

## Interest Groups — NYYM Summer Sessions 2013

**Tuesday 7/23/13, at 7:45-9:30 pm AND**  
**Wednesday 7/24/13, at 1:45-3:15 pm**

### **1. A Conversation about Quaker Leadership, *Joyce Schroeder***

Many Friends assume leadership roles in both our meetings and in our wider society. When we assume these roles, how do we feel? Do we find them to be spiritually sustaining or a burden? Do we feel supported in our attempts or thwarted? This presentation will draw upon real data culled from an online survey and interviews to give us a deeper understanding of the current state of Quaker leadership. It will present concepts and tools to help Friends understand that leaders need supportive cultures so that they can flourish and grow.

**Tuesday 6:30-9:30 pm**

### **2. Awakening the Dreamer Symposium, *Fred Doneit***

The Symposium consists of professionally developed video clips and interviews with well-known experts advocating for changes in our way of life to create a sustainable and equitable society. Interspersed are exercises and sharing opportunities for participants to become emotionally and intellectually involved in bringing about change, beginning in their own lives as well as in their families and communities.

**Tuesday 7:45-9:30 pm**

### **3. Empower Your Meeting: Learn about FGC Programs & Resources for Your Meeting, *Barry Crossno, Helen Garay Toppins***

Hear an overview of Friends General Conference programs and resources for meetings, followed by more in-depth presentations on three of FGC's newest and/or most popular offerings: Quaker Quest, The New Meetings Project, and The Quaker Cloud. Quaker Quest is a program designed to help your meeting deepen the relationships among your existing members and attenders while reaching out to seekers in your community. The New Meetings Project exists to help Quakers who feel led to establish new worship groups do so with the help of their yearly meeting, other local meetings, and the support and resources of FGC. The Quaker Cloud is an online toolbox to help meetings create and store minutes, establish an effective website, and build an easily-updated member directory.

### **4. Get Your Answers Here, *Anita Paul***

Come with your aging-related questions for yourself, your meeting, your family. If we don't know the answer we will find out for you. Medicare, Medicaid, driving, affordable housing, moving, caregiving, etc.

### **5. A Great People to Be Gathered: What in the World is going on with FUM? *Colin Saxton***

You are partners in the global work and witness of Quakers through Friends United Meeting. Come get an update on the work that is currently in progress and hear more about emerging plans arising out of last fall's Day of Discernment.

## **6. How Can We Meet our Native American Neighbors with Respect and Honor?**

*Liseli Haines, Susan Wolf*

We will start with a review of the Doctrine of Discovery: what it means and how it applies to Friends. We will bring forward information about the Two-Row Wampum Renewal Campaign and its goals, and describe the historic enactment that will take place immediately after Summer Sessions. We will provide some perspective on the history most of us are taught and how this distorts the mainstream view of Native Americans. We will invite discussion on all these topics. We will provide specific ways people can respect and honor Native American traditions, culture, spirituality, and history.

## **7. Quaker Bolivia Link: A Quaker Response to Poverty, John Scardina**

A presentation (including video and photos) to describe the work of QBL in the Bolivian altiplano, presented by individuals who have recently visited our project sites.

## **8. Saving US/Mexican Border Migrants: Accompanying the Afflicted, Caroline Besse Webster**

From my eight day visit in May with a group of religious human rights advocates to the Arizona/Mexico border, I will show photos and describe programs for illegal immigrants on both sides of the border. Topics are Separation of Families (by enforcement); Poverty (causes, exploitation); Torture (by whom, where); Legal Defenders (the court, felonies, misdemeanors, deportation); Current Human Rights Goals (saving lives, relieving suffering, affirming compassion and hospitality along the border).

## **9. Teaching as a Ministry, Emily Provance**

It sometimes seems as though a disproportionate number of Friends work as professional educators. While the primary defined goal of a teacher is to guide students' intellectual development, teaching almost always naturally extends to character development as well. This will be a query-centered worshipful discussion of how our testimonies as Friends can and do advise our work as educators. How does the testimony of integrity inform your practice as an educator? What deliberate actions or practices stem from your testimony of peace? In what ways does your testimony of equality inform your choices in curriculum and teaching strategies? What value does silence have in the modern classroom? What challenges have you faced in attempting to incorporate silence in your classroom?

### **Wednesday at 1:45-3:15 pm**

**10. Answering That of God in Those Who Support Fracking, Christopher Sammond**  
Fracking and other extractive industries do not happen in a vacuum. They happen with the full support of many good people. Better understanding the values and assumptions behind this support may help us as we seek a Spirit-led response to behaviors that may ultimately destroy life as we know it on this planet. I will be sharing what I learned on my sabbatical about these values and assumptions, some responses I tried, and questions I am living with based on this experience.

