



# SPARK

New York Yearly Meeting  
*The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)*

Volume 47, Number 2

15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003

March 2017



## The Election and What Comes Next

A large group of Friends met up outside of Quaker House on 47th Street, New York, to march together in the NYC Women's March on January 21, 2017. For more photos from the Women's Marches around our NYYM area, please look throughout this issue and view the album at our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/photos](http://www.facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/photos). Photo by Jillian Smith.

Gather with us at  
**Spring Sessions**  
March 31-April 2  
Teen and Youth programs available  
*turn to page 7*

### Finding the Rhythm

Emily Provance  
15th Street Meeting

Wednesday, November 9th, I call the building manager.

“What’s the earliest we can book the meetinghouse?”

“Five.”

“What time do we have to be out?”

“Nine-thirty.”

“Okay. We’ll worship from five to nine-thirty.”

I text a friend. *This is so scary.*

Back from him—*I hear you.*

*Remember: Love is stronger than fear.*

From me—*I know. I have decided to be scared for one day. Then we have a lot of work to do.*

*continued on page 4*

### President Trump: Now What?

Jerry Leaphart  
Wilton Meeting

For eight years, I enjoyed being able to say a colloquial phrase—“Obama President, y’all”—even though I came to believe that President Obama was far too centrist oriented in his policies during his tenure for my liking. I nonetheless respected the fact that “Obama [was] president y’all.”

It is fair to wonder whether more boldness on President Obama’s part would have made a subsequent Trump election less plausible? That latter query looks back in time and while it might be worthwhile to think about it and address it, that query will not be developed here beyond observing that mandates

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### What Comes Next? The Same as Before.

Jeffrey Aaron  
New Brunswick Meeting

Shortly after the presidential inauguration, I read an intriguing passage from a book entitled *Switched On, A Memoir of Brain Changes and Emotional Awakening* (2016) by John Elder Robison, a successful author on the autistic spectrum who underwent transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) which opened pathways to emotional awareness in his brain.

“...autism [had] shielded me from the worst of my [rough] upbringing by making me oblivious to what was happening around me... Before TMS

*continued on page 5*

## Notices

### New Members

**Peter Derries** — Rochester  
**Suzanne O'Hara** — Poplar Ridge

### Transfers

**Daniel Seeger**, to Morning-side from Newtown (PYM)

### Deaths

**Mark Tolbert Kenmore**, member of Buffalo, on November 19, 2016.  
**Janet Miller Laird**, member of Rochester, on December 17, 2016.

## MEETING NEWS

### Benefit Concert for Refugee Alliance

In December Poughkeepsie Meeting hosted a benefit flute and piano concert for the Mid-Hudson Refugee Solidarity Alliance (more than 20 faith-based groups and civic institutions), which is supporting the Church World Service refugee resettlement program in the mid-Hudson Valley.

### Farmington Friends Aids Homeless Families

Farmington Friends MM has become a "host congregation" for Family Promise of Ontario County, an affiliate of the Interfaith Hospitality Network. For a period of one week four times a year, beginning on Sunday afternoon and continuing through breakfast of the following Sunday, a host congregation provides overnight hospitality for families who are homeless. The host congregation provides overnight accommodations, the evening meal, breakfast, and food for bag lunches for up to fourteen persons; the families consist of at least one parent/legal guardian and minor child(ren). The families arrive late Sunday afternoon to have supper with volunteers from the host congregation. After supper and chores, guests and volunteers spend some time together socializing and helping with homework before bedtime. After an early breakfast the next morning, the families are transported by Family Promise to a day center; from there children go to school, parents go to work, and help with whatever each family needs to achieve sustainable,

## Around Our Yearly Meeting

independent housing is pursued. (<http://familypromise.org/>)

### Interfaith Flushing event

A Beacon of Pluralism candlelighting ceremony and photography exhibit, organized by local artists Nancy Bruno and Gina Minielli, was held at the Flushing Meetinghouse on January 30th. The event brought together people of many faiths, including Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and other communities, in celebration of the religious diversity of Queens. The Flushing Meetinghouse is seen as the birthplace of religious tolerance in the US. The event was covered in local newspapers and television, including pieces on NY1 News, the Queens Courier, and the China Press.

### News from Purchase Meeting

We hosted Purchase Quarterly Meeting on Feb 5; our speaker was Paulette Meier, a Friend from Indiana, who has put historic Quaker writings into song. Friends found her beautiful voice and messages inspiring and healing. NYYM Friends may be most familiar with her version of John Woolman's quotation "May we look upon our treasure, the furniture of our houses, and our garments, and try to discover whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these, our possessions." See her website [www.paulettemeier.com](http://www.paulettemeier.com) for more information.

We are currently hosting a display of the banners celebrating the AFSC's 100th Anniversary. They are well-done and portable, each with its own stand. We were able to display them at Quarterly Meeting and at Friends' Academy on Long Island. We highly recommend signing up to bring them to your Meeting.

On February 25, we will host a Quaker Parenting Meet-up for our Quarter that Melinda is offering, and on April 8 Scarsdale Meeting will host a Quaker Young Adult Meet-up at Purchase Meeting hosted by Emily and Gabi.

### FGC Offers Spiritual Deepening Program

Friends General Conference invites Friends, meetings, and seekers to participate in the Spiritual Deepening Program, a framework and set of resources for adults and children

that encourages connecting with each other, connecting with Quaker practice and faith, and connecting with Spirit. The Spiritual Deepening Program provides participants with an opportunity to explore and deepen their faith journeys, to rediscover the power that early Friends experienced in a way that is relevant for their lives today, and to explore tools to help them move closer to living a life transformed by the Inward Teacher, the indwelling Christ, the Seed—that Power Beyond Words.

