

Spring Sessions

April 9-11, 2021

Online via Zoom

Saturday morning, April 10, 2021

*Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Clerk
Robin Gowin (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Matthew Scanlon (Scarsdale), Assistant Clerk
Lucy (Lu) Harper (Rochester), Recording Clerk
Robin Alpern (Amawalk), Reading Clerk*

2021-04-01. Friends gathered into a period of waiting worship.

2021-04-02. Out of worship, Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley) read an [acknowledgment of the original inhabitants of this land](#), attached.

2021-04-03. The Clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerk's table and asked the tech team to introduce themselves.

2021-04-04. Robin Alpern (Amawalk) read the roll. Friends turned off their video, and then turned it back on when their meeting's name was read.

2021-04-05. Laura Cisar (New Brunswick) presented the [2020 Year End Treasurer's report](#). Meeting contributions were higher than anticipated. The fiscal year ended with a surplus of \$49,251.56, and with balances of \$385,957.12 in the Operating Reserve, \$57,851.28 in the Sharing Fund and \$171,780.92 in the Designated Use Funds. The Invested Trust Fund value at the end of December was \$7,505.296 with gains across donor restricted, NYYM designated and unrestricted funds. Laura shared contributions to other organizations named in the operating budget (\$87,300), designated by the Lindley Murray Fund (\$28,968) and contributions to member organizations (\$750).

2021-04-06. Laura Cisar presented the [March 2021 Treasurer's Report](#). The Paycheck Protection Program loan was paid off. At the end of March income exceeded disbursements by \$9,832.86. Fund balances were \$395,789.98 in the Operating Reserve, \$41,085.50 in the Sharing Fund and \$77,432.96 in the Designated Use Funds. Contributions designated by the Lindley Murray Fund of \$32,358 were awarded in March 2021. Laura reviewed Sharing Fund and Designated Use Fund contributions disbursed to date.

2021-04-07. Helen Mullin, clerk of the Yearly Meeting Membership Subcommittee of Ministry & Pastoral Care Committee, reported that Bryant Edmond Henning has been received into membership as an At-Large Member of NYYM, our first such at-large member. In [the report](#)

(attached), she detailed the committee's steps in this new process & noted that Ministry & Pastoral Care Committee in conjunction with Ministry Coordinating Committee will clarify responsibilities for next steps, which include welcoming Bryant and matching him with an accompanying Friend or Friends for the first two years of his membership.

2021-04-08. Friends welcomed Bryant as our first at-large member. In response to a question, the Membership subcommittee feels it could now receive applications from incarcerated Friends. Friends spoke of the opening this change has brought, and acknowledged the faithful work of many Friends in bringing about at-large membership.

2021-04-09. Lu Harper (Rochester) read the minutes to this point. Friends approved.

2021-04-10. General Secretary Steve Mohlke (Ithaca) reported on [Interim Actions](#) taken by the Clerk and General Secretary between Fall and Spring Sessions, attached: a letter to NY governor Andrew Cuomo requesting early release of elderly incarcerated people and vaccination prioritization for incarcerated people and NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCSS) staff; a letter to CT governor Ned Lamont opposing construction of the Killingly Energy Center; and a statement and press release about anti-Asian violence.

2021-04-11. Powell House youth directors Sarah and Martin Glazer (Rochester) reported on current Powell House programs and particularly the [Powell House Youth Program](#). (Report is attached.) While Zoom fatigue is a factor in low registration, efforts have also been made to connect youth as pen pals.

2021-04-12. Mary Brown, clerk of the Powell House Committee, reported on the initial phase of [Powell House's capital campaign](#), attached.

2021-04-13. Lu Harper (Rochester) reported on behalf of Ministry Coordinating Committee (MCC) that Elizabeth (Beth) Kelly (Brooklyn) has been recorded in the ministry. Friends celebrated Beth's gifts of spiritual accompaniment as demonstrated in her ongoing service in Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, New York Quarter, and with Young Adult Friends, as well as in her professional life as a hospital chaplain. In her interactions with others, Beth shows a depth of concern and thoughtfulness that has been demonstrated in her support for the families of COVID patients, in her participation on the Young Adult Field Secretary's support committee and as a mentor in the Young Adult Mentorship program.

2021-04-14. Lu Harper read the minutes to this point. Friends approved.

2021-04-15. Deb Wood (Purchase) brought a request from Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC) to direct the yearly meeting clerk and General Secretary to sign the petition to [formally end the Korean War](#). (Request is attached.) WCC has already signed the petition. The [text of the petition](#) was read. Friends approved directing the yearly meeting clerk and General Secretary to sign the petition. WCC will reach out to Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) to confirm they are familiar with this petition, inform the yearly meeting of their understanding and position on

it, and forward the petition with informational material to monthly meetings. Friends approved the minute.

2021-04-16. The morning session closed at 11:49 a.m. after a brief period of worship.

Online via Zoom
Saturday afternoon, April 10, 2021

*Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Clerk
Robin Gowin (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Matthew Scanlon (Scarsdale), Assistant Clerk
Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale), Recording Clerk
Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk*

2021-04-17. Friends gathered into a period of worship beginning with a “Meeting for Feelings,” and continuing into silent worship. Clerk Elaine Learnard introduced herself and the other clerks. The members of the tech support team introduced themselves.

2021-04-18. June Tano (Morningside Meeting) read the attached [epistle](#) from Japan Yearly Meeting. The theme of their gathering was: "May your love grow ever richer in the power of knowing and discerning, and may you be able to discern what is truly important (Philippians 1:9-10)." Friends in Japan, like Friends everywhere, are finding ways to worship and connect with each other, while attempting to prevent the spread of infection.

2021-04-19. Laura Cisar brought a minute from the Earthcare and Climate Justice Working Groups for consideration. Human activity is causing catastrophic effects including habitat destruction, pollution of air, soil and water, resource depletion, species extinction, global warming, and new forms of disease that cross the human/non-human barrier. The minute calls on Friends individually to evaluate their lifestyles to limit the harm they cause. More importantly, however, Friends are called to work collectively with others. The working group asks that the yearly meeting endorse the minute to remind ourselves of the importance of Earthcare and climate justice.

Some Friends expressed concern about the language of the minute, especially use of the word “should.” Others emphasized the urgency of work to limit climate change and called for immediate approval. After a period of ministry, Friends endorsed the intent of the minute and asked a group of Friends to bring back tomorrow a revised version incorporating the concerns with language which were expressed today. If they are not able to come to a satisfactory revision overnight, they will bring it back to Summer Sessions.

2021-04-20. James Ralston brought a [minute](#) on Federal legislation on carbon pricing from the Climate Justice Working Group for our consideration. The working group suggests that the yearly meeting endorse the position of the FCNL on carbon pricing, which is spelled out in the minute. He also announced two webinars on lobbying members of Congress on matters related

to climate. The working group would appreciate it if the clerk and general secretary would send the minute, in the context of a letter, to the six senators from New York, NJ, and CT, and the representatives in the Congress as well. Individual Friends and monthly meetings are invited to do the same. The meeting approved endorsing this minute.

The minutes were approved to this point.

2021-04-21. Pamela Wood brought the attached [minute](#) from Morningside Monthly Meeting, New York Quarterly Meeting and Witness Coordinating Committee on timely parole, which is asking the Meeting to consider endorsing it. The bill provides that if a person's record in prison is good and the person does not evince a current and unreasonable risk to the safety of members of the community outside prison, the person should be granted parole as a matter of course once they are eligible for parole. Pamela recommends sending letters from individual Friends to members of the state legislature in support of this bill. The minute was approved.

