

New York Yearly Meeting Fall Sessions

November 15 – 16, 2014

Fifteenth Street Meetinghouse, New York, NY
Saturday, November 15, 2014, 9:30 a.m.

Jeffrey L. Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield), Clerk
Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Assistant Clerk
Roger Dreisbach-Williams (Rahway & Plainfield), Recording Clerk
Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk

2014-11-01 The Clerk spoke of the deep worship we shared this morning. The Yearly Meeting has faced difficult times with a troubled economy and declining numbers. He has heard a sense of despair and cynicism as he travels around the Yearly Meeting. The ministry we heard this morning may be a step in a new direction, a sense of guarded optimism. He invited Friends to enter the work before us with joy. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table and reviewed the agenda.

2014-11-02 Friends were asked to stand as their region was called. All nine regions, quarters & half yearly meetings are present. The Clerk asked Friends to identify their home meeting and role when speaking to the body.

2014-11-03 Carol Summar (15th Street) and Emily Provance (15th Street) spoke for the host committee welcoming us and going over access issues since the elevator is not working. Special thanks were extended to Friends Seminary, Yearly and Quarterly Meeting Staff for their efforts in preparing for these sessions.

2014-11-04 The Clerk reported interim items approved by the Clerk and General Secretary and not reported previously.

November, 2012 - signed on to a statement from Britain Yearly Meeting and AFSC calling for the end of the use of force in Gaza.

December, 2012 - signed on at the request of the NYYM Conscientious Objection to Paying for War Committee as official co-sponsors of the next International Conference of War Tax Resisters and Peace Tax Campaigns.

December, 2012 - signed on to a letter from FCNL for The Climate Summit 2013 coalition, of which FCNL is a charter member, supporting President Obama in following through on his commitment in hosting a national summit on climate change. The President was particularly looking for religious groups to show support for this initiative.

January, 2013 - signed on to a letter to Governor Cuomo from many organizations applauding his commitment to address climate change after hurricane Sandy, and

challenging his ongoing support for hydrofracking as being inconsistent with that stance, due to its large impact of greenhouse gas emissions.

September 2014 - Signed a shared statement by Quaker groups titled "Facing the Challenge of Climate Change."

A list of all interim items approved by the Clerk and General Secretary since 2010 was made available to Friends.

2014-11-05 Friends heard the 2014 epistle from Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting.

2014-11-06 Friends heard a report from the General Secretary which he entitled "Community, Communion and Living in Truth." There was ministry of appreciation and expansion of the General Secretary's report. Notes for the oral report are attached. A separate written report on the work of the General Secretary is also attached. Friends received the General Secretary's oral report.

2014-11-07 Minutes 2014-11-01 to -06 were approved.

2014-11-08 John Cooley (Finger Lakes), serving as Clerk of General Services, spoke on Friends commitment to follow the law when possible and to break it when necessary and to act with integrity and transparency.

2014-11-09 Susan Bingham (Montclair), serving as Treasurer, presented her report. Last year the closing balance was \$18,000 less than the opening balance, this year it is \$26,000 less. In the context of the total budget this is not a serious concern. Friends received the report.

2014-11-10 Matt Scanlon (Scarsdale and Sing-Sing Worship Group) presented the first part of the budget for 2015. The budget now considers volunteer efforts and trust fund expenditures, which effectively doubles the size of the budget.

Meeting income is about the same (this number had been decreasing). Most meetings are able to increase what they contribute, several have indicated that they must reduce their contributions, and it balances.

Christopher Sammond spoke on the work of the Development Committee; about asking for our passion, and the funds that go with it. He expressed gratitude for automatic donations, multi-year donations, and the member of a prison worship group who gave \$5 on an income of a few cents an hour. Concerns that Development efforts will take funds from Covenant Donations are not supported by the experience of New England Yearly Meeting that has been doing this for several years.

Matt Scanlon resumed his presentation of the budget, which now includes a consolidated audit to include Trust Funds, Development Contributions, Covenant Donations and Program Revenue, highlighting the changes from last year, and notes on how the budget reflects the Statement of Leadings and Priorities. This will come most forcefully from the work of the committees and should be reflected in the 2016 budget. Yearly Meeting Staff, Powell House and Trustees are already reporting on their work in the context of the Leadings and Priorities.