Small groups within meetings can come together to participate in the Spiritual Deepening program exercises over a series of sessions, or individuals can join an 8-week online Silence & Light eRetreat and build spiritual community online. The suggested fee for participating in the program is \$20/person, on a Pay-as-Led basis.

Learn more about the Spiritual Deepening Program and how to bring it to your meeting: [www.fgcquaker.org/spiritualdeepening](http://www.fgcquaker.org/spiritualdeepening)

The next Silence & Light eRetreat will run from March 26 – May 19, 2017.

Sign up for the Spiritual Deepening email list to receive announcements about registering for eRetreats and new program content: [www.fgcquaker.org/sdinterest](http://www.fgcquaker.org/sdinterest)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FWCC Section of the Americas Meeting in Stony Point, NY

The Friends World Committee for Consultation, under the Nurture Coordinating Committee in NYYM, would like to announce: The Section of Americas meeting for Quakers from every country in North, Central, and South America is having our annual section meeting **HERE IN NY!**  
Date: March 23-26, 2017  
Location: Stony Point Center, 17 Cricketown Rd, Stony Point, NY 10980 / 845-786-5674  
[info@stonypointcenter.org](mailto:info@stonypointcenter.org)

From [fwccamericas.org](http://fwccamericas.org):  
"In the Americas, the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship.

Answering God's call to universal love, Friends World Committee

for Consultation brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world."

Please REGISTER at [http://fwccamericas.org/\\_wp/event/2017-section-meeting-of-the-americas/](http://fwccamericas.org/_wp/event/2017-section-meeting-of-the-americas/)

Local friends are welcome but they must register in advance for any portion of the event they attend. Questions: [americas@fwccamericas.org](mailto:americas@fwccamericas.org)

### FGC Gathering in NYYM!

2017's Annual FGC Gathering, *Ripples Start Where Spirit Moves*, is July 2-8 in Niagara, NY. Remember to mark your calendars for Monday, April 3rd, 2017—that's when online Early Registration begins for an equal chance at your choice of a workshop and housing requests.

### Volunteers needed for JYM

As we look ahead to NYYM Summer Sessions at Silver Bay, Sunday, July 22 to Saturday, July 28, 2017, we are looking for volunteers to work with the Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM).

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Friendly adults are sought to work with young Friends from Grades 1-12. Perhaps you, or someone in your meeting, has the gift of working with children or teens and would welcome this opportunity. It is a wonderful way to get to know the Yearly Meeting. We ask that Meetings give consideration to providing financial assistance to JYM volunteers from their community so that they may serve the Yearly Meeting in this way. Volunteers may also request that part of their Silver Bay costs be covered by JYM. Friends who are not led to give the entire week to JYM may have gifts to share for an hour or so during the week. Please contact Ellie Rosenberg (ellierosenberg7@gmail.com) or Dawn Pozzi (quakerdawn@gmail.com), this year's JYM coordinators.

### AVP Summer Camp for Youth Leadership and Personal Development

A summer day camp "with a difference" for youth entering Grades 6-11. Have fun while building a

#### Editor's Note

Hello! Everyone is encouraged to write for Spark. Articles in Spark are a form of written ministry; pieces should be spirit-led, and reflect your personal experience, Quaker history, or present faith and practice on the subject. For example: things you or your meeting has done; a prophetic message; personal reflection; or whatever you are led to say.

The **theme** for the next Spark, in May, is **Discernment**. We welcome articles on this or other related topics. Please send your submissions to me at [communications@nny.org](mailto:communications@nny.org) by April 18th.

Meetings and committee clerks: don't forget to **share your info**. Send me your meeting's news and upcoming events so I can share them with the rest of the Yearly Meeting through InfoShare, our digital newsletter. Send your items to [communications@nny.org](mailto:communications@nny.org). Don't get InfoShare? Email [office@nny.org](mailto:office@nny.org).

Keep up-to-date with NYYM events through our Facebook page, updated frequently: [www.facebook.com/NewYork-YearlyMeeting/](http://www.facebook.com/NewYork-YearlyMeeting/)

Read short messages and links to articles on Twitter: [twitter.com/NYYMTweets](https://twitter.com/NYYMTweets)

—Sarah Way

community of peers and growing and developing as a person. August 7-17, 2017 (Monday-Thursday, 9am-5pm) at Chatham-Summit Friends Meeting.

Using the principles of the Alternatives to Violence Project program, teens will focus on:

- Self esteem
- Communication
- Nonviolent Relationships
- Conflict Transformation
- Community Building

The goal is to help young people develop into leaders who are caring and skillful communicators in all their relationships.

Visit [avpnjyouth.weebly.com](http://avpnjyouth.weebly.com).

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

### General Secretary of New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

This is a full-time position headquartered in New York City, serving the needs of more than 60 monthly meetings spread through New York State and parts of Connecticut and New Jersey.

The ideal candidate is a servant leader with strong spiritual grounding, abilities in both administration and ministry, good understanding of Quaker process, and demonstrated skills in

- Translating vision into action
- Management
- Collaboration
- Releasing and nurturing others' gifts in ministry
- Communication
- Building effective teams of volunteers
- Development, grant writing, budgeting

Although each General Secretary brings a personal vision, typical activities of the position include visiting throughout the Yearly Meeting, leading workshops for spiritual growth, writing press releases on urgent events, and consulting with committees and meetings in crisis. The General Secretary leads and supervises a small staff that has grown in size and scope, coordinating their efforts with groups of volunteers. Eventual membership in a monthly meeting of NYYM is expected.