2021-04-22. Pamela Wood brought the attached [minute](#) on elder parole from Morningside Meeting and New York Quarter, and revised by Witness Coordinating Committee with the request that the Meeting consider endorsing it. The bill provides that all people aged 55 years or older who have served 15 years or more in prison would become eligible for parole consideration. The WCC requests that letters of support of this bill be sent to the same legislators mentioned in the previous minute by the clerk and other individual Friends. This minute also was approved.

2021-04-23. Jens Braun reported that the move of the Committee on Sufferings from the Ministry to the Witness Coordinating Committee has now been approved by both coordinating committees. A [new Handbook page](#) (attached) for the Sufferings Committee was presented for a first reading. The page redefines the purpose of the Fund, and includes a Liaison for the Fund for Sufferings. The functions of the Liaison are listed in the Handbook page.

2021-04-24. Karen Snare, reading clerk, read the attached [travel minute](#) for Cai Quirk; the Meeting was asked to endorse it. Cai carries a concern for removing barriers to welcome. Through photography, storytelling, music, vocal ministry, writing, and workshops, Cai opens doors to fresh perspectives and ways of seeing the world and each other. They have particular experience and calling to ministry at the intersections of spirituality and gender diversity; both are places of fluidity and liminality. The meeting approves endorsement of the minute by the clerk.

The minutes were approved to this point.

2021-04-25. The meeting adjourned after a minute of settling.

Online via Zoom
Sunday afternoon, April 11, 2021

Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Clerk
Robin Gowin (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Matthew Scanlon (Scarsdale), Assistant Clerk
Laura Higgins (Wilton), Recording Clerk
Barbra Bleecker (Montclair), Reading Clerk

2021-04-26. Friends gathered into a period of waiting worship.

2021-04-27. The Clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerk's table and asked the tech team to introduce themselves.

2021-04-28. Laura Cisar read the revised [Earthcare Minute](#), attached. Friends gave ministry on the minute. Friends approved this minute. Friends spoke strongly about the hope and need that the minute be disseminated as widely as possible. The Climate Justice Working Group will post the Earthcare Minute on their page at nym.org and on the NYYM Climate Justice Facebook page. Other friends mentioned ways they will share the minute. Clerk and General Secretary are directed to share the Earthcare Minute and [Federal Carbon Tax Minute](#) (see minute 2021-04-20) widely to the Quaker communities and other yearly meetings.

2021-04-29. Announcement of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation by Roseann Press, Clerk of NYYM Trustees. Our Bylaws require an announcement with 60 days notice. One session during Summer Sessions will be so designated as the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

2021-04-30. [Seasoned Business Items List](#)

The Seasoned Business Items list is published in advance with an expectation of approval without discussion at an upcoming business session. These are items that the Clerk believes need a decision or need to be recorded in our minutes but do not require any consideration during the business session. These items have been available for at least two weeks. Clerk noted that second reading of the Handbook pages for the [Sessions Committee](#) (see minute 2020-07-27) and [Lindley Murray](#) (attached) were on the Seasoned Business Items list and are, therefore, approved.

2021-04-31. From the Seasoned Business Items list, the nominations to serve and releases are:

Nominations to Serve:

Friends United Meeting Representatives to Virtual Triennial

Mabel Ilusa Kidiga	Manhattan	class of 2021
Regine Ndanga	Christ is the Answer Friends Church	class of 2021
Christian K. Ntochibwa	Christ is the Answer Friends Church	class of 2021
Karen Peissenger	Buffalo (attender)	class of 2021

Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee

Guelmy Neris	Montclair (attender)	class of 2023
Patrick Shelton	YAF/Northside, Chicago (attender)	class of 2023

General Services CC:

Lindley Murray Committee

Jeanine Laverty	Easton	class of 2023
Anthony Smith	New Brunswick	class of 2023

NYYM Board of Trustees

Keith Johnson ('15)	Chatham-Summit	class of 2024
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Releases/Resignations:

Committee on Conflict Transformation

David Fletcher ('19)	Morningside	class of 2022
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Development

Bryan Wigfall ('19)	Morningside	class of 2022
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Nominations Committee now has an email address, which is nominating@nyym.org

Nominating Committee requests Friends from Nine Partners and All Friends come forward, because they are not represented on the Committee.

2021-04-32. Jill McLellan (Buffalo) gave the **Nominating Committee Report Addendum of releases/resignations that are not in the Seasoned Business Items:**

Friends World Committee on Consultation

Sarah Glazer ('18)	Rochester	class of 2021
Bryan Wigfall ('20)	Morningside	class of 2023

2021-04-33. **One additional nomination to General Services Coordinating Committee for the Lindley Murray Committee is:**

Lisa Bateman	Fifteenth St.	class of 2022
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The nomination was approved.

2021-04-34. Emily Provance (eprovince@hotmail.com) (15th St.) presented a report on a summary of actions by Friends United Meeting (FUM).

Ramallah Friends School is now 150 years old and has a new Head of School Rania P. Maayah. Rania is Palestinian and an alumna of the school. Partly because of COVID, the school is having a difficult financial time.

Belize Friends Center (a community center) in Belize City. There is a school within the center. Oscar Mmbali, pastoral minister, Belize Friends Church and Nikki Holland, Director of Belize Friends Ministries operate the Center.

Friends Theological College is in Kenya and has had multiple openings and closing, ultimately going virtual, because of COVID. COVID is having a resurgence in Kenya and the College had to close again.

Lugulu Mission Friends Hospital is committed to treating all people regardless of ability to pay. Maternal Care and HIV/AIDS are large ministries for the hospital.

There are three ways we can grow closer to FUM, if interested:

- International prayer meetings on Zoom every other Friday.
- Stoking the Fire, May 21-23, will be a virtual North American retreat to go deeper in connection with Spirit. [Registration link](http://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/connect/stoking-the-fire).
(www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/connect/stoking-the-fire)
- Triennial, June 17-19 also will be virtual. The first day offers the chance to hear a wide variety of Friends on the ministries.

Samburu Friends Mission and Turkana Friends Mission are small efforts with huge impacts serving pastoral people in Kenya. They emphasize educating girls to combat poverty. Together both projects require \$5000 per month to operate and are frequently short of funds.

2021-04-35. The [Personnel Committee report](#), attached, was presented by Steve Mohlke (Ithaca). Two projects were funded to support families and young children. Joy Meikle, has been leading a Meeting for Feelings focused on young children every Friday since last Fall. The other project funded from that initiative was a series of Parent Support Groups organized by Emily Provance. We know that parents have been hit very hard and participants have expressed a great deal of gratitude for these groups. In addition, Marissa Badgley continues her part time work with nurturing young adults.

In November, NYYM approved a budget with \$100,000 for supporting children, youth and young adults. That budget expects \$20,000 in contributions this year from individuals and meetings to the new CYYA (Children, Youth & Young Adult) Fund. In the March Treasurer's Report, we saw that there have been \$1,400 in contributions to date. There are quite a few people, including many young adults, who have contributed to this fund.

The committee and the General Secretary are still in discernment about how to proceed with that funding. New requests for proposals to engage children, teens and families were issued last week. The goal is to invite creativity to try new ideas right away. Seeing what works and what doesn't will help inform our longer term plans.

2021-04-36. Barbra Bleecker (Montclair) Reading Clerk read the [Travel Minute](#) from Brooklyn Monthly Meeting that the meeting will be asked to consider endorsing for Mahayana Landowne, attached. Brooklyn Monthly Meeting has united with Mahayana (Yana) Landowne's discernment that she is called to travel and share her gifts in ministry. She uses movement, interactive performances, and playfulness to engage individuals and communities in new perspectives. Her ministry opens us to fresh ways of engaging with the joys and sorrows of this modern world, through a faithful, spiritual, and joyful lens.

