

CONSENT AGENDA (7 items)

1. We receive the report on Interim Actions from the New York Yearly Meeting Clerk and General Secretary. For questions or comments, contact Christopher Sammond or Lucinda Antrim.

Interim Actions Report, Summer Sessions 2017

In a minute approved at Fall Sessions 2014, the Yearly Meeting directed the NYYM clerk and general secretary to represent the Yearly Meeting between sessions, when the occasion for giving the Yearly Meeting a public voice seems urgent and appropriate.

Since Spring Sessions 2017 the New York Yearly Meeting clerk and general secretary have two items on which to report:

- A. We were directed by the body to write a letter to Governor Cuomo requesting that he oppose the proposed restrictions on prison visitation. We did not get this done before that bill was defeated.
- B. We wrote a letter (copied below) to Britain Yearly Meeting on the occasion of terror attacks in Britain. We received a response from Paul Parker (also copied below).

New York Yearly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
15 Rutherford Place
New York, NY 10003

Dear Friends in Britain Yearly Meeting,

Our hearts and prayers go out to you in this time of repeated assaults on your nation, assaults consciously intended to turn the hearts of your land from love and tolerance to fear, alienation, and hatred. We are moved by the capacity of the British people to choose love over fear, and open hearts over a desire for vengeance. Your witness is a telling testimony to the world as to the possibility to live out Jesus' admonitions to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us.

We imagine that while we hear of British resolve to not lose your principles or your commitment to an open society despite these vicious attacks, that there are many advocating for draconian measures to try to ensure the safety of your citizens. We stand with you as you discern how to respond to the latter, and how to be a voice for the Inner Light residing in all hearts.

We grieve for those lost and for those injured. We pray for healing peace for the survivors and for the families and loved ones of all. We join you in unceasing openness to peace, and when we are led through the valley of the shadow of death we continue in trust to dwell in the house of the Lord.

In peace,

Christopher Sammond, General Secretary
Lucinda Antrim, Presiding Clerk

The response:

Dear Christopher and Lucinda

Greetings from the UK! It is good to hear from you. Thank you for this powerful message, which I will share with Friends in London and elsewhere in our yearly meeting.

It is good to know we have been in the thoughts of New York Friends. Whilst I'm not aware of any Friends being affected directly by the events in London or Manchester, it's certain that the continued sense of threat, and the sharp increase in armed uniformed officers on our streets by way of 'response' is concerning and alarming Friends.

This morning we are reflecting on an election result which has left us with a hung parliament and no party in overall control. Far from being seen as an opportunity for a more consensual politics, this is likely to lead to bitter conflict and recriminations, and it would not be surprising to have another election before long. Our country is deeply divided over economic policy and Brexit, and there is much healing work to be done.

It is good to know we are held in the light by you, as you are by us in difficult time for the US too.

Hoping all is well with you, nevertheless.

in Friendship

mewn cyfeillgarwch

Paul

Paul Parker
Recording Clerk
Quakers in Britain
Friends House
173 Euston Road

Paul Parker
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- 2.** We approve the slate of nominations as proposed by the Nominating Committee. For questions or comments, contact Elaine Learnard.

(Please view the nominations on the bulletin board on the Inn porch and at nyym.org.)

- 3.** We receive the report from our representatives to the New York State Council of Churches, Lucinda Antrim and Sara Niccoli. For questions or comments, contact Sara Niccoli or Lucinda Antrim.

Report from NYYM Representatives to the New York State Council of Churches

New York Yearly Meeting has two representatives to the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC), usually the Clerk or immediate past Clerk and one other individual; for the past several years this has been Sara Niccoli. NYSCOC is active under the direction of Peter Cook. Particularly exciting is the increased emphasis on gathering and disseminating New York State legislative information and alerts, an effort analogous on the state level to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, an organization that receives high praise from other members of the NYS Council of Churches.

Their work covers issues from housing to incarceration to re-entry from prison. Here are two examples of suggested NYSCOC actions item from March and May 2017:

ACTION - RAISE THE AGE

The New York State Council of Churches reluctantly supports the Assembly version believing it still should include more kids including those with violent felonies. It should work with those excluded kids in the family court system where prospects of restoration are exceptionally higher than in the adult system. We urge people to see what is proposed by the Senate and then call their legislators and ask that they commit to the Assembly version and do nothing to water down the proposal any further.

ACTION – COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Join in the fight against modern-day slavery today by asking your state representatives in the New York State Senate and Assembly to support groundbreaking and crucial legislation on human trafficking. The New York Senate and Assembly have introduced

legislation (S.5955/ A.06834) to lessen the prevalence of human trafficking in hotels and put systems in place to identify and protect victims.