For a link to the job description and more information about NYYM see [nny.org](http://nny.org).

Deadline for applications: April 1, 2017

Contact: [search@nny.org](mailto:search@nny.org)

## QuED: Quaker Exploration and Discourse

Adria Gulizia

Chatham Summit Meeting

When I was invited to help kick off a series of intergenerational, day-long discussions aimed at sharing the richness of New York Yearly Meeting with young adult Friends, I knew it was a tremendous opportunity. To speak on any topic God led me to and to help create a program to benefit other young adult Friends and to get acquainted with my fellow speakers and to benefit from the able facilitation of Gabi Savory-Bailey and Emily Provance and to do all of that in the comfortable environment of my own meeting—it was almost too good to be true. The truth is, participating in New York Yearly Meeting's inaugural QuED Day was an even greater opportunity than I thought. Though I chose my topic—why conviction matters now more than ever—without knowing what my fellow speakers would discuss, somehow my talk fit perfectly with the themes of racial justice and spiritual growth explored by Jeff Hitchcock and Carol Holmes. And who could have predicted that, in both the question and answer period and the open dialogue that followed the morning's talks, themes as diverse as political economy, immigration, the yearly meeting's minute on racism and our shared call to the Lamb's War would be raised and reflected upon, not with the stridency and rancor so common these days, but in an atmosphere of sweet fellowship. I truly believe the Holy Spirit was present with us, guiding both the topics and the tenor of the dialogue. By the time late afternoon rolled around, I felt emotionally tender, intellectually informed and spiritually edified. In other words, I was greatly blessed by the day, and I am so looking forward to the upcoming QuED day at Fifteenth Street Meeting.

QuED Days will be occurring monthly. If you're a young adult or member of the host meeting, please come. If you aren't (or if you're a young adult who can't make it in person), please tune in on Facebook live. If you get half as much out of it as I did, you will be richly blessed!

#QUAKER  
OUTSIDE  
THE LINES

### What does it mean to Quaker Outside the Lines?

It means to take your Quaker faith out into your community in meaningful ways.

If you have a project in mind that would engage your neighborhood community, we have an opportunity for you! From now until October, Friends in New York Yearly Meeting can receive up to \$200 reimbursement for a project that:

- Involves Quakers and non-Quakers doing something together;
- Is a manifestation of Quaker faith;
- Is meaningful to people living in your town or city;
- Happens somewhere other than your meetinghouse (libraries/schools/parks/etc.);
- And is documented at least once on social media, using #Quakeroutsidethelines.

This is open to all of us in NYYM—individuals, whole meetings, small groups, First Day Schools, everybody!

Apply (or get more information) here: [www.tinyurl.com/quakeroutsidethelines/](http://www.tinyurl.com/quakeroutsidethelines/)



Above, Friends at the NYC Women's March (photo by Walter Naegle); below, Friends at the Asbury Park, NJ Women's March (photo from Megan Brytus), January 21, 2017.

## Finding the Rhythm

Emily Provance  
15th Street Meeting

(continued from page 1)

That night, I sit on the facing bench. They start coming in. A man, by himself. Then two women. A man, joined later by a woman, then another, and they seem to be friends. Two full rows of twenty-somethings who enter en masse. Mostly strangers. Forty-five in all. How did they even know we were open?

A few familiar faces. In and out, in and out. Most people stay for about an hour. At nine-thirty I stand up and join hands with those who remain. We exchange names. One man gives us each a sprig of rosemary. It's nice—a sweet-smelling sign of life.

Thursday. A seven-year-old asks me—“What's un-doc-a-mended?”

Friday. Somehow, Facebook gets nastier. A Quaker posts a violent cartoon. I worry. She must be terrified.

But also on Facebook, an invitation—you're in your city, and I'm in mine, but do you want to worship tomorrow at the same time as me? So we do, and it's deep, and it's centered, and it's familiar, too.

More days, more weeks, more months go by. The sky is falling—so fast. We're collectively breathless. How to respond? It's a world over-full of exclamation points.

On the phone, with a Friend. *The work is unchanged.* We're finding a rhythm. *We know how to do this.* Worship, witness, love one another. Be open to healing. Testify.

(I'm still kind of scared, God.)

*That's okay. If you weren't, you wouldn't have empathy.*



Mike Clark, Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag at the Albany Women's March. Photo from Regina Baird Haag.

## President Trump: Now What?

Jerry Leaphart  
Wilton Meeting

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for change need to be acted upon. Otherwise, reactionary energy may gather in forcefulness, resulting in an unexpected shift in public sentiment.

The attempt here is to introduce queries based on apparent similarities between the present and certain prior eras in American history. It is hoped that doing so may help Quakers discern what can be done in such circumstances.

### Is past, prologue?

I put forward the following widely separated time periods as possible antecedents to the present:

- 1776
- 1860
- 1968
- 2000

### 1776

The present lacks the fervor of revolutionary opposition to existing sovereign authority that characterized 1776; though, perhaps, not by any great degree. Post January 20th (2017), may mirror the revolutionary time period in terms of the degree of division among the people. In the 1770's, there was a divide based upon having either “patriot” or “loyalist” sentiment. For Quakers, the primacy of our peace testimony all but mandated a loyalist stance, whether our forbearers in the faith supported the patriot cause or not. Because Quakers could not and would not take up arms, they were seen as being loyalist, even if they believed in the “patriot” cause, and otherwise voiced support for that cause.