The covenant donations should reflect what meetings can do. Some will be able to do more and some won't.

The institutional structure that we support in this budget enables Friends to respond to callings. The example of a Friend who was able to replace college courses in prisons when the State of New York ended the program was cited.

Timothy Johnson (Schenectady), serving as Clerk of the Audit Committee, spoke to the increased cost of the audit, which is being paid for by Trustees. We have not been in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and part of the cost increase is to bring us into compliance with GAAP.

Friends approved the budget for 2015.

2014-11-11 Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale), serving as Clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee, presented the concern to ask President Obama to release Leonard Peltier from prison. Susan Wolf (Ithaca) presented a minute in support of this request. Friends asked that the minute be reworded to reflect the spiritual basis of our concern. Friends also spoke of others who are unjustly imprisoned and need our concern. A Friend asked what should be done after the minute is approved. This should be the beginning, not the end of our concern. The minute will be brought back tomorrow.

2014-11-12 Minutes 2014-11-08 to -11 were approved.

2014-11-13 The meeting closed with worship.

ATTACHMENTS

1. General Secretary's message, as delivered to the body

Community, Communion, and Living in Truth

This is our first time back together as a community since summer sessions. There, after days of real difficult wrestling with one another, we came to a powerful sense of unity, one which I can still touch back on in my heart. Friends who were there used language such as “a powerful movement of the Spirit,” “a Pentecostal experience,” and “conflict transformation.” While many of us who are here today were present then, many also were not, and I feel a need to perhaps help us bridge back to that time, that energy, that powerful presence of the Spirit aflame in open hearts. I hope we can touch back on that. And I hope that our sessions here, and our work going forward, are tempered by that experience of openness, joy, and spiritual power.

Summer Sessions – conflict, resolution, and what arose in me afterwards:

The words Community and Communion. And the sense that much of the conflict I had been witnessing revolved around an orientation to one or the other.

Description of Community – a powerful sense of connectedness: a ‘conference high’

Description of Communion – the powerful feeling of gathered worship when ‘the power of the Lord is overall’.

I have been holding questions about these two experiences. Are they flip sides of the same coin? Part of a continuum? The same thing as experienced by different spiritual types? Does one lead to another? We need to become more conscious of these two different spiritual modalities, and how they play out in our life in community.

I am uncomfortable with the sense of “Community” as an end in itself, understood only as this nice thing that happens between people. Like all testimonies, it is rooted in something deeper. This wonderful experience we call “Community,” is not just something happening between individuals. There is a spiritual dimension as well. As we open profoundly to each other, we also open to the Divine. I can feel that shift when it happens in a group I am facilitating. I can feel it when the whole temporary community at an FGC (Friends General Conference) Gathering makes this shift. It usually happens on Wednesday of that week, but sometimes on Thursday. And it is palpable, and huge. We need to understand and acknowledge the spiritual dimension of this experience.

My concern is that I experience those who favor one or the other- Community or Communion- as their way in to the Divine, as being often in conflict with one another. These are different entry points into participation in the Divine. But I see us looking past this in one another, not understanding their complementary nature.

If our richest spiritual experiences are happening away from our Monthly Meetings, what does that call us to?

Now I am going to make a broad generalization, and all generalizations are false in some degree, including this one. Most of our experiences of profound community are happening away from our Monthly Meetings communities. And most of our experiences of communion happen within our Monthly Meeting communities.

What does it mean that most of our experiences of deep community are happening away from our Monthly Meetings? What does this require of us?

As the goal of our worship is communion, and that is how I understand our practice as Friends, and that is not happening as often as we would like, what does that require of us?

Let me state a radical position: Without our Monthly Meetings, there is no reason to have a yearly meeting, or its sessions. There is no reason to have Powell House, its conferences, or its youth program. There is no reason to have FGC or its Gathering. How can we, how do we, take the spiritual riches we experience in these places, and live them out in our home communities? If our richest spiritual experiences are happening away from our Monthly Meetings, what does that call us to? How do we sustain that sense of openness, and bring it back to our Monthly Meetings?

There is a third strand to our communities, which I would call living in Truth. This is the dimension of our witness work. Recently, I had a refresher in that spiritual dimension.