If you or your committee would like to receive these alerts, please contact nyscoc@aol.com or pcook@nyscoc.org.

There are at least two other members of the New York State Council of Churches with constituencies that cross state lines, so New York Yearly Meeting is not alone in that respect and the Council is aware of this.

Also exciting are the efforts of the NYSCOC to nurture spirit-led leadership and to bridge the urban-rural divide. Their first annual "Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide" Conference will be held July 18th - 20th, 2017 in Johnstown, NY.

The group does good, faithful, spirit-led work and those of us who attend the meetings are heartened by them.

REPORT FROM NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The New York State Council of Churches is very pleased to report on our activities in 2016 and 2017. In an era where resources are more limited, we are passionate about the value of ecumenism and working together. We see ourselves, in many ways, as a networker and a "dot connector" to help our partners know what each other is doing while helping congregations offer the Gospel in our communities, state and nation. We are keenly interested in the process of encouraging people to grow as disciples for Jesus Christ. In this spirit, we want to offer tools and perspectives which invite people to humbly engage the struggles of this world, listen to people's real struggles and seek to point to the promised kingdom of God on earth by offering comfort and doing justice. For us, pastoral care is not just an individual matter. It is about creating laws and policies which do not discriminate and offer hope. We think this work is effectively done in an ecumenical way.

Our purpose and work can be found in the following mission statement:

New York State Council of Churches, embracing a spirit of ecumenism and hospitality, seeks to live into God's call to do justice and to love our neighbor. Pointing to the Kingdom of God on earth, we envision a world where the marginalized are freed from poverty, where prisoners can be restored to live happier and healthier lives, and where we help young people grow in their Christian discipleship.

To live into our purpose and vision, we have three foci:

We promote faith formation opportunities for high school students and young adults.

On February 20 to 22, we sponsored our annual high school trip to the United Nations. 37 high school students from across the state participated in a seminar on Islamophobia led by United Methodist Women. We explored the dynamics of stereotyping and the root causes of prejudice. The session included a tutorial on Islam and an exploration of how we can testify to our faith by

countering discrimination in our communities. We are grateful to Christy D'Ambrosio, Director of Christian Education at First Presbyterian Church in Albany, for coordinating the trip. Our next trip is scheduled for February 19 to 21, 2018 and we welcome high school applicants across the state. We also seek to help young people live out their faith by doing justice and we promote materials and experiences to help people grow in their discipleship.

We certify and support chaplains in our state prison system and other state institutions.

We certify Protestant chaplains for the state. Certification is necessary before one can be interviewed by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) and other state agencies. The Council is grateful for a grant from the Upper New York United Methodist Social Holiness Team to support and certify chaplains in our state correctional system. The grant supports our regular visits of chaplains and to develop a longer term care plan. As of March, 2017, 19 chaplains have been visited. The Council also sponsors an annual chaplain's conference focused on helping chaplains do ministry in a pluralistic society. The Council always seeks fully ordained clergy with parish ministry experience to apply for certification since we anticipate vacancies in the coming years.

We help local churches and judicatories work ecumenically on a grassroots level to collaborate with other religious and secular partners to do justice

The Council of Churches received a grant from the Social Holiness Team, Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church to help us develop collaborations across the state to engage local congregations and judicatories and secular entities in doing social justice ministries. Collaborations include bringing people together in a region, offering theological reflection, and providing tools to advocate on pending legislation or change state laws. New collaborations will emerge as needs arise.

Collaborations include:

1. Creating a network of congregations and denominations to aid reentry from prison. The network focuses on creation of a website to resource people and an annual conference at Stoney Point on October 27 and 28. Part of our advocacy included successfully calling on the Governor and the legislature to no longer prosecute and incarcerate 16 and 17 year olds as adults.
2. Working with the Collegiate churches, Enterprise Partners, Presbytery of New York City, the Interfaith Coalition and many other partners, The Council is creating a collaboration where congregations in New York can meet with impartial experts to explore how they can advocate for supportive or affordable housing in New York City and/or build such housing themselves. Learnings from this collaboration will be shared with collaborations in other parts of the state. The Council is working with many partners to advocate for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to release 1.9 billion for supportive and affordable housing. We have also advocated for the support of the Home Stability Supportive Act to keep people in their homes who find they cannot keep up with rising rents.