There is at least one significant example of where the assumption of Quakers being loyalist, when in fact a Quaker was not, worked out to the benefit of the revolution. I refer here to Oyster Bay, LI, NY, Quaker, Robert Townsend. From casual research, I have come to understand that Townsend was a central figure in the “Culper Spy Ring” that engaged in high level espionage that resulted in the delivery of crucial, even decisive, information to George Washington. Two examples:

- The Culper Spy Ring obtained information that Benedict Arnold had defected to the British side and was planning to

capture George Washington at West Point, NY.

- The Culper Spy Ring enabled delivery of misinformation to the British causing them not to send troops to attack the French fleet upon its landing in Rhode Island. As a result, the French were able to then proceed to Yorktown VA, where the decisive military engagement took place.

NY Quaker, Robert Townsend, was an integral part of the spy ring, his code name was Samuel Culper Jr. His home, in Oyster Bay, known as Raynham Hall, is maintained as a museum and historical site to this day.

Is the example of Robert Townsend and 1776 apropos to the present? And, if so, what should Quakers do?

### 1860

The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 occurred in a context of a deeply divided nation. The South rejected Lincoln's election, with some states authorizing secession before he was inaugurated; and with Civil War commencing within weeks after Lincoln took office. Nothing quite as drastic as that appears to be looming on the horizon at present, but the degree of social angst is nonetheless very high. The present may be a time when spiritual discernment calling for leadership by example of peaceful, silent, will-to-good, may be essential. How can Quakers best work to fulfill that objective? How can we lead by example?

### 1968

That year was similar to 2016 in that democratic presidents had been in office for consecutive terms. A progressive, civil rights agenda had been pursued and major health care legislation (Medicare), had been enacted. An unpopular war, in Vietnam, was still raging and episodes of serious civil unrest were occurring. Republican Richard Nixon won the presidential election, resulting in a sense of shock among more progressive voters.

Because democrats had pursued the war in Vietnam, it was difficult for people who supported nonviolence to wholeheartedly support the Democratic Party nominee, Hubert Humphrey. In fact, many democrats were rallying to support Robert F Kennedy, who might have succeeded in getting the nomination were it not for his assassination in June of that year.

Did the intense rivalry between Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton in the 2016 primary voting serve a similar purpose of weakening progressive resolve?

### 2000

The disputed election of 2000 led to what some accounts refer to as “America's lost decade.” A time period bookended by 9/11 at its beginning and by the financial collapse of 2008 toward its end. Characterizations of Bush the younger's term in office frequently used terms like “worst president” that served to further the partisan divide as much as anything else. Here, the cause for comparison consists in addressing the query of whether and to what extent does personal acumen, or lack thereof, in the person who is president, matter?

The US is not only divided along partisan lines at present, the background and leadership style of the person who is president as of January 20, 2017, has generated doubts about competence, intentions and several other factors, including sanity. Many do not trust him. How should Quakers respond to the present reality; and how should we prepare to be useful in the immediate future?

One thing that is common to the time periods of 1776, 1860, 1968 and 2000, in American history, is that war and suffering followed each of the named time periods. Through all of them, Quakers held fast to their testimonies, ideals and faith. That is what we are called upon to do at present as well.

The challenge for us may also consist in the detail and the specifics of our plans and actions. There is no short or easy answer to that, beyond remaining faithful to divine guidance. One thing seems certain and that is that we will be called upon to be as active as we can be.

## Political Activism Among Friends

What forms of political activism are allowed for non-profit religious groups such as monthly meetings? We have posted an article discussing what actions, including electioneering and lobbying, meetings and other tax-exempt religious organizations are allowed to take under the laws of the IRS. Read it at [nyym.org](http://nyym.org).

## What Comes Next? The Same as Before.

Jeffrey Aaron  
New Brunswick Meeting

*(continued from page 1)*

enlightened me, I thought the reason I often felt somewhat down was that I could not receive positive emotions from other people. Now I knew the truth: most of the emotions floating around in space are not positive. When you look into a crowd with real emotional insight you'll see ... greed, rage, anxiety, and what for a lack of a better word I call 'tension'—with only the occasional flash of love or happiness.... [N]ow that I could read others more clearly, my plight was not necessarily improved, because one of the strongest emotions I sensed in others was their own anxiety." (p. 205-206)

As a Friend, this observation initially seemed cynical and depressing, but I soon realized that it is most likely accurate as a generalization about random groups of people. My next thought was that I hope it is not accurate among groups of Friends, where we can find the warm company of Spirit-led people who share basic Quaker values, who seek that of God in others. Being among Friends and seeking that of God in ourselves and each other can be very uplifting. It next occurred to me, however, that what Robison refers to as "tension" or "anxiety" is in reality quite common among Friends, who, as social and religious activists, are deeply aware of what George Fox referred to as the "ocean of darkness." It is sometimes hard to remember the spiritual uplift available on accessing "that of God," when we are confronting an ocean of darkness, even when we are laboring among like minded Friends to make the world a better place. Facing that swelling ocean in our current sociopolitical climate can elicit feelings of impotence and hopelessness, so I looked for answers. Two came to mind surprisingly quickly.

I was born in 1944, in the midst of World War II, when the outcome of the war was not at all certain; the hostile war machine of the Nazis seemed overpowering. What, I thought, were Friends doing in that era, when the ocean of darkness

seemed to be overwhelming the entire world? The answer was obvious: they were doing the same things we are doing now and were doing a year ago, ten, fifty years ago. They were laboring at "Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World." They were bound to the work rather than to the outcome, by their values and their beliefs, and therein lies the answer to troubled spirits. How easily we can forget; how obvious is the answer! While it is true that a gathering of Friends may include tension and anxiety, it certainly does not normally include the greed and rage that Robison saw as normal in the world at large, and even the tension and anxiety among Friends is more often directed at concern about the outcome of our efforts at good works than it is at each other. Yes, we may fail at times, being human, but it is not our norm. Our norm is to uplift each other as we labor to make the world a better place.