Friends directed the Clerk to endorse this travel minute.

2021-04-37. Dawn Pozzi (Rochester) gave the report from the Sessions Committee. One hundred fifty nine people (22 Young Adults) registered for Spring Sessions. Next event is Summer Sessions. July 25-31 will be the core week, hosting such main events as worship sharing, plenary, meetings for business, and Bible study. Saturday, July 24 is Meeting for Discernment. Interest Groups will be held throughout the weeks before the core week, starting July 9. These will be announced in the NYYM Weekly Update. JYM will not offer Zoom meetings during the core week.

2021-04-38. Laura Higgins Recording Clerk read the minutes. Friends approved.

ATTACHMENTS

Acknowledgement of the Original Inhabitants

(See minute 2021-04-02)

We humbly acknowledge that we, in New York Yearly Meeting, live on stolen land; whether it was the land of the Matinecock and Shinnecock on the eastern shores, the Lenni Lenape in the south, The Haudenosaunee to the west, the Abenaki to the north or many others who took care and shelter in the thousands of miles of these broad, fertile lands, forests, and waters.

These peoples, with their tradition of hospitality, welcomed us as guests to these, their lands. Many of us did not know how to share and our greed caused us to take and take and take until there was almost nothing left for our hosts.

In spite of this, their strength and resiliency have enabled them to regain their presence and to be an example of the need for connection. Their ongoing care and stewardship of this land and their communities is a timeless spiritual practice and model for sustainable living.

May we have learned in the several hundred years of living on this continent, the abundance that is still here, the meaning of enough, the hospitality that is still offered by our hosts, and respond in gratitude for their enduring love and the care of this land. May we join them in loving care for Earth and each other that will take us into the future.

Report from the Memberships Subcommittee of Ministry and Pastoral Care (M&PC)

(See minute 2021-04-07)

Membership Request and Process for Bryant Edmond Henning

The Membership Subcommittee's work was a journey along an uncharted road. Being faithful to our Quaker principles, and the guidelines in Faith and Practice, we began our accompaniment with Bryant and were ever trustful of the Spirit's guidance. Our journey was filled with joy at welcoming a new member. With tender love and prayer for Bryant Henning we moved forward with the understanding that what we were undertaking was new and would set a precedent for future applicants.

We are certainly aware that our process can and most likely will be adjusted over time.

The nuts and bolts of how Bryant became NYYM's first at-large is noted here: New York Yearly Meeting Office forwarded the membership request from Bryant Edmond Henning to the clerk of the Membership Subcommittee; it was received on June 8, 2020. The Membership Subcommittee met, discussed our process, and convened a clearness committee: Don Badgley, Chris DeRoller, Regina Haag, Mary Pagurelias, and Jennifer Swann. They met with Bryant on October 25, 2020 and November 4, 2020.

On November 13, 2020, the clearness committee met without Bryant present, and affirmed Bryant's readiness and clearness to become the first at-large member of New York Yearly Meeting. A copy of the clearness committee's report and Bryant's letter are attached.

On November 14, 2020, the clearness committee presented its report to the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee where the report was accepted and forwarded by M&PC's clerk to Ministry Coordinating Committee and NYYM so that Bryant would be recorded as the first at large membership.

At the Coordinating Committee weekend on January, 30, 2021, Jan Phillips, co-clerk of M&PC, presented that "Bryant Henning has been added as the first yearly meeting member, under the additional path to membership approved by the yearly meeting."

At this point, the Membership Subcommittee feels that it's work is done. We had been faithful to the process and the applicant. We created a flow chart to help us to be clear about which committee is responsible for which of our steps (flow chart is attached).

Additional Clarity is needed in these regards:

1. When the report of the clearness was sent by co-clerk of M&PC, Jennifer Swann, to the clerk of Ministry Coordinating Committee in late December 2020, we were informed that there were additional steps in the membership process that had been approved by MCC in 2019. These steps were not included in the approved Faith and Practice revisions. Here are those steps:
 - a. "On final approval, the new member is welcomed appropriately and is matched with an agreed upon Friend (or two) to guide the new member. The Friend(s) are responsible for support, advice, and oversight of the new member and are expected to maintain contact with their designated Friend regularly for the first two years of membership"

- b. “The new member submits an annual check in letter to Ministry and Pastoral Care to let them know what has been going on for the past year, whether they need any kind of specific support, or if they would like to adjust their membership status in any way. This will also be expected for the first two years of membership or at any time that they may want to adjust their membership.”
2. At the time of this report, M&PC and MCC have not discussed and therefore not reached unity regarding which committee is responsible for welcoming the new member or matching the member with an elder. It is felt by some on the Membership Subcommittee that the welcoming and the matching of Friends resides with MCC. Also it is unclear if upon hearing the report from M&PC, is there a “required action,” like approval, or just reception.
3. We do hope that clarity and unity around which committee is responsible for these steps is achieved. It is our understanding that Bryant Edmond Henning has been recorded as our first at large member of NYYM as of the receipt of the report by MCC.

Submitted in friendship,
Helen B. Mullin, Clerk of Membership Subcommittee
Don Badgley
Mary Pagurelias
Jennifer Swann

Clearness Committee Report on Bryant Henning

The Yearly Meeting Membership Subcommittee learned that Bryant Edmond Herring was led to apply for At-Large Membership within the New York Yearly Meeting upon receipt of his letter June 8th 2020 to the NYYM office. An active member of the Powell House community, Bryant has additionally served as a co-opted member of the Junior Yearly Meeting Committee, the Powell House Committee, and most recently the Sessions Committee. For years he has been active both in Powell House and in NYYM and has now expressed a leading to formalize his membership within the New York Yearly Meeting itself.

A clearness committee was formed, composed of Don Badgley, Chris DeRoller, Regina Haag, Mary Pagurelias and Jennifer Swann (convener) and met with Bryant on two occasions: October 25, 2020 and November 4, 2020.

The committee is pleased that Bryant was the first person to reach out to request NYYM At-Large Membership. Our conversations with Bryant made for clear discernment that he was faithful to the leading of membership and had deep feelings around upholding the integrity of the process. Additionally, his deep spiritual efforts within the Yearly Meeting and Powell House demonstrated a strong commitment to both of these communities.

After the meeting with Bryant, and further discernment, the committee felt clear to recommend approval for membership at-large for Bryant. In a separate meeting on November 13, 2020 the clearness committee affirmed Bryant’s readiness and clearness to become an At-Large Member of New York Yearly Meeting. This report was forwarded to the Ministry and Pastoral Care committee and received their approval.

We ask that upon clearness and unity about this application, that the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee forward the request to the Ministry Coordinating Committee and the New York Yearly Meeting office.

The request will be that Bryant Edmond Henning be recorded as an At-Large Member of New York Yearly Meeting. The Ministry Coordination Committee may appoint a welcoming committee.

Jennifer H. Swann (convener)

Chris DeRoller

Don Badgley

Mary Pagurelias

Regina Haag

NOTE: A copy of Bryant's letter requesting membership is below.

-Approved by M&PC on 11/14/2020

-Presented to MCC on 1/30/2021

Bryant Henning's letter requesting membership

June 6, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I have been waiting a long time to be able to write this letter. In my mind and heart I have been a Quaker all of my life. This letter will not change that, but allow me to be recognized as a card carrying member.