Witness of Sandra Steingraber, Roland Micklem, and many others. And then a comfortable dinner in a good restaurant. I became aware of, I could feel the dissonance between those two, and a palpable sense of what in Seminary we called “Middle Class numbness” in the latter. That numbness denied the truth of the larger situation. In that restaurant, the world was a fine place, the current order benign, just and good. We could enjoy our meal in peace, not needing to worry. And, it ignored the Truth that forces are actively at work that are destroying our planet, that money have corrupted both science and politics, and that the Empire will defend those forces against any who challenge them.

We have many Friends whose experience spiritually centers on having the courage to live in the Truth of our situation, to see clearly the school to prison pipeline, to see clearly our racism, to see clearly the destruction of our planet, to see clearly the genocide of peoples at home and abroad, to see clearly that we are a country that tortures, that we send out drones to kill those we perceive to be our enemies, killing others in the process, to see clearly that we live amidst vast and accelerating economic disparity, Friends who are unwilling and unable to live out the numbness that says that all is well, fine, just and good, when it is not.

And in this yearly meeting, I have seen an attitude of conflict between “Witness Friends” and “Ministry Friends,” and could tell you stories about that.

We need all of these three strands, and more. We need all of us. These three strands complement, complete each other. We need to be conscious of when we are feeling in

competition or conflict with those who come from a different spiritual orientation, and pause, and remember how they are a vital part of our community.

That is the unity that embraced us at summer sessions, and that is the unity we need to live out, consciously and fully.

2. General Secretary's written report

General Secretary's Report

Fall Sessions, 2014

15th Street Meetinghouse

This is our first time back together as a community since summer sessions. There, after days of real difficult wrestling with one another, we came to a powerful sense of unity, one which I can still touch back on in my heart. Friends who were there used language such as “a powerful movement of the Spirit,” “a Pentacost experience,” and “conflict transformation.” While many of us who are here today were present then, many also were not, and I feel a need to perhaps help us bridge back to that time, that energy, that powerful presence of the Spirit aflame in open hearts. I would invite those of you who were there to go back to that time, to touch back to that energy, and to bring some of that forward. And I hope that our sessions here, and our work going forward, might be tempered by that experience of openness, joy, and spiritual power.

My time at Summer Sessions was a week of listening to Friends who were angry, concerned, feeling alienated, feeling left out of the vision for the Yearly Meeting as elaborated by the Statement of Leadings and Priorities. It was one long conversation, with the partners changing, but the content was pretty similar. As I pondered all those conversations in the weeks afterwards, the words “Community and Communion” kept coming to me, along with the sense that much of the conflict I had been witnessing revolved around an orientation to one or the other.

Each of us might use those words, but mean very different things. I will give you my descriptions. By “community,” I mean the feeling we experience of incredible openness of hearts and spirits, unity, and togetherness Friends often talk about experiencing at summer sessions, at an FGC Gathering, at a Powell House conference, where we refer to coming away with “a conference high.”

By “communion,” I mean the powerful experience when we are in a gathered or covered meeting, when the silence gets so thick it is palpable, and the air gets heavy and full, and you can actually sense the presence and the unity of the Spirit in the room, with all there open in heart and spirit to each other and to God.

I have been holding questions about these two experiences. Are they flip sides of the same coin, part of a continuum, the same thing as experienced by different spiritual types? Does one lead to another? We need to become more conscious of these two different spiritual modalities, and how they play out in our life in community.

I am uncomfortable with the sense of “Community” as an end in itself, understood only as this nice thing that happens between people. Like all testimonies, it is rooted in something deeper. This wonderful experience we call “Community,” is not just something happening between individuals. There is a spiritual dimension as well. As we open profoundly to each other, we also open to the Divine. I can feel that shift when it happens in a group I am facilitating. I can feel it when the whole temporary community at an FGC Gathering makes this shift. It usually happens on Wednesday of that week, but sometimes on Thursday. And it is palpable, and huge. We need to understand and acknowledge the spiritual dimension of this experience.

My concern is that I experience those who favor one or the other- Community or Communion- as their way in to the Divine, as being often in conflict with one another. These are different entry points into participation in the Divine. But I see us looking past this in one another, not understanding their complementary nature.

Now I am going to make a broad generalization, and all generalizations are false in some degree, including this one. Most of our experiences of profound community are happening away from our MM communities. And most of our experiences of communion happen within our MM communities.