My second answer came as a recollection of the times I have attended services at The First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, the "black" church in NJ at which Spring Sessions 2016 was held. I attended once not long after the infamous murder of members of Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston SC by a white racist during a Bible study session. I attended the Baptist Church in solidarity; I have friends and neighbors there. The pastor acknowledged the event and spoke about the need to be alert and careful for their community in a dangerous world, but other than that, the experience was as it always is in that church, and in many other "black" churches across America: welcoming, sharing, uplifting, deeply spiritual, filled with the joyful noise of smiling and swaying multiple choirs. The warmth and sense of open-armed welcome both for members and for visitors is always palpable from the moment of arrival until the moment of departure. I attend now and then for a rip roaring spiritual uplift and a reminder of the goodness in forms other than ours, the joy of experiencing our world's blessed diversity. The experience reflects the original purpose of the founding of the black American church during the time of legal slavery, the one place that slaves could experience saving grace and joyful, spiritual, communal togetherness under the Divine Spirit. It remains the

same, a unique experience even today, when race slavery is thought of as a thing of the past although racism itself remains integral to our society. That this community has such strength of character built into its religious institution that it can rise joyfully above the ocean of darkness that still casts its dark shadow, is an amazing testament to the depth of spirit of people of good will. To me as a Friend who struggles at times to rise above

despair in order to witness to the world what we Friends have and can do, it is a humbling reminder of what is right in the world and in our own community. It is a reminder to hold firm to what we witness to by our good works, perhaps to double down. It is we who are responsible to lift our own spirits and it is up to us to cherish and to work to preserve our own beloved community and the goodness it represents.



### Quaker Groups on Facebook

Want to connect with other Friends? Here's a list of Quaker-related Facebook pages to explore. These are linked to on our page ([www.facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/](http://www.facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/)) in the LIKED BY THIS PAGE section in the right hand column. Facebook pages contain general information in addition to announcements and events. You don't need a Facebook account to read them.

#### **NYYM-related Facebook pages:**

**[www.facebook.com/NYYMFamilies/](http://www.facebook.com/NYYMFamilies/)** Families of NYYM. Information about NYYM events and resources for families in the yearly meeting, particularly families currently raising children.

**[www.facebook.com/nyymqued/](http://www.facebook.com/nyymqued/)** NYYM QuED. Quaker Exploration and Discourse is a free series for Young Adult Friends (Quakers), including food, worship, speakers, conversations, and more.

**[www.facebook.com/powellhouse.org/](http://www.facebook.com/powellhouse.org/)** Powell House, the Quaker conference and retreat center in Old Chatham, New York.

**[www.facebook.com/QIVCcanaanny/](http://www.facebook.com/QIVCcanaanny/)** The Quaker Intentional Village community in Canaan, NY.

**[www.facebook.com/yafnyym/](http://www.facebook.com/yafnyym/)** Young Adult Friends of NYYM. A place for Young Adult Friends(Quakers), roughly ages 18-35, who are part of New York Yearly Meeting.

#### **General Quaker pages:**

**[www.facebook.com/AmericanFriendsServiceCommittee/](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanFriendsServiceCommittee/)** AFSC is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service.

**[www.facebook.com/fgcquaker/](http://www.facebook.com/fgcquaker/)** Friends General Conference. FGC, with Divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.

**[www.facebook.com/friendsjournal/](http://www.facebook.com/friendsjournal/)** Friends Journal: Communicating Quaker experience in order to connect and deepen spiritual lives. A Quaker communication ministry.

**[www.facebook.com/friendsunitedmeeting](http://www.facebook.com/friendsunitedmeeting)** Friends United Meeting commits itself to energize and equip Friends through the power of the Holy Spirit to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord.

**[www.facebook.com/fwccworldoffice/](http://www.facebook.com/fwccworldoffice/)** Friends World Committee for Consultation. which encourages fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends around the world.

**[www.facebook.com/Quakers4RE/](http://www.facebook.com/Quakers4RE/)** The Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (QREC) is a broad network of Friends sharing resources for youth, adult and children's religious education.

**[www.facebook.com/Quaker-Earthcare-Witness-143510792334460/?nr](http://www.facebook.com/Quaker-Earthcare-Witness-143510792334460/?nr)** (or go to Facebook and search for Quaker Earthcare Witness) Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of people who are taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world.

**[www.facebook.com/quakerlobby/](http://www.facebook.com/quakerlobby/)** The Facebook page for FCNL: Friends Committee on National Legislation. FCNL's multi-issue advocacy connects historic Quaker testimonies on peace, equality, simplicity, and truth with issues and legislation in Washington.

What did I miss? Email [communications@nyym.org](mailto:communications@nyym.org). — Sarah Way

## Let love (and welcome, inclusion, knowledge, and action) be the first motion!

Melinda Wenner Bradley  
Children and Youth Field  
Secretary

In both my roles as a parent and educator, I've been part of many conversations since the election this fall about "how do I parent/work with children/model activism/take care of myself" in response to recent and ongoing events. In times of challenge, there is always more wisdom in the circle of people around us, whether in our families, meeting, or the wider world of Friends. During the time of greatest personal crisis in my life, when one of my children (then a toddler) had cancer, our family, Friends school colleagues, monthly meeting—and even yearly meeting—communities gathered around and journeyed with us. That was, in fact, what the pediatrician said to me when we first spoke after James' diagnosis: "You are beginning a journey."