I was born and raised attending Rockland Monthly Meeting till the age of thineen. That is the meeting where my parents have their membership and it would have been simple to give them my letter, but my integrity wouldn't let me. The problem was it wasn't my spiritual home. The place I connected to and worshiped at was Powell House, specifically the youth program. It was there that I planted my roots and began my growth as a Quaker. But Powell House is not a monthly meeting.

At Powell House I developed the sense of Quakerism and spirituality that runs deeper than just religious practice. Over the years I grew from being a youth attender, to junior counselor, to buller and adult presence, to co-facilitator. It was my center.

Over the many years I attended Summer Sessions I transitioned from attending Junior Yearly Meeting to helping facilitate the program. As time passed, I realized I wanted to become more involved and served on the Junior Yearly Meeting committee. In order to do this though, since I was not technically a member of the yearly meeting, I had to be co-opted onto the committee each year. This is when I began to realize my limitations. Time went on and I continued to attend Summer Sessions as well as multiple Powell House conferences every year. Soon I was led to join Powell House committee, and once again I had to be co-opted onto the committee each year. This past year I accepted a nomination to be co-opted onto Sessions Committee as a

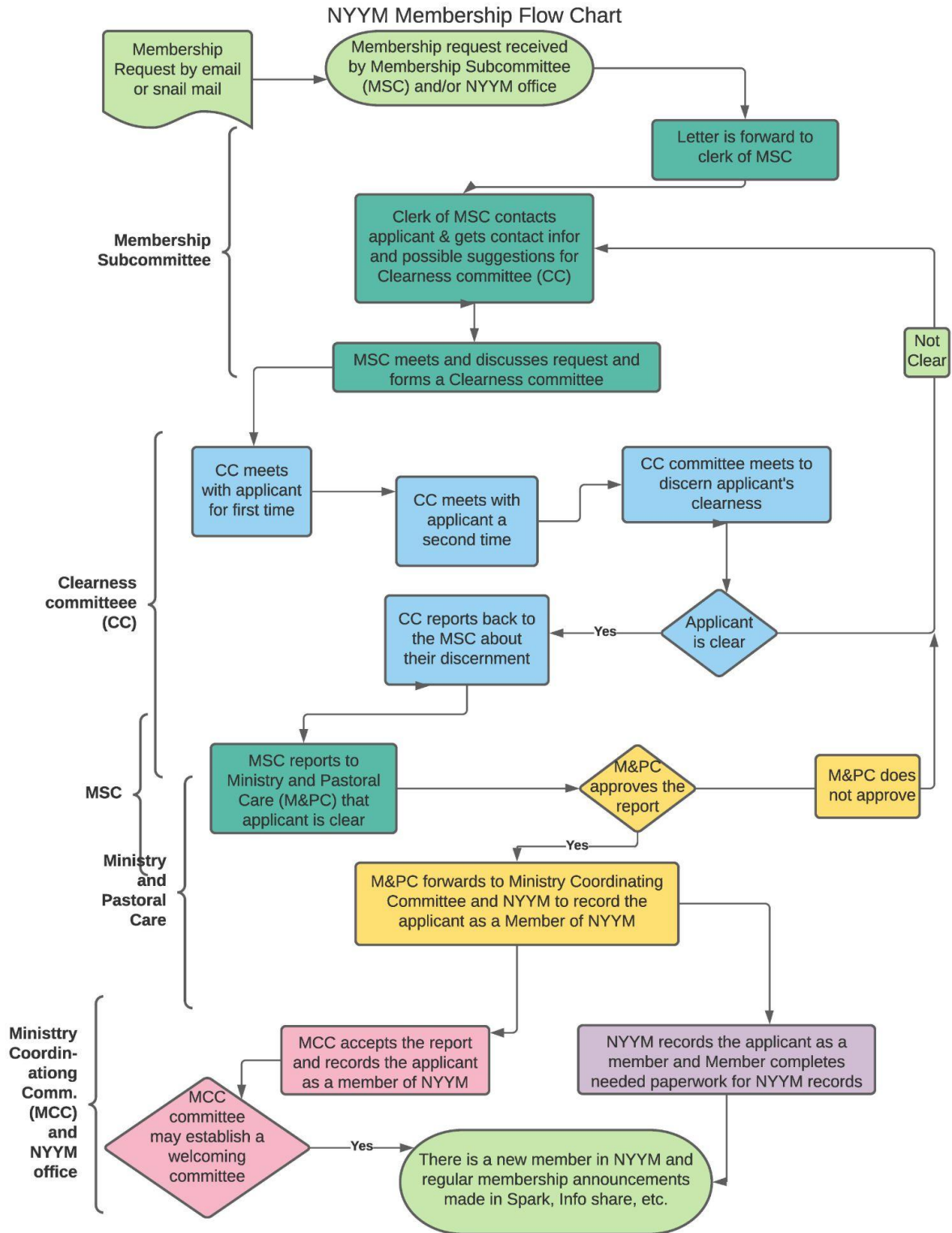
shadow of the Junior Yearly Meeting coordinator position. At this point, my Quaker life was being co-opted.

People asked why I didn't just join a meeting, I was even informally invited at times, but they were not my home. The very integrity that Quakerism instilled in me now held me back. I talked about my predicaments, attended conferences on the topic, and made a point to bring it up in various conversations each year. And I waited.

I am 30 years old now and, with the recent changes to membership, I am finally able to write this letter, a declaration of something I have been all my life. Sitting down to write this letter filled me with excitement, but to be honest, now I find it a little underwhelming. Spiritually and emotionally, nothing has changed. Inside I identify as a Quaker, something that people recognize even if they don't know the terms for it. That is what really matters. Ultimately, my reasons for this letter are purely bureaucratic, so it can be on record and people around the world can label me as Quaker. This letter is not for me, but for them.

So I, Bryam Edmund Henning, do formally request to join the New York Yearly Meeting as a member-at-large.

NYYM Membership Flow Chart



Interim Actions Taken by Clerk and General Secretary

(see minute 2021-04-10)

Letter to NY Governor Andrew Cuomo Requesting Early Release of Elderly Incarcerated People and Vaccination Prioritization for Incarcerated People and NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCSS) Staff

January 21, 2021

Dear Governor Cuomo:

In light of the current pandemic, the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) asks that you take the necessary steps to release the elderly people incarcerated in New York State prisons and to prioritize vaccinations for all incarcerated persons and DOCCS staff.

Governor Cuomo, you have been a singular national leader in fighting COVID-19 and in making New Yorkers safer and less afraid. Now COVID is ripping through our prisons. You have it in your power to help alleviate this suffering, too.

Further, to stop the current rapid spread of the virus, we ask that you make vaccination of the incarcerated and the staff of DOCCS a high priority in the distribution of the vaccine. This will provide increased protection for all and should hasten the time when the prison system can resume less restrictive procedures. Curbing the spread of the virus in the State prison system will likely be a frugal move; it will surely be a caring one.

Quakers believe that there is that of God present in every person, that every person is entitled to humane treatment, and that no person is beyond redemption. We heed the teaching of Jesus: “Lord, when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the King will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25: 39-40)

Led by that teaching, we offer this information to support our request:

The infection rate is four times higher in prison than in the general population. As of January 15, the entire prison system in NYS is on a form of lock down to restrict movement. For the men in maximum security prisons, this is effectively solitary confinement in their cells, an especially cruel and unnecessary punishment.

Evidence shows that people who are over 60 years of age have a minimal risk of recidivism. The elderly are particularly vulnerable to COVID infection and the crowded conditions in the prisons increase this risk. The current conditions make it a matter of life or death to reduce the NYS prison population, especially for the elderly.