What does it mean that most of our experiences of deep community are happening away from our MMs? What does this require of us?

As the goal of our worship is communion, and that is how I understand our practice as Friends, and that is not happening as often as we would like, what does that require of us?

Let me state a radical position: Without our MMs, there is no reason to have a yearly meeting, or its sessions. There is no point in having a yearly meeting office, its staff, or certainly a general secretary. There is no reason to have Powell House, its conferences, or its youth program. There is no reason to have FGC or its Gathering. How can we, how do we, take the spiritual riches we experience in these places, and live them out in our home communities? If our richest spiritual experiences are happening away from our MMs, what does that call us to? How do we sustain that sense of openness, and bring it back to our MMs?

There is a third strand to our communities, which I would call living in Truth. This is the dimension of our witness work. Recently, I had a refresher in that spiritual dimension.

I was with my wife Barbara at the arraignment of Friends Sandra Steingraber, Roland Micklem, and ten others. We were at a rally and press conference just before they entered the court building. One after another gave powerful witness as to why they felt called to do whatever was necessary to stop a proposed massive natural gas storage facility in the salt caverns under Seneca Lake. They were willing to be arrested for blocking entry to the facility, and to go to jail, if need be. We stood out in the dark, with candles, for an hour and a half on a cold, windy evening, getting chilled to the bone, and deeply moved by their witness.

As the courthouse would not accommodate more than the defendants, their families and their lawyers, Barbara and I headed home at the end of the rally. It was late, and we stopped for dinner in a restaurant in Ithaca. We were enjoying a comfortable dinner in a good restaurant, with good food, music, people around us enjoying their meals, with a glass of wine or beer. We warmed up, settled in.

I became aware of, I could feel the dissonance between the scene where we had just been, and where we were now, and a palpable sense of what in Seminary we called “Middle Class numbness” in the latter. That numbness denied the truth of the larger situation. In that restaurant, the world was a fine place, the current order benign, just and good. We could enjoy our meal in peace, not needing to worry. And, it ignored the Truth that forces are actively at work that are destroying our planet, that money have corrupted both science and politics, and that the Empire will defend those forces against any who challenge them. And I could feel that where we had been,

that scene in the courthouse parking lot, had a lot more life in it than the cozy restaurant. And I wanted more of that life.

We have many Friends whose experience spiritually centers on having the courage to live in the Truth of our situation, to see clearly the school to prison pipeline, to see clearly our racism, to see clearly the destruction of our planet, to see clearly the genocide of peoples at home and abroad, to see clearly that we are a country that tortures, to see clearly that we live amidst vast and accelerating economic disparity, Friends who are unwilling and unable to live out the numbness that says that all is well, fine, just and good, when it is not.

And in this yearly meeting, I have seen an attitude of conflict between “Witness Friends” and “Ministry Friends,” and could tell you stories about that.

We need all of these three strands, and more. We need all of us. These three strands complement, complete each other. We need to be conscious of when we are feeling in competition or conflict with those who come from a different spiritual orientation, and pause, and remember how they are a vital part of our community.

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3. Treasurer’s oral report

The opening balance:	\$204,093	(\$204,000)
Total receipts for the year:	\$370,955	(\$371,000)
Total disbursements:	\$396,617	(\$397,000)
Closing balance:	\$179,431	(\$179,000)
This is a net change of	– \$25,662	(-\$26,000)
Net change at this time in 2013	– \$17,630	(-\$18,000)

4. Report of the Development Committee

Development Committee Report to Fall Sessions, 2014

Twelve months ago, Matt Scanlon, clerk of Financial Services, reported to Fall Sessions that we had roughly eighteen months to explore whether we could increase revenues, or face substantially altering the way we structure our efforts as a yearly meeting. An increase in Covenant Donations has certainly been a part of that exploration, and Matt will be reporting on that aspect of our financial picture in his report today. The other part of the question of whether or not we can increase revenues has fallen to the Development Committee.

We are a relatively new committee, only being approved as a committee in summer of 2012. While we have filed Advance Reports, we have not yet reported to a yearly meeting session about our work. We are still in the process of building a development program in New York Yearly Meeting to help ensure that the needs and leadings of Friends in this yearly meeting will be better supported. But based only on the limited experience of the past two and a half years, we would answer Matt's question, "Yes, we can."