Accompaniment on a journey can make an extraordinary difference, whether the journey is physical, temporal or spiritual. The times we're living in certainly feel for some of us like a new path, and for others like a road walked too often. How can we provide accompaniment and spiritual nurture to children and young people in the days ahead? How can we support their interest in justice and participation in protest? How do we address worries and provide comfort? How do we recognize that of God in everyone—especially those who don't hold the same views or values—and let love be the first motion?

### 1. Welcome: Among Ourselves and to the Stranger

Two of the best ways we can support our children are to take care of ourselves on this journey, and model for them both the giving and receiving of hospitality to others. Building connections and finding accompaniment is a powerful message to model for our children, who know how important friends are. In our yearly meeting, we're hosting Quaker Parent Meetups for fellowship and worship together (in quarters and regions) and there are online communi-

ties for sharing information, like the "Families of NYYM" Facebook page. Watch for news in coming weeks about online *Conversation Circles* for parents, caregivers, and teachers interested in connection and discussion across the yearly meeting. Explore with children and youth how we make our circle wider, and welcome others, whether it's a visitor to meeting on First Day or reaching out in friendship and service in our neighborhood or community.

### 2. Knowledge and Inclusion: Hand in Hand

Providing children with stories and images of people who live/look/worship/love differently than them or their family is to nurture their compassion and experience of inclusion. How can we support young Friends if they are confronted with racism, Islamophobia, misogyny, homophobia? Stories are a potent source for exploring the experiences of people different from us, as well as finding ourselves in the story. We're growing the collection of books in our NYYM Resource Library which center the lives of people of color (Friends and others), and also including stories like "Muslim Child" by Rukhsana Khan and "Before Columbus" by Charles C. Mann. Looking for a book to borrow for FDS or home? Interested in suggested titles or want to lift one up? Please be in touch!

*For a list of websites with excellent multicultural book collections and suggestions, please see this article at [nyym.org](http://nyym.org).*

### 3. Activism with Children and Youth

Several opportunities for children to be involved in age-appropriate activism are happening at this time. There are possibilities for each of us, at all ages, to find our entry into witness and activism. How do we know where our Light leads us to be God's hands and feet and voice? One of the gifts we can give children is the tool of discernment; a Friend talks about giving a concern or a leading "The Love test; time; over to a larger group." A resource to learn more about these ideas and exploring discernment with kids is posted on the NYYM website, "When the Light it at Work in Us."

*Two Letter-Writing Campaigns for Kids:*

- Friends Journal's 4th annual Student Voices Project: [www.friendsjournal.org/studentvoices](http://www.friendsjournal.org/studentvoices)

- The RavensPerch Literary Magazine's "Children's Letters to the President": [www.theravensperch.com](http://www.theravensperch.com)

*Participate in a project to take Quaker faith out into your community in meaningful ways—outside the meetinghouse walls. Quaker "Outside the Lines": <http://www.nyym.org/?q=quaker-outside-the-lines>*

*For links to books and resources for young activists, please see this article at [nyym.org](http://nyym.org).*

The wider circle of Friends is on this journey together. A gathering of New England Friends in January initiated the development of resources to support Quaker witness for peace and justice; one of these is Supporting Young People After a Tragedy (<https://goo.gl/opoj3j>). It offers wisdom to take care of yourself, pay attention to where young people are (do not assume or project feelings about events), provide accurate information, move to action you can take, and make space for prayer and silence as well as support from those around you. Let us walk together, and let love be the first motion.



## Some days are gone.

Sheree Cammer  
Albany Friends Meeting

Some days are gone.

The days of being self righteous  
Those days are gone.  
The days of hating haters,  
The days of dividing us and them,  
Those days are gone.  
Casting stones and blaming;  
Those days are gone

The time for cairns is come again,  
has always been—  
Huge stones left to guide those  
on rugged ground to what they need  
to journey on.

We need not overcome,  
We need to come with,  
Honor the divine in all  
Love for the Other:  
These days have come.  
Laying an inclusive table  
These days have come

Hearts open,  
listenin' deeper  
To those who seem against us  
These days have come.  
Hearts open  
Listenin' deeper  
With the eyes of our hearts  
for Spirit in us, amongst us,  
These days have always been  
And will be again.

Lord of Laughter, Lord of Song,  
Braid our energies with yours, strong  
and open.



## The Tote Bag: NYYM Religious Education and Family Resources



### New! Hot off the presses!

"The Tote Bag: NYYM Religious Education and Family Resources" is an e-newsletter published quarterly by the Children and Youth Field Secretary. The Winter 2017 issue includes new curriculum resources for First Day programs, events and news for families, youth witness opportunities, and information about summer programs. The Spring 2017 issue will focus on resources and support for youth (middle/high school) in our meetings.

To read, share, and subscribe, please go to: <https://goo.gl/JicOc6>



Friends at Rochester Women's March. Photo from Molly Tornow-Coffee.



# New York Yearly Meeting Spring Sessions

Hosted by Long Island Quarterly Meeting

March 31-April 2, 2017

Friends Academy,  
270 Duck Pond Road, Locust Valley, NY 11560

**Registration Deadline: Friday, March 17, 2017**

Contact: Herb Lape 631-456-9081 or Elaine Learnard 631-513-2735

Contact for Children & Youth programs: Melinda Wenner Bradley 484-678-6508

Welcome! Long Island Quarterly Meeting welcomes everyone to Spring Sessions, to do the business of the Yearly Meeting and to expand the life and witness of our Society. This is an opportunity to bring our meeting's concerns to the attention of the Yearly Meeting and to report back the decisions of the sessions. We encourage as many Friends as possible to come and share the worship and the fellowship of the gathered Yearly Meeting.