**11. Conflict in Monthly Meetings, *Peter Phillips***

This is an opportunity for Friends to share their experiences of conflict that threatens the good order of monthly meetings—how conflicts have arisen, how they have been addressed, and what some basic tools of conflict transformation might have to offer.

**12. Friends Academy—Quaker Education at its Best on Long Island, *John Scardina***

A discussion of Friends Academy's program as a Quaker school committed to letting our lives speak in service to others.

**13. Joys & Challenges of Committee Clerks, *Steve Ross***

We will examine the basic roles of and common problems faced by NYYM committee clerks, focusing on meeting both the committee's internally-driven objectives and the needs and expectations of the wider NYYM organization.

**14. Keeping Faith: Apologizing to Afro-Descendants, *Robin Alpern, Mary Pugh Clark***

Keeping faith includes coming to the table to repair damage in relationships. Apology brings us to the table. To date, no Quaker group has apologized to Afro-Descendants for any harm we have done, past or present, consciously or unconsciously. NYYM's Ministry Coordinating Committee has asked monthly meetings to season an Apology to Afro-Descendants for slavery and its aftermath. Two members of European American Quakers Working to End Racism (EAQWER) offer support to Friends laboring with the Apology. Through a presentation of history and issues and group discussion, we will explore the rationale for an apology, to whom it would be addressed, and who would apologize.

**15. New Group Games and a Children's Curriculum from Right Sharing of World Resources, *Mary Eagleson***

These games and the children's curriculum give First Day School teachers (and others working with young people) a good way to bring into focus the glaring inequities in the distribution of the world's wealth. This interest group will introduce the materials. A few copies will be available for participants to take home; others can be ordered from [www.RSWR.org](http://www.RSWR.org). If there are enough participants, we will actually play one of the games.

**16. The Largest Hispanic Quaker Community's Faithfulness, *Jens Braun, Emma Condon***

A Bolivian Friend will speak about how Friends live out their faith at home and in society. Describes how young adult Friends in Bolivia, who have received financial aid from the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund, work to promote love and care among Bolivian people.

**17. Quaker Schools and Quaker Meetings: How do they relate to each other? *Tom Rothschild***

This is intended as an open discussion about the relationships between Quaker schools and meetings, including consideration of past history, the present day, and visions for the future. While there may be some general materials from Friends Council on Education, the primary intention is to foster discussion among the participants.

**18. Spiritual Ecology: Answering That of God in My Bioregion, *Steven Davison***

How do you actually “answer that of God in all creation”? What makes a place sacred? For Indigenous Peoples, their place really matters in their religious life. Not so for Christians or Quakers. We’ll look critically at the universalist, “all creation” emphasis in our tradition. We’ll look at how Jesus used the landscape of Palestine in his personal spiritual practice and the role that Palestine’s ecology played in the origins of the Judao-Christian tradition. We’ll explore what “spiritual ecology”, a land-based spirituality, and a religious culture of sacred place might mean for us Friends today, and what a bioregional New York Yearly Meeting might look like.

**19. Vitality of Ministry, *Anne Pomeroy***

Are you concerned about the vitality of ministry among Friends in your meeting, in the yearly meeting, and beyond? What are we being called to? How are eldership and ministry related in bringing forth the new or vital ministry we need today? Join us as we consider these concerns.

**20. What has Native Philosophy to do with Quakerism? *Rebekah Tanner, Susan Wolf***

The testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, and Equality are essential to Quakerism. What does Native American philosophy have to say about these testimonies? What are the overlaps and differences in how these ideas are perceived and put into practice in these two contexts? Where they are very different, can we still find common ground? Or, in the words of Native American philosopher Gregory Cajete, "be inclusive of all the ways that humans are capable of knowing and understanding the world."

**21. Shared Housing, *Barbara Spring***

Explore the many ways to build community and share resources through shared housing. We will focus on the variety of senior housing options for sharing, but will consider inter-generational ideas and extended family options. Bring your ideas and experiences to share.

**22. Transition Environmental Movement, *Pamela Boyce Simms***

As we face the challenges of peak oil, climate change, and economic contraction, the Transition Movement is a positive approach that focuses on local solutions and building community resilience. This discussion will provide an overview on how to set up, run, and maintain a successful Transition initiative. We will share ways in which participants can engage their communities, and delve into both the theory and practice of Transition that has worked well in hundreds of communities around the world.