In 2012, our predecessor, the Development Working Group, just barely getting up and running, raised \$15,044. In 2013, we raised \$22,960. This year, we will raise at least \$33,394. (We hope to add to that number here at Fall Sessions, making our goal in the Operating Budget of \$34,000.) That is a 50% increase each year over the previous one. We have committed to raising \$40,000 for the 2015 Operating Budget.

We have been building this program from scratch, each year adding a new program or capacity. We have had to build slowly, as we are a small group. The first year, we put together an annual appeal. The next year, we did an annual appeal and looked to how we should prioritize the other options before us. This year, we added automatic donation services, and had ice cream socials and our first house party fund raiser. We have offered to host monthly meeting automatic donation pages on our service. We also received our first multi-year gift, a gift of \$40,000 over the next five years.

We are incredibly grateful for this gift, and equally grateful for the \$5 gift from an incarcerated Friend, and just as grateful for all the \$5 per month contributions we are receiving. Together, they are adding up to healthy, proactive support for the work being done by us as a yearly meeting. Thank you, each and every one of you.

In the coming year, we anticipate doing more house parties, pursuing other multi-year gifts, and increasing participation in our automated giving program, in addition to our annual appeal. As time allows, we hope to begin the work of inviting Friends into opportunities for planned giving to the Yearly Meeting.

We have heard some concerns that funds raised through development might overwhelm or undermine the core of what sustains this yearly meeting, our Covenant Donations. While we understand and respect those concerns, and welcome conversations about them, we do not see those risks as being substantive. In New England Yearly Meeting, each year for the past many that they have solicited contributions from individuals, both individual giving and giving by monthly meetings have gone up. Giving

begets giving.

In our proposed 2015 Operating Budget, Covenant Donations make up 81% of our income, the proposed appeal, 7%. At what point should we become concerned that money raised through development might undermine the more important contributions through Covenant Donations? That is a worthwhile question for us to consider, and we should do so. But we do not see ourselves nearing that level just yet, and are optimistic about the positive effect a coordinated development effort can have, not just in supporting crucial work done at a yearly meeting level, but also in better connecting individuals and meetings with that work.

Up until this point, we have asked the body for approval on a year by year basis to do an appeal for the coming year. We now will be reporting to General Services Coordinating Committee the idea of doing appeals on an ongoing basis, as we discern they are needed. We hope that this recommendation will then be on Sunday's agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,
The New York Yearly Meeting Development Committee

Peter Baily
Tom Bonhag
Linda Hill Brainard
Joyce Ketterer
Ray Rios
Christopher Sammond

New York Yearly Meeting
Fall Sessions
November 15 – 16, 2014

Fifteenth Street Meetinghouse, New York, NY
Sunday, November 16, 2014, 10:30 a.m.

Jeffrey L. Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield), Clerk
Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Assistant Clerk
Andrew Mead von Salis (Brooklyn), Recording Clerk
Sylke Jackson (Rockland), Reading Clerk

2014-11-14. Following an hour in Fifteenth Street Meeting's weekly worship, Friends moved at 10:30 a.m. into attending to the business of the Yearly Meeting. From the quiet in the room, the Clerk introduced the clerks and announced the business before us.

2014-11-15. Tom Rothschild (Brooklyn), on behalf of the Indian Affairs Committee, read a revision of the Committee's minute, presented yesterday, supporting the release of Leonard Peltier. Copies, with background information, were distributed.

Friends approved the minute as revised and read at this point, and as further revised by our Minute 24 (below). It is therefore as follows:

Friends have a long-standing concern for prisons and those who have been unjustly imprisoned. We are called by God to act with integrity, and out of this grows a concern for justice. We have historic ties with Native American Nations and hold a concern that Native American individuals and Nations receive justice within our governmental systems. We feel led by the Spirit to call for the release of Leonard Peltier because we are led to speak truth to power. If we remain silent, we fail to take action when we feel called to do so. Our conscience requires it of us and our Spirit moves us to act. We join the international community in calling for his release.

In Leonard Peltier's own words:

The Message

Silence, they say, is the voice of complicity.
But silence is impossible.
Silence screams.
Silence is a message,
just as doing nothing is an act.