We ask that you act with compassion and that you do so quickly. Public safety does not require the continued incarceration of most of the currently incarcerated elderly. Those elderly now in the general prison population were not sentenced to death by the courts and they should not be held in that jeopardy now.

We hold you in the Light.



Elaine Learnard
Clerk



Steve Mohlke
General Secretary

Cc: The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Carl E. Heastie, Speaker of the NYS Assembly

Letter to CT Governor Ned Lamont Opposing Construction of the Killingly Energy Center

February 4, 2021

Governor Ned Lamont,

We write on behalf of those Quakers in Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey who are jointly part of the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, to ask you to oppose the construction of the Killingly Energy Center (KEC), a 650 MW electric generating plant fueled by natural gas, whose projected cost is \$500 million.

According to the Connecticut Siting Council's Finding of Fact, if built, the plant would emit 2,207,451 tons of carbon dioxide per year throughout its expected lifetime of 30 years. KEC would directly contravene Connecticut's decarbonization policy (Executive order #3, section 8, September 3, 2019). In fact, most or all of the electricity generated by KEC would enter the ISO-New England grid, and so may not even directly benefit Connecticut's residents. The policy of Connecticut must be critically focused on fully decarbonizing the energy economy, including providing renewable electric power for its residents.

We ask you to reject the application because it does not meet the requirement that Connecticut generate at least 22.5% of its electricity from renewable sources in 2021, rising to 40% by 2030.

Your leadership on decarbonization and renewable energy can be an important part of solving the climate crisis.



Elaine Learnard
Clerk, NYYM



Steve Mohlke
General Secretary, NYYM

Statement and press release about anti-Asian violence

Statement sent to NYYM and other Quaker groups:

Over the past year, there have been more than thirty-eight hundred reported hate incidents targeting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), nearly 70% of them targeting women. The casual ignorance and nastiness of public statements about “the China virus” and other racial scapegoating were insufficiently challenged in person and in the media. We, those of us not of Asian descent, as Quakers, should have been sensitive to the dangers to our friends and Friends in the Asian communities. If we had been paying attention, the shooting of eight people – six of them women of Asian descent – in Atlanta this week would not have come as a surprise or seem unconnected with anything larger. Regardless of what other layers of motivation there might be for the incident, the racial and misogynist aspects of this crime cannot be ignored. We must not be silent in the face of anti-AAPI violence or allow anti-Asian bias to permeate our meetings and Society.

What can we do now?

First, we can raise awareness of the forms and history of anti-Asian bias and violence. There needs to be education about the lynching and mass murder of Chinese workers in the 19th century, the stereotyping of AAPI immigrants including the hypersexualizing of Asian women, the conflating of all AAPI nationalities as having the same values and cultures, and countless other forms of ignorance and misunderstanding of Asians in America. And we can ask what else we should learn about the varied Asian experiences among Quakers and in America.

Second, we can speak out against violence and we can name anti-AAPI speech and attitudes when we see them. We can be activists for safety, for a just society that provides full inclusion for AAPI, for a community that makes no one the “other.” And we can ask, how might my own actions, words, thoughts, explicitly or inadvertently, reflect internal bias and contribute to systemic racism?

Third, we can prepare to intervene whether or not we know the person being targeted. It is important to prepare before we unexpectedly find ourselves in such a situation. See this [American Friends Service Committee guidance on bystander intervention](http://www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention) (www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention). And we can ask what other support is needed.

Fourth, we need to be clear that anti-AAPI violence is part of racism in America. The White Supremacist system in which we live benefits from creating division among oppressed groups, so we must encourage mutual support and unity (see standtogethersf.org, www.tsuruforsolidarity.org, www.ihollaback.org). Until we can all be safe from violence no one of us is safe. And we can continue to work on addressing all racism.

This is work for all of us, no matter our skin color, gender, or cultural orientation. Spirit tells us we are one, we all have the Light within us, we are all connected. As we deepen our listening, let

us ask ourselves: how can I become more aware, how can I prepare myself to act, what actions are mine to do?

Neither of the authors of this statement are of Asian descent and we are aware that we cannot adequately represent or reflect the experiences and feelings of those who are. Nor do we mean to imply that every person of Asian descent would see any specific incident in the same way. But we do hope to hold up some of what we have heard from Friends of Asian descent in our recent consultation. We share one specific reflection: “It might be worthwhile for our Quaker community, across all racial and ethnic lines, across all ages, across all gender identities, to really dig deep to understand where we actually stand on this issue and how we understand racism.”

If you are interested in reading more, here are some links to articles that were shared with us that we found helpful:

- <https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2021/03/ro-kwon-letter-to-asian-women>
- <https://www.thecut.com/2021/03/atlanta-spa-shooting-victims-what-we-know.html>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/21/black-and-asian-unity-attacks-on-elders-spark-reckoning-with-racisms-roots>
- <https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2021/03/21/black-and-asian-solidarity-march-in-union-square>

Elaine Learnard, Clerk, NYYM
Steve Mohlke, General Secretary, NYYM

Press release sent to media contact list:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2021

CONTACT:

Sarah Way

Communications Director

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NY, NJ, and CT Quakers Condemn Anti-Asian Violence

Anti-Asian violence is anathema to Quaker beliefs of equality, justice, and peace

[April 2, 2021; New York, NY] New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) strongly condemns recent anti-AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) violence. The recent shooting of eight people – six of them women of Asian descent – in Atlanta has made this urgent declaration necessary. The racial and misogynist aspects of this crime cannot be ignored. Quakers cannot be silent in the face of anti-AAPI violence or allow anti-Asian bias to permeate our society.

Quakers answer the question, “what can people do?”

- First, awareness needs to be raised about the forms and history of anti-Asian bias and violence. There needs to be broader education about the lynching and mass murder of Chinese workers in the 19th century, the ongoing stereotyping of AAPI immigrants including the hypersexualizing of Asian women, the conflating of all AAPI nationalities as having the same values and cultures, and countless other forms of ignorance and misunderstanding of Asians in America.
- Second, anti-AAPI speech and attitudes should be called out when they are encountered. People can choose to be activists for safety, for a just society that provides full inclusion for AAPI, for a community that makes no one the “other.”
- Third, people can prepare themselves to intervene if they witness a bias incident. This article helps to prepare people to disrupt harassment in progress: [American Friends Service Committee guidance on bystander intervention](#) (www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention)
- Fourth, acknowledge that anti-AAPI violence is part of racism in America. The system of White Supremacy in the United States is strengthened by division among oppressed groups. To counter this system, we must encourage mutual support and unity. (Some organizations working on this are standtogethersf.org, www.tsuruforsolidarity.org, www.ihollaback.org). Until everyone is safe from violence, no one is safe.

Quakers believe that all people contain a divine spark

Quakers believe that the Light of the Spirit, or God, is within everyone, and we are all connected. Violence against a person is violence against God. Through the testimony of non-violence, Quakers affirm the divine Light in every human being and the need to act on the belief that truth and love can overcome ignorance and hate.

The work of anti-racism is for everyone, no matter their skin color, gender, or cultural orientation. Quakers encourage everyone to ask themselves, “how can I become more aware, how can I prepare myself to act, and what actions are mine to take?”

About New York Yearly Meeting

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is the organization encompassing the Quaker meetings (congregations) in New York State, northern New Jersey, and southwestern Connecticut. First established in 1695, New York Yearly Meeting currently has approximately 3,000 members. It is called a “yearly meeting” because its members gather annually to consider the work laid upon it by God’s Holy Spirit. For more information about the yearly meeting, visit www.nyym.org or call 212-673-5750.