**Programs for Children (Ages 4 to Grade 5) and Youth (Grades 6-12) will focus on the ways Friends in the past — and today — sought and continue to seek creation of the peaceable kingdom in our world.** We'll explore Quaker roots here on Long Island as well as witness in the world today. There will be mural painting, stories, songs, and a service project bringing together all ages. Both groups will focus on fellowship and community building, as well as joining the adult community for meals and worship. Teens in Grades 9-12 will have a program option to stay overnight at Matinecock Meeting both Friday and Saturday. Child-care will be provided for our youngest participants (infants to Age 3).

- Flyers and a more detailed schedule will be available on the NYYM website.
- Interested in signing up to be a Friendly Adult Presence or driver? Please contact [childrenandyouthfs@nyym.org](mailto:childrenandyouthfs@nyym.org)
- We require a **completed medical form** for each child attending a NYYM session. Find the form online or request a paper copy from the registrar. Youth Medical Form, <http://nyym.org/?q=SessionsCommittee>

F/friends are welcome to arrive on Friday and either to go directly to their host family or come to Westbury Meeting at 550 Post Ave. Westbury, NY 11590 any time after 4pm and take part in a simple meal at 6pm and a program that will finish up around 8pm. Those being met at airports will be brought to Westbury Monthly Meeting, where host families will meet you. The Host Committee asks that those requesting hospitality, pick-up, or childcare return their registration forms no later than March 17.

**Schedule, Agenda, and Advance Documents:** please visit [nyym.org](http://nyym.org) to view the schedule, agenda, and advance documents related to the agenda for Spring Sessions. They are also available for download in pdf format.

**Meals:** Meals and snacks will be provided by Friends Academy staff, including vegetarian, non-vegetarian, and vegan items. Lunch on Saturday and Sunday will cost \$11.00 each day and Saturday dinner will be \$14.25. We ask that participants indicate their food preferences on the registration form to aid the planning for meals.

**Sustainability:** We ask participants to consider their environmental impact when attending any NYYM gathering. Carpool with other local attendees, for instance, using the most fuel-efficient vehicle of the group. Bring a travel mug and water bottle with you—some even bring their own utensils and plates! Bring a warm sweater, so that we don't have to turn up the heat in the entire building for the comfort of only two or three people. Instead of printing out the advance documents, save them to your computer or tech device and read them electronically. If you do print them out, be sure to share! Return your nametag holder when you last leave the venue, so they can be used again. Whatever ways you can think of to lower your carbon footprint, reduce, and reuse, will be greatly appreciated.

**Hospitality:** Hospitality is available with local Friends for Friday and/or Saturday nights by request on a first-to-ask, first-assigned basis. A list of motels will be sent to anyone requesting this information on the registration form. Friends Academy is in a residential area, so that those using a motel would need their own transportation. You can contact our hospitality coordinator, Tom Bigda Peyton, 631-223-0863 [bigdapeyton@verizon.net](mailto:bigdapeyton@verizon.net), with questions or to let him know if you have made arrangements.

**Registration:** You may register in two ways:

**To register online:** download the registration form from our website (see links above), fill it out, and email it to [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org). Then determine the amount

(registration and meals plus any contribution to the Equalization Fund). You may pay electronically via our online credit card payment service at: <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=a73d2e>. Or you may mail your check to the Yearly Meeting office.

**To register by mail:** fill out the registration form and mail it to Helen Garay Toppins, NYYM Office, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003. Include a check payable to New York Yearly Meeting.

**The registration deadline is March 17, 2017.**

Registration fees are \$25 for adults 18 and older prior to March 17th, and \$35 thereafter; for youth 17 and younger, the fee is \$15 whether registered on time or late. However, please note that childcare will not be available for children registered after March 17th if there are no other children in their age group who have registered on time.

**Meeting Space and Display Space:** Requests for committee meeting space and display space should be directed to Steve Fortuna, [fortunasc75@gmail.com](mailto:fortunasc75@gmail.com), 917-991-2922. Please submit your request by the registration deadline, Friday, March 17, 2017.

**Program for Children (Age 4 to Grade 5):**

*Saturday 9am-12pm and 1:00-5:30pm; Sunday 9:00-11:45am*

A dynamic and fun program that will include an exploration of Edward Hicks' "Peaceable Kingdom" series and how we create peace today in our homes and communities. On Saturday afternoon, we'll join the older youth for a beach clean up (please bring gloves) and visit Council Rock in Oyster Bay where George Fox preached in 1672! We're going to play, create, sing and listen together ... and welcome a special guest joining us from 19th century Long Island.

**Program for Youth (Grades 6-12):**

*Saturday 9am-12pm, 1:00-5:30pm and 7-9pm; Sunday 9:00-11:45am*

The youth program will span the history of Quaker witness in the world from the Flushing Remonstrance to the individuals and organizations today working for peace and justice. We'll hear from a 19th century Long Island Friend, and members of the contemporary NYYM community about witness at Standing Rock and service to organizations like AFSC and FCNL. Youth will explore how they each feel called to bring the peaceable kingdom to our turbulent world. Saturday afternoon will include a service project (beach clean up—please bring gloves!) with younger Friends.