Let who you are ring out & resonate
in every word & deed.
Yes, become who you are.
There's no sidestepping your own being
or your own responsibility.

What you do is who you are.
You are your own comeuppance.
You become your own message.

You are the message.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,
Leonard Peltier

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends calls for the release from prison of Leonard Peltier in accordance with the plan drawn up by the National Congress of American Indians. Leonard Peltier is elderly and in ill health. We ask that he be allowed to rejoin his family and live his last days in peace.

The clerk of NYYM is requested to forward this minute to Barack Obama while he is in office, and to our Senators and Congressional Representatives.

Additionally, the clerk is requested to write to Leonard Peltier personally to inform him of our action and support, as well as the National Congress of American Indians, which formulated the plan for his release; the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, *Indian Country Today*; and all North American Yearly Meetings. Individual members of New York Yearly Meeting are also encouraged to express individual support for release of Leonard Peltier as led.

2014-11-16. The Assistant Clerk, Lucinda Antrim, presided as the Yearly Meeting heard a report on our Visitation Initiative. Jeff Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield) presented the oral report of the 145 recorded occasions of intervisitation this year by 63 different Friends. All Friends are free to log visits through a “QuickLinks” on our website as they take place. He reviewed the who, what, when and where of the visits, and emphasized especially the why – because of the rewarding relationships and mutual enrichment that can be gained by reaching out to seize the widely-overlooked opportunities for intervisitation among our local meetings.

Various Friends' expressions of appreciation and welcome arose from the floor. Letters of introduction from a visiting Friend's home meeting were encouraged.

2014-11-17. The Clerk then introduced Elaine Learnard, clerk of the Priorities Working Group, who reminded us of the Statement of Leadings and Priorities, approved this summer, which appears in our currently released *Yearbook*. She presented for a first reading the Working Group's new proposals. Their purpose is to guide our future decisions on using our resources, and to provide a process for implementing the priorities and assessing that implementation. These draft minutes reflect the past three years of work, and are ready for distribution and consideration throughout the Yearly Meeting.

Members of the Working Group took turns reading aloud its proposed minutes embodying the proposals, including five Implementation Minutes and a Priorities Assessment Committee Minute. The latter includes language intended to be fit for inclusion in our *Handbook* upon an approval of the Yearly Meeting's establishment of an assessment committee. The Working Group invited feedback and discussion before an expected second reading at our Spring Sessions 2015, at which time the Working Group expects to recommend that it be laid down.

Friends' concerns and comments were offered from the floor, and will continue to be welcome over the coming months. Friends directed the Clerk to distribute the proposals in accordance with the Working Group's report.

2014-11-18. The Reading Clerk read the Epistle of the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage 2014. Twenty-six pilgrims from nine countries toured many localities in Peru and Bolivia, the first time the Youth Pilgrimage has been to South America. They understood God's purpose that we not be alone, as different forms of worship were experienced and, in due course, well appreciated. Games, songs and caring among the pilgrims and their hosts transcended barriers of language, forms of worship, and culture. Quoting George Fox, the pilgrims reported they felt the meaning of being patterns and examples as they walked across these new lands.

2014-11-19. The Assistant Clerk presided as Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale), as a member of the Liaison Committee by virtue of her clerkship of our Witness section, gave the second reading of a "Minute clarifying the role of the clerk and general secretary in representing NYYM," which had its first reading and consideration at this year's Summer Sessions (Minute 2014-07-39). The Liaison Committee recommended its approval today. With word changes to emphasize reporting all such interim statements back to the Yearly Meeting and archiving them, the Minute is approved, as follows:

The NYYM clerk and general secretary are expected to represent the Yearly Meeting.

Between sessions, when the occasion for giving the Yearly Meeting a public voice seems urgent and appropriate, the clerk and general secretary are expected to represent the Yearly Meeting's known stands, along with the testimonies of the wider body of the Religious Society of Friends.

Such occasions could include, but would not be limited to, joining with other organizations in joint statements or actions, signing onto *amicus curiae* briefs, signing petitions and letters of concern as an organization, sending letters of concern to other yearly meetings affected by wars, terrorism and natural disasters, and making time-critical comments to public officials.

The clerk and general secretary should confer with each other and be in accord before taking action. If one or the other is not available to confer, the clerk or general secretary should confer with the assistant clerk and/or associate secretary.