Report from Powell House Youth Directors

(See minute 2021-04-11)

Greetings from Powell House! We are still here! As we head into Spring, work and play proceed at a quiet, but cheerful hum. Sojourners continue to pass through our doors, enjoying the respite and spiritual deepening that remains strong on our grounds. Their presence livens up the space and it is gratifying to know that people are enjoying the comforting furnishings of Pitt Hall and the ACC. At our Drive-thru Dinners, it is a joy to work with Chef Tony as we cook up hot meals for folks in the area. Virtual programming remains a good way to see the faces and hear the voices of our widespread community. Our latest recurring virtual event is Powell House Bible Study, where it has been wonderful to hear many perspectives.

In the Youth Program, small but sweet groups bring great energy and joy to our virtual conferences. Last month, we held two conferences focused on change and renewal. At Building, Changing, Inventing, a conference for 3rd-6th graders, participants exercised their creativity as they built structures and creatures out of cardboard boxes, toilet paper rolls, and other discarded supplies. This led to collaboratively creating new worlds using the whiteboard on Zoom. At Rest, Renew, Refresh for 6th-8th graders, participants recharged their batteries with a drawing meditation and were sent on a scavenger hunt to find items related to comfort and relaxation in their home. In March we also took a group of high schoolers to FCNL's Virtual Spring Lobby Weekend, joining hundreds of other young people across the country to lobby members of congress on the issue of ending police violence. Although it was a small group, their confidence and passion for the work was wonderfully inspiring.

As is reflected in our low attendance, the zoom fatigue for our youth attenders is as present as ever. In response to this, we have recently launched the Powell House Pen Pal Program. So far we have made 6 matches, making connections between PoHo Youth of all ages including young adults. We hope this program continues to grow and serve as a support for folks who are not able to join our virtual programming.

Sarah Glazer
Martin Glazer
Powell House Youth Directors

Report of the Clerk of the Powell House Committee on the Capital Campaign

(See minute 2021-04-12)

Powell House has embarked on a Capital Campaign. We find ourselves at a challenging intersection: spirituality and stewardship.

The spiritual needs and opportunities are clear before us. Stewardship of our physical resources – buildings and property – will ensure a place which allows us to achieve our potential for healing, for worship, for celebration.

We can meet these challenges with two coordinated goals: the financial resources to support top notch programming coupled with improvements to buildings and infrastructure which will attract people to attend the programs in person and virtually.

We are in the silent phase right now, recruiting volunteers and establishing administrative procedures. Peter Laughter is the Clerk of the Capital Campaign Committee and is joined by a leadership team of Don Badgley, Jens Braun, Spee Braun, Peter Close, Sam Cooley, Bob Elmendorf, and Dennis Haag. We are committed to strengthening Powell House as an important partner and resource in the life of the Yearly Meeting.

Mary A. Brown, Clerk, Powell House Committee

A Proposal that NYYM Sign a Petition to End the Korean War

(See minute 2021-04-15)

There is a group that is putting out a 3-year effort to collect 1 million signatures calling to finally end the Korean War. The completed petition will be brought to the United Nations. On the website of the group, two of the first signatures were Albany Friends Meeting and AFSC, but there are few other Quaker organizations. The website: en.endthekoreanwar.net.

A request was brought to Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC) asking that WCC consider signing a petition. WCC approved signing the petition and recommends to NYYM that the yearly meeting also consider signing.

Additionally, the WCC clerks will consider a way to communicate with monthly meeting peace committees, suggesting that they also educate themselves about this concern and act accordingly.

Epistle from Japan Yearly Meeting

(see minute 2021-04-18)

To Friends Worldwide,

On November 21-22, 2020, the annual gathering of Japan Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends was hosted by Tsuchiura Monthly Meeting. We took as our theme Philippians 1:9-10: "May your love grow ever richer in the power of knowing and discerning, and may you be able to discern what is truly important." Although the meeting was held in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were grateful that 30 people (including 12 who participated via Zoom) were able to attend the meeting with God's guidance and grace. This year, we were especially glad to be able to welcome and exchange opinions with members in Osaka and Mito, transcending the geographical distance.

In Panel Discussion I, we considered the use of the former Annex site and the future of the Tokyo Meetinghouse. Views were exchanged on the proposal to relocate the Tokyo Meetinghouse to the campus of Friends Girls School. In response to the proposal, the Executive Committee decided to establish a committee to study the future of the Tokyo Meetinghouse and the land owned by Japan Yearly Meeting.

We also approved the activity report and financial report for 2019, and the activity plan and budget for 2020.

Next, in Panel Discussion II, there were reports from four monthly meetings on the theme of deepening our faith during the pandemic. Tsuchiura Monthly Meeting made a donation to people suffering from the economic effects of the pandemic. We heard how the faces of the children attending Sunday School lit up as they realized that their donations were being used for good. Tokyo Monthly Meeting continues to hold Meeting for Worship face to face and via Zoom. They thought it would be meaningful to provide a place of quiet prayer for those who are anxious and worried, as well as to strengthen their faith by gathering for worship. Osaka Monthly Meeting also holds Meeting for Worship monthly via Zoom, and makes efforts to strengthen their connection with Meetings overseas. We renewed our awareness of the meaning of spending quiet time together in our homes at the same time, even if we do not have Internet access. Mito Monthly Meeting suspended Meeting for Worship temporarily, but when they resumed, they felt again the importance of gathering together to worship, and how it strengthens the connection and faith among the members. Each of the Monthly Meetings is making efforts to continue gathering for worship while trying to prevent the spread of infection.

In the Nitobe Inazo Memorial Lecture, Louisa Hatanaka spoke about her memories of coming to Japan as an English teacher at Friends Girls School, and then interacting with many Friends as the director of the Friends Center, principal of Friends Girls School, and chair of the Board of Trustees.

As the fury of the pandemic is still not over, we pray for the peace of mind and health of Friends and all people around the world.

Machiko Takeda, Clerk
Japan Yearly Meeting
November 22, 2020

Minute on a Federal Price on Carbon

(see minute 2021-04-20)

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (all of NY and parts of CT and NJ) encourages the enactment of carbon pricing legislation in 2021.

We are motivated by our Quaker faith to endorse the position of our Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) which is that:

- A price on carbon is widely recommended by economists as the most effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed necessary. Emission targets need to be in line with the scientific community's recommendations to avoid even more catastrophic impacts of climate change. If reduction targets are not met, the price would increase.
- The legislation must ensure that the costs of a carbon price are not borne by households and communities with low incomes.
- Polluters must not move operations to other countries to avoid paying for their emissions. Legislation must include transparent reporting to monitor emission levels.
- Our Quaker faith guides us to acknowledge and celebrate our interconnection with the natural world, to pay attention to related concerns including climate change and environmental justice, and to join with others in actively caring for our planet.
- The overwhelming consensus of scientists is reflected in the report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. We are in an existential crisis that threatens all life on Earth. We must act now. A price on carbon is an essential part of an effective climate policy.

Friends are asked to convey this minute and their personal commentary to their elected officials in the US House of Representatives and the US Senate and to the Chairs of relevant Congressional committees. Letters to the editor which mention elected officials are an important complement.