3. We built bridges of understanding through a conference: "Bridging the Rural-Urban Divide, July 18 to 20 at Fulton Montgomery Community College in Johnstown.
4. We worked closely with the Labor-Religion Coalition to strengthen ties with labor unions and have lent our support to people on strike (Verizon, Momentive and Honeywell)
5. Moving towards a clean energy economy. We have been one of 100 co-sponsors of the New York Renews movement which is advocating for the Climate and Community Restoration Act. We believe this Act will increase well paying jobs as we build out a clean energy infrastructure in our state.
6. We support efforts to guard New Yorker's health by helping people understand the implications of repeal and replace plans of the Affordable Care Act and to advocate as appropriate.
7. We support efforts of our denominational partners to address discrimination against immigrants, people of color and those of other faiths. We believe that our efforts complement the work done by high school students who have participated in United Nations programs focusing on Islamophobia and racism.

The Council wishes to thank our denominational partners for their financial assistance, along with churches, individuals, labor unions and other organizations who have offered grants and contributions. We continue to need financial support to sustain our ministries.

In faith,

Peter Cook
Executive Director

- 4.** We receive the report from the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee.
For questions or comments, contact Jeffrey Aaron or Caroline Lane.

Report on Meeting for Discernment Summer Sessions 2017

Friends speak of our Sunday meetings for worship as a time to sit quietly with Friends of like mind and shared values, a time to be inspired by heartfelt messages. It is a regular opportunity for renewal for Friends, for being at peace and for uplift and healing in an otherwise chaotic world.

Meetings for discernment serve the same purpose, but they also provide extended time for deepening, for sharing with Friends new and old, new in the sense of being new to us as individuals, but all having come with intention, many from substantial distance. New in the sense of sitting in a new place, in meeting houses we may otherwise never

before have visited, or perhaps sitting in our own meeting house with the pride and joy of sharing it with dozens of new visitors.

Friends, meetings for discernment do not disappoint! They are a time of intentional sharing, a time to experience the warm feelings that are always part of the experience of intervisitation. Unfortunately, it is beyond the capacity of your Steering Committee to hold more than one event per year plus the gathering during our summer sessions, but for those who manage to attend, the expressions of gratitude and joy are normally heartfelt and universal. After the winter gathering, faces of the participants are always lighted, both as participants as a whole and from the members of the host meetings whose special experience is always a joyful role, even if there are arrangement difficulties. The Steering Committee tries to provide this opportunity to meetings in all of our regions. We welcome hosting requests from meetings whose meetinghouses can hold up to 100 or so Friends.

This past winter, we were greatly pleased to bring our winter event to the beautiful and historic Poplar Ridge meetinghouse in the wonderful Finger Lakes area of Farmington-Scipio region. Despite difficult weather conditions, conflicting events and long travel distances for many Friends, there were more than 50 Friends many of whom reported an experience that was wonderfully uplifting, at least according to the many messages of joy that followed our sessions.

In turbulent times, when Friends sometimes struggle to rise above despair, it is critical to many of us to share in the important and uplifting good works that Friends do together, and to sit in peaceful contemplation at least weekly to renew our spirits and know that we are never alone, as long as we have our beloved Friends, our beloved Society. We recommend that you watch for the announcement where the next winter gathering will occur, and make an effort to share this blessed experience. In this turbulent world, it will do you good; we promise!

At this year's sessions we anticipate that Nathaniel Corwin will be released from service on the Steering Committee, at his request, and Beverly Archibald, class of 2017, will be nominated for a new term in the class of 2020.

- 5.** We approve that the New York Yearly Meeting Clerk sign Christopher Sammond's travel minute. For questions or comments, contact Lucinda Antrim.

(scroll down for scan of minute)

Poplar Ridge Friends Meeting
1868 Poplar Ridge Road, Poplar Ridge, NY 13139
(315) 364-8634

Travel Minute for Christopher Sammond
April 23, 2017

Christopher Sammond, a member of Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting, carries a long-standing concern about deepening the faith and practice of Friends, especially with respect to the gathered worship experience and vocal ministry, and he has acted on this concern in a variety of ways and in many venues. Years ago, in seminary, Christopher applied for a residency in Clinical Pastoral Education, because, to use his own words, "I knew by then that I craved working with those who really wanted to find a deeper path to God."

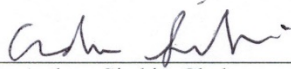
In his service to New York Yearly Meeting as our General Secretary, Christopher recognized and named the spiritual gifts of those within the Yearly Meeting and beyond, releasing them not only to deepen their own Quaker faith and practice, but often strengthening the monthly meetings to which they belong. He led workshops and facilitated retreats in deepening worship, in vocal ministry and, most recently, in welcoming the "other" in ourselves, our meetings and in the wider world.

Christopher rejoices in the gathering of diversified Friends in the unity of worship and in the spiritual nurture of individuals and groups. Again, in his own words, "Inviting Friends into deeper contact with the Inward Teacher ... and creating a container for a group to open powerfully to the presence of the Holy Spirit has been my greatest joy."