Whenever possible, they should anchor their comments in our faith as Friends, articulating how our speaking out is linked to our testimonies, our *Faith and Practice*, and past minutes approved by the Yearly Meeting, and they should use the resources of the Yearly Meeting's committee members and individuals known to share deeply the relevant concern. If necessary the clerk may call a special meeting of the Liaison Committee to aid in their discernment.

Furthermore, these Friends can ask an individual member to speak for the yearly meeting in a specific instance in which the individual can draw on her or his expertise in the relevant area of concern.

At the next session, the clerk and general secretary will report on such statements and actions they have taken in the interim between sessions. Their actions and joint statements with other bodies will be archived in the NYYM office. When either or both are instructed by a minute of the Yearly Meeting in session, they are expected to report how they have carried out the task. This follow up may be done in writing to the relevant committees and individuals or, if appropriate, by reporting at the next session.

This minute is intended to clarify, consolidate and reiterate policies and processes based on precedents and current review by the Liaison Committee.

2014-11-20. The Clerk called upon John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of the General Services Coordinating Committee, who presented its recommendation that the Development Committee be authorized to conduct fund appeals at their discretion, instead of continuing our practice of prior approval of an annual appeal by the body of the Yearly Meeting. Friends approved.

2014-11-21. The Clerk brought to our attention the Consent Agenda. The following Minutes 22 and 23 were approved in accordance with our consent agenda practice.

2014-11-22. The following nominations for Yearly Meeting service were approved:

Ministry and Pastoral Care (2017)	Emily Provance, 15th Street
Communications Committee (2015)	Jennifer Coonce, Brooklyn (attender)
Development Committee (2017)	Albert Hsu, Wilton
Personnel Committee (2017)	Lynn von Salis, Brooklyn
Friends United Meeting – General Board (2017)	Beverley Archibald, Manhattan
Young Adult Concerns Committee (2017)	Alanna Badgley, Poughkeepsie
Young Adult Concerns Committee (2017)	Audrey Jaynes, Montclair
Indian Affairs Committee (2017)	Rebekah Rice, Saratoga
Indian Affairs Committee (2017)	Rebecca Wolf, Rochester

2014-11-23. The following releases from Yearly Meeting service were received:

Committee on Conflict Transformation (2015)	Judy Meikle, Wilton
State of the Society (2016)	Joan Cope Savage, Syracuse
Junior Yearly Meeting Committee (2015)	David Gerhan, Schenectady
Elsie K. Powell House, Inc. (2016)	Cinda Putman, Albany
Elsie K. Powell House, Inc. (2018)	Catherine (Cathy) Wald, Amawalk
Friends Committee on National Legislation (2015)	Jonathan Collett, Butternuts

2014-11-24. Revisiting our Minute 2014-11-11, a Friend rose to suggest a change in language as to our call to act that appeared to have the consent of the Indian Affairs Committee. Friends approved replacing the phrase “Our testimonies call upon us to act with integrity” with “We are called by God”.

2014-11-25. The Reading Clerk read a travel minute of Manhattan Monthly Meeting for Margaret Mulindi to travel and work in Kenya, already endorsed by New York Quarterly Meeting. The Clerk offered it for endorsement by the Yearly Meeting. Friends directed the Clerk to endorse the travel minute.

2014-11-26. The Sessions Committee, by Melanie-Claire Mallison, its assistant clerk, reported orally on these Fall Sessions. The attendance was the largest Fall Sessions attendance ever, including 170 adults, 26 teens and 2 younger children giving a total of 196 Friends. Melanie-Claire named the Host Committee's members and many volunteers and the host meeting and School, to all of whom we are grateful for their resourceful and generous service. The report was received.

2014-11-27. Melanie-Claire Mallison proceeded to read a report of the Sessions Committee. It includes the schedule of dates for the Yearly Meeting's sessions over the next year, and an earnest statement of the design and plans for our Summer Sessions 2015 at Silver Bay, N.Y. Friends were warmly invited and encouraged to participate. Friends received the report and invitation.

2014-11-28. The Minutes were heard, corrected and approved in stages during the meeting.

2014-11-29. Friends returned to a period of silence to end the Fall Sessions, adjourning at 12:35 p.m. to meet again for Spring Sessions at Oakwood School, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., on April 10-12, 2015.