- Initial Minute Approved by Saratoga Friends Meeting, January 3, 2021
- Approved with revisions by NYYM Climate Justice Working Group, January 27, 2021
- Approved with revisions by NYYM Witness Coordinating Committee, March 27, 2021
- Approved by NYYM, April 10, 2021

Minute on Timely Parole

(See minute 2021-04-21)

Morningside Monthly Meeting, NY Quarterly Meeting, and Witness Coordinating Committee of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) support the passage of the Fair and Timely Parole bill, S. 1415 and A. 4231. The bill provides that if a person's record in prison is good and the person does not evince a current and unreasonable risk to the safety of members of the community outside prison, the person should be granted parole as a matter of course once he or she has served the minimum time the judge has set. As Friends, we believe that we all have the possibility of transforming our lives. People who have turned their lives around while incarcerated and have demonstrated that transformation deserve to be released. They can make important contributions to their communities and families. The nature of the crime committed many years before should not be the sole reason for denying parole. Those of us who have volunteered in NY State Correctional Facilities have seen numerous examples of this kind of positive change and know many who, upon release, have been assets to their communities.

Minute on Elder Parole

(See minute 2021-04-22)

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) supports the passage of the Elder Parole bill S. 15 and A. 3475. This provides that all people aged 55 years or older who have served 15 years or more in prison would become eligible for parole consideration. It does not mean people will automatically receive parole, but it does allow people who have sentences such as life without parole or 50 years to life to be considered for parole.

As Friends, we believe all lives are sacred. We believe in rehabilitation. We believe that those who have pled guilty or those who have been found guilty by trial to violent acts against persons, deserve judicial review. We believe that personal growth is possible.

Friends grieve the fact that People of Color have been serving extended sentences disproportionately. We acknowledge that granting a prisoner 55 years of age or older a chance to be paroled may well be mitigating earlier injustice. Evidence shows that people who are over 55 years of age have a minimal risk of recidivism. During long sentences, people often lose hope and sometimes die by suicide. By recognizing the possibility of change, the possibility of hope is restored.

New Handbook Page for the Sufferings Committee — First Reading

(See minute 2021-04-23)

Proposed Handbook Page

LIAISON FOR THE FUND FOR SUFFERINGS (2021)

History

Minute 74 of the 1971 Yearly Meeting sessions marked the initiation of the Fund for Sufferings under the Peace and Social Action Program. The Fund, raised through voluntary contributions, is meant to provide assistance to those who are suffering hardship because of fidelity to Friends' testimonies. In the sessions of 1975, a Committee on Sufferings was established to administer the Fund, and a budget appropriation was placed in the goals of the Sharing Fund to continue until the Fund reached \$10,000.

The Fund for Sufferings was transferred in 2003 to the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting from the separate investment account maintained by the Committee on Sufferings. When the Yearly Meeting consolidated its accounts into those maintained by the Yearly Meeting treasurer

and those maintained by the Trustees, \$10,000 was placed in the care of the Yearly Meeting treasurer and the remainder invested with the Trustees.

By approval of the Yearly Meeting at Fall Sessions 2018, the accumulated income from the invested trust fund was directed to the income of the NYYM operating budget for unrestricted use. The Fund for Sufferings remains as a Designated Use Fund with no endowment, but could be replenished, if needed, through direct designated contributions to the fund.

Purpose of the Fund

The Fund for Sufferings is available to provide support for Friends who suffer financially as a result of their faithful witness, their acts of conscience, or their fidelity to Friends' testimonies. It is intended to respond to urgent needs in a timely manner.

How to Apply for Funds

Applications will be accepted from New York Yearly Meeting members, wherever that member resides, and from any who are faithful participants in witness actions in local meetings. The application is posted on the NYYM website, and completed applications are submitted to the Liaison for the Fund for Sufferings for consideration.

Before submitting an application to the Yearly Meeting, the applicant should approach their local meeting, care committee, or a Yearly Meeting committee requesting financial assistance. Once that meeting or committee has reached discernment about assisting the applicant, they can forward the request to the Liaison for the Fund for Sufferings. Normally it is expected that the Fund will supplement a meeting's financial contributions to an individual. For requests requiring immediate attention, discernment by the individual's meeting or care committee and the Liaison and Witness Coordinating Committee may occur in parallel. A Yearly Meeting committee may also endorse and forward an application to the Liaison. In the case of urgent requests, an electronic transfer is possible. There is also the possibility that costs covered by a meeting or group may be reimbursed after discernment.

Support should not be presumed, and is not guaranteed. Examples of time-sensitive expenses that might receive support from the Fund for Sufferings include but are not necessarily limited to: legal expenses resulting from nonviolent direct action and holy obedience/civil disobedience, including bail and expenses related to arrest, property damage/loss and incarceration; legal proceedings or financial penalties related to conscientious objection to military service or war tax refusal; and medical expenses resulting from injuries sustained or illness contracted in the course of public witness.

Functions & Activities of the Liaison

The Liaison administers the Fund for Sufferings by:

1. accepting applications for assistance,

2. researching the request and following up with the local meeting or other committees connected with the request
3. reviewing the request and preparing a recommendation
4. presenting the request to the clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee
5. meeting with the Coordinating Committee clerk and additional people from that committee in discernment
6. contacting the Treasurer of the Yearly meeting with the pertinent information if the outcome is positive, so that funds may be sent to the applicant.
7. In the event of a conflict of interest between the Liaison and the applicant, the Liaison will forward the application to the clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee.

Liaison Appointment

The Yearly Meeting appoints the Liaison on Sufferings upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee. The Liaison on Sufferings serves a term of three years, with the option of serving a second three year term. The Liaison shares reports of requests and gifts.

Finances and Reporting

The fund is held by the Yearly Meeting as a Designated Use Fund. The Yearly Meeting Treasurer monitors compliance with the fund's designation. Witness Coordinating Committee will receive regular reports on use of the funds, and the remaining balance in the Fund for Sufferings.

Travel Minute for Cai Quirk

(See minute 2021-04-24)

Dear Friends,

We commend to you our beloved Friend, Cai Quirk (they/them or ey/em pronouns), whose leading to travel in the ministry has been seasoned in Ithaca Monthly Meeting.

Cai carries a concern for removing barriers to welcome. Their visions of community are of a wholeness in which Friends' full selves are welcomed and cherished. Through photography, storytelling, music, vocal ministry, writing, and workshops, Cai opens doors to fresh perspectives and ways of seeing the world and each other. Cai has particular experience and calling to ministry at the intersections of spirituality and gender diversity; both are places of fluidity and liminality. We experience Spirit as vibrant and alive when Cai shares their ministry. Indeed, their name means "rejoice unusually!"

Since 2017 they have been sharing various forms of their ministry among and beyond Friends, here in New York and around the country. They listen deeply and carefully to others' concerns, including those who disagree with them. In each setting, Cai's openness, compassion, joy, and integrity, have allowed them to engage with people of diverse views and helped to deepen Friends' sensitivity to and understanding of these vital issues. Through this ministry, Cai

continues to grow in their faithfulness to the traditions of Friends and to the guidance of the Spirit.

Cai was born into Ithaca Monthly Meeting and carries our love with them as they seek to enrich our society with their gifts. We have appointed an anchor committee which continues to meet with Cai for ongoing discernment and support. We hope that you will welcome Cai in your meeting and support them in their work while they are with you and as they travel among Friends.

Warmly,

Gina Varrichio, Clerk
Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
120 Third Street
Ithaca, NY 14850

Earthcare Minute

(See minute 2021-04-28)

Human activity is causing catastrophic effects including habitat destruction, pollution of air, soil and water, resource depletion, species extinction, global warming, and new forms of disease. With reverence and respect for all Creation, Friends are called to bring the full weight of our heritage of engagement with the world to help stop and reverse the effects of climate disruption and ecological damage in order to leave a habitable planet to future generations of all species. These compounding crises call each of us to discern what we can do individually and corporately in light of our gifts and circumstances. Our daily choices matter. However, as important as personal witness is, it is not enough to safeguard our planet for future generations. Therefore, Friends are urged to act collectively and quickly to protect and restore our beloved planet.