As Christopher prepares to lay down his service as NYYM's General Secretary in July, 2017, we support him as he travels to act on this long-standing and deeply held concern. He will continue this work with faith communities within and beyond New York Yearly Meeting, traveling with an elder whenever possible.

A care and accountability committee, under Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting's Ministry and Counsel, is charged with the support of Christopher's ministry. The committee meets at regular intervals with Christopher to listen, test and discern where his ministry lies and how it is proceeding.

We expect to revisit this travel minute within one year.



Andrew Simkin, Clerk

4/30/2017

Date

6. We receive the Comprehensive Treasurer's Report. For questions or comments, contact John Cooley or Fred Dettmer.

(Please see report under Advance Documents at www.nyym.org)

7. We have completed the first reading of the Audit Committee's Handbook page revision. For questions or comments, contact John Cooley.

Audit Committee

[Proposed Handbook Revision – 2017]

AUDIT COMMITTEE (2017)

History

The Audit Committee was established at Representative Meeting held December 6, 1980. Its purpose was to provide an annual review of the financial records of each Yearly Meeting committee. At Yearly Meeting sessions in 2001, a new Audit Committee was named and asked to articulate a new statement of purpose, which would reflect several changes in the Yearly Meeting's fiscal management and reporting practices. These changes included a sharp reduction in the number of Yearly Meeting committees that maintained their own accounts and records, and a decision by the Yearly Meeting that all its financial accounts and records should be professionally audited. In 2017, further changes were made in the Audit Committee composition and operations to support a consolidated audit covering both Trustee and Treasurer Managed Accounts, and to bring the Yearly Meeting financial procedures into consistency with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Purposes and Objectives

Working with the Yearly Meeting treasurer and the treasurer of the Yearly Meeting's trustees, the Audit Committee will assure the Yearly Meeting that its consolidated financial accounts, records, procedures, controls, and reports are periodically reviewed and audited by competent outside professionals in the field of accounting, and will interpret the findings and recommendations of the resulting accountant's or auditor's report(s) to the Yearly Meeting.

Functions & Activities

1. Advise the Yearly Meeting on the recommended schedule and scope of review or audit activities.

2. Recruit and recommend an appropriate firm or individual professional to carry out the services recommended.
3. Review and advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the appropriate engagement letter or contract.
4. Coordinate the planning and execution of the accountant's or auditor's work with the treasurers, bookkeepers, and other fiscal officers whose accounts, controls, or procedures are being examined.
5. Receive and review a draft of the professional's findings and recommendations.
6. Advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the timing and method of reporting to the Yearly Meeting (It is anticipated that custom will be followed in reporting an auditor's findings or opinions to the full governing body – in our case the membership – and that the widest practical exposure among those affected will be given to the auditor's recommendations to management.)
7. Advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the release of payment for professional services under the terms of the engagement.
8. Evaluate the performance of those engaged for professional accounting or auditing services and advise on their suitability for future retention.
9. Help interpret professional findings and recommendations to the treasurers, bookkeepers, other fiscal officers, and others whose work may be affected by those recommendations.

The General Services Coordinating Committee retains its authority to contract and compensate professional services as recommended by the committee or, at its own discretion, to request or act on another recommendation. It also retains its responsibility for the ongoing oversight of financial policies, plans, operations, controls, and systems within the Yearly Meeting organization and for overseeing the adoption and implementation of any recommendations arising out of a financial review or audit. **Financial initiatives, changes, or procedural matters involving the Yearly Meeting Trust Funds will require prior approval of the Yearly Meeting Trustees before action by the General Services Coordinating Committee.**

Organization & Method of Appointment

The Audit Committee should consist of no fewer than three members, appointed one each year by the Yearly Meeting at the recommendation of the Nominating Committee or Trustees for rotating terms of three years. **One member of the Audit Committee will be nominated by the Yearly Meeting Trustees; this nominee may not be the Treasurer of the Trustees. The Assistant Treasurer shall also serve as a Liaison member of the Audit Committee.** No member of the Audit Committee should concurrently serve as Treasurer of the Yearly Meeting, as a member of the Financial Services Committee, or as an officer **or-trustee** of any board or committee whose accounts and records are subject to a direct review or audit supervised by the Audit Committee. Members of committees whose work focuses on the allocation or distribution of funds for which management is not under their direct control are not precluded from serving, but they may want to consider the potential for conflict **of interest** before agreeing to serve.

While not a requirement for appointment, it would be helpful if members of the committee brought some previous experience working with business, nonprofit, or public-sector audits, as well as some familiarity with the Yearly Meeting's management and fiscal operations.

The Audit Committee will appoint its own clerk, as well as name a representative to the General Services Coordinating Committee.