**Overnight Opportunity for High School:** Friday and Saturday evenings there will be a program and overnight for students in grades 9-12, at Matinecock Meeting (across from Friends Academy, at the corner of at Piping Rock and Duck Pond Roads in Locust Valley, NY). On Friday evening, youth are invited to attend the Flushing Remonstrance program at Westbury Meeting, and then will be shuttled to Matinecock Meeting for the overnight. On Saturday, there will be time for "self space" and homework, and we've been invited by Friends Academy faculty to gather around a firepit on campus. Sunday morning after breakfast they will join the community for Community Worship. Participants should bring sleeping bag, pillow, and whatever else they need to be comfortable sleeping on the floor. When teens register, a permission form will be sent to be filled out by a parent or guardian, and handed to adult leaders on arrival.

**Childcare:** The youngest children (through age 3) will be supervised in an early childhood classroom space at Friends Academy during the day on Saturday and Sunday until lunch. Parents are responsible for their children during meals. Please note your needs on the registration form. The form must be received by March 17th to reserve childcare arrangements.

**ONE NYYM Community:**

All ages of children and youth will join the gathered yearly meeting community at times in the weekend—for meals, and for worship. We'll begin together on Saturday morning for the roll call and opening worship, and on Sunday from 9:00-9:30 participate in multigenerational Community Worship before heading to Giant First Day School together.

**Transportation:**

**Airports:** See [nyym.org](http://nyym.org) for details.

**Driving:** Friends Academy is at 270 Duck Pond Road, Locust Valley, NY. For detailed driving directions please see [nyym.org](http://nyym.org).

**Train:** Long Island Rail Road from Penn Station via the Oyster Bay line to Locust Valley takes 1 hour 10 minutes. Friends can be met Saturday and Sunday morning. For more info see [nyym.org](http://nyym.org) and [www.mta.info/lirr](http://www.mta.info/lirr).

**Other!** For car service or any other travel information contact the host committee.

**Transportation Questions** including train station pick up contact David Sinclair, transportation coordinator, 516-398-7774.

## Registration for Spring Sessions 2017: March 31-April 2

**Westbury Meetinghouse on Friday evening  
Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY, on Saturday and Sunday**

REGISTRATION DEADLINE Friday, March 17th

Please return this form by email to [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org) or send by postal mail to Helen Garay Toppins, NYYM, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003. Make checks payable to New York Yearly Meeting; write "Spring Sessions 2017" on the memo line. You may also pay electronically on our website; look for a link on [www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org).

### ADULT REGISTRATION

<b>NAME</b>	
Address	
Home & cell phone	
Email address	
Meeting	

### HOSPITALITY

I would like home hospitality		Fri. night		Sat. night		Can bring sleeping bag
I would like to be housed with:						
Stairs a problem		Allergies		Smoker		
Special Needs:						
<b>MEALS</b>		Vegetarian		Gluten Free		
Saturday lunch		\$11.00				
Saturday dinner		\$14.25				
Sunday lunch		\$11.00				

### TRANSPORTATION

Please meet me as follows:	
Plane arrival	
Bus arrival	
Train arrival	
Departure day, time, location	

### REGISTRATION FEES

Registration	Amount
Adult Registration Fee (\$25 per adult until 3/17/17)	
Late Registration Fee (additional \$10 per adult)	
Meal Costs	
Contribution to NYYM Equalization Fund	
Assistance requested from NYYM Equalization Fund	
<b>Total</b>	

## Spring Sessions Schedule

### Friday—Westbury Meetinghouse

**4:00pm** Meeting House open  
**6:00-8pm** Simple dinner and program

### Saturday—Friends Academy

**8:00-9am** Registration, fellowship, and display set up, with bagels, coffee, etc.  
**9:00-9:45** Meeting for Worship (theatre)  
**10:00-11:45** Meeting for Worship with attention to the life of the Yearly Meeting (theatre)  
**12:00-1pm** Lunch and fellowship (cafeteria)  
**1:15-2:45** Meeting for Worship with attention to the life of the Yearly Meeting (theatre)  
**3:00-4:00** Committee meetings, session 1  
**4:15-5:15** Committee meetings, session 2  
**5:30-6:30** Dinner (cafeteria)  
**6:45-9:00** Coordinating Committee meetings

### Sunday—Friends Academy

**8:00-9am** Fellowship with bagels, coffee, etc.  
**9:00-10:00** Meeting for Worship (theatre)  
**10:15-11:45** Meeting for Worship with attention to the life of the Yearly Meeting (theatre)  
**12-1:30 pm** Bag Lunch and farewells  
**1:45-3:00** Optional committee meeting time

*\*Committee meeting space to be reserved by committee clerks*

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH REGISTRATION

<b>NAME</b>							<b>TEEN PROGRAM—Grades 9-12</b> (includes sleepovers at Friends Academy)					
Address							Name:		Age:		Grade:	
Home & cell phone							Fri sleepover	Sat AM	Sat PM	Sat eve	Sat sleepover	Sun AM
Email address												
<b>MEALS</b>	Vegetarian		Gluten Free									
<b>Will be eating the following meals:</b>	Sat lunch \$11 (under 12: \$6)		Sat dinner \$14 (under 12: \$7)		Sun lunch \$11 (under 12: \$6)		Name:		Age:		Grade:	
<b>CHILDCARE—Ages 0-3</b> Please provide my children with <b>childcare</b> for these times:							Fri sleepover	Sat AM	Sat PM	Sat eve	Sat sleepover	Sun AM
Name	Age	Sat AM	Sat PM	Sat eve	Sun AM							
						<b>My parent/guardian at Spring Sessions is:</b>						
						<b>REGISTRATION FEES</b>						
						<b>Youth Registration Rate (\$15 per child)</b>						
						<b>Meal fees</b>						
						<b>TOTAL</b>						