Friends can help create community initiatives such as community choice aggregation (an affordable, ecological source of electricity), protection and planting of trees and other forms of carbon sequestration, watershed protection, community gardens and composting centers, and stations for collecting and reusing refrigerants.

Friends are urged to stay informed on Earthcare issues including pending government legislation at all levels and to contact our elected representatives regularly to express our opinions. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), Quaker Earthcare Witness and Climate Crisis Policy are valuable resources.

Friends are called to advocate that institutions and businesses shift their investments and change their practices so that climate solutions can be implemented rapidly and at the scale needed to truly slow and then reverse global warming. A respected source of scientifically and financially validated climate solutions is “The Drawdown Review,” available at www.drawdown.org.

Opportunities for further work for change include climate marches, non-violent direct actions, and other ways to publicly advocate for ecological and just policies and practices.

In contemplating collective actions, care should be taken to work with and receive guidance from those people most impacted by the climate crisis, environmental degradation and injustice. We must also support a just transition for workers who may lose their livelihoods in the transformation to an Earth-friendly economy.

Friends, may we come into right relationship with all Creation.

— Approved by New Brunswick Monthly Meeting, May 17, 2020 with revisions from Manasquan.

— Approved by Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting, September 26, 2020.

— Approved by NYYM Witness Coordinating Committee October 17, 2020, with revisions from the NYYM Climate Justice Working Group November 6, 2020 and March 4, 2021.

— Approved by NYYM April 11, 2021, with revisions proposed April 10, 2021.

Second Reading of the Handbook page for the Lindley Murray Fund Committee

(see minute 2021-04-30)

THE LINDLEY MURRAY FUND COMMITTEE

History

In 1836, the original principal of the Lindley Murray Fund was established with the residue of the estate of Lindley Murray, who died in 1826. Six trustees were named in the will to hold this principal in trust and to apply the income thereof yearly in perpetuity for all or any of a variety of purposes, including:

1. To liberate Black people from slavery and give them, their descendants, and other Black persons suitable education.
2. To promote the civilization and instruction of the Indians of North America
3. To purchase and distribute books tending to promote piety and virtue and the truth of Christianity
4. To assist and relieve the poor in any description and in any manner that may be judged proper.

The description of purposes is a considerable abbreviation of the will's exact terms. The will also specified that the trustees should have the advice and direction of the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, which was given the power to reappoint the trustees and to establish such regulations and limitations as should seem proper and most likely to promote the ends the legator had in view.

When the \$42,700 fund came into possession of the trustees in 1836, two of the originally named trustees were deceased, so the Yearly Meeting appointed successors and also named a seventh trustee. The Yearly Meeting currently names seven members.

Over a period of nearly a century and a half, ten Friends made additional contributions to the Murray Fund, either through bequests or through direct donation. These donors usually placed special emphasis upon one or more Murray goals. Prominent among their objectives were needs of Indians and Blacks, relief of the poor and needy, promotion of Christianity, and the peace principles of the Society of Friends. One found “religious, educational and charitable objects” suitable language. As a result, the original Murray Fund more than doubled, reaching \$91,577 by 1975, in direct gifts and bequests. In 1915, Murray Fund trustees accepted the responsibility of managing the \$7,500 principal fund of the New York Female Association and forwarding the income to the association for distribution. Known for initiating free education in New York City in 1800, the Association is an independent organization ministering to “benevolent needs.”

Contributions to principal:

Original Lindley Murray Fund 1836 \$42,700
David Sands 1860 5,000
William F. Mott 1867 4,000
Maria Willets 1887 2,000
Phebe J. Sampson 1888 1,000
Martha Heaton 1901 4,867
William T. Travis 1903 2,000
Joshua M. Dean 1913, 1915 8,000
Edward Tatum 1927 2,000
Edmund Titus 1928 5,000
Maria W. Barton 1928, 1968, 1975 15,010
Murray Fund principal \$91,577
New York Female Association principal 1915 7,500
Total under Murray trustees' investment supervision \$99,077

Functions & Activities

The historical account makes clear that the trustees of the Lindley Murray Fund are responsible for:

- The care and proper investment of the trust funds in their possession; these funds were invested in the Unit Plan of the NYYM Trustees in January 2003.
- The collection of income from these investments
- The disbursement of the income in accordance with their best interpretation of

the terms of the bequests

Organization & Method of Appointment

The Trustees of the New York Yearly Meeting are the Trustees of the Lindley Murray Fund. The review of the grant applications and the recommendations for disbursements will be made to the Trustees of the Fund by the Lindley Murray Committee. The members of the Committee are appointed by the Yearly Meeting upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee for five-year terms, one or two being appointed each year. The Committee will name their own officers and a representative to the General Services Coordinating Committee.

Meeting Times & Places

Trustees and the Committee determine number, time, and place of meetings needed to properly fulfill the responsibilities laid on them

Report from Personnel Committee

(see minute 2021-04-35)

If you arrived for the early part of worship Saturday afternoon, you encountered a puppet named Aura. Aura's person, Joy Meikle, has been leading a Meeting for Feelings focused on young children every Friday since last Fall. Joy responded to a request for proposals from NYYM last summer to help children and their parents. The other project funded from that initiative was a series of Parent Support Groups organized by Emily Provance. We know that parents have been hit very hard and participants have expressed a great deal of gratitude for these groups. In addition to those projects, Marissa Badgley continues her part time work nurturing young adults.

In November, NYYM approved a budget with \$100,000 for supporting children, youth and young adults. That budget expects \$20,000 in contributions from individuals and meetings to the new CYYA (Children, Youth & Young Adult) Fund. In the March Treasurer's Report we saw that there have been \$1,400 in contributions to date. There are quite a few people, including many young adults, who have contributed to this fund.

The committee and the General Secretary are still in discernment about how to proceed with that funding. The COVID pandemic has changed the way we interact with one another. People have different needs than they had before the pandemic, especially parents, young children and youth who have not been in school regularly or at all. Traveling to different meetings has not been possible. The changes with opening up are going to be as dramatic as closing down.

In the meantime, we just last week opened a new request for proposals to engage children, teens and families. The goal is to invite creativity to try new ideas right away. Seeing what works and

what doesn't will help inform our longer term plans. If you, or someone you know, has an idea for engaging children, teens and families please send them on over to nyym.org/pks. That will take them right to an online form that gives more details and makes it easy to apply. This will be useful for the short term but for the long term we need a person to handle the administration of this work.

Travel Minute for Mahayana Landowne

(see minute 2021-04-36)

Dear Friends,

We, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, have united with Mahayana (Yana) Landowne's discernment that she is called to travel and share her gifts in ministry.

As Yana travels among Friends as well as in the wider world, she uses movement, interactive performances, and playfulness to engage individuals and communities in new perspectives. Her ministry opens us to fresh ways of engaging with the joys and sorrows of this modern world, through a faithful, spiritual, and joyful lens.

She encourages people to see and welcome that of God within each other. She invites us to expand our comfort zones in ways that joyfully expand our Beloved Community, amongst and beyond Quakers. She is a beacon of joy and hope, and we trust she will serve your community with deep discernment and faithfulness while she is amongst you.

Yana carries the love of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting with her as she seeks to enrich our society with her gifts. We hope that you will welcome Yana in your meeting and support her in her work while she is with you and as she travels among Friends.

Warmly,

Joan Malin, Clerk, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting