

Public Witness

Criminal Justice | **Solitary confinement.** The Yearly Meeting sent to the legislature and governor of New York State a minute of conscience expressing our opposition to solitary confinement and our support for a reform bill.

Prison meetings. A delegation from New York Yearly Meeting is working with NYS Department of Community and Correctional Services to improve conditions for several prison worship groups who feel that their religious freedom rights are being curtailed.

AVP in New Jersey. This year the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) really blossomed in New Jersey, largely due to the work of NYYM Friends. AVP is now active in state correctional facilities for both youth and women, and in communities around the state.

Racial Justice | **Friends & slavery program.** Two Friends spoke on Quakers and slavery at three consecutive meetings of a local NAACP chapter for the group's Juneteenth celebration.

White Privilege Conference. The Yearly Meeting signed on as a host organization and is actively organizing NYYM participation. The goal is 100 Friends from New York Yearly Meeting attending the Conference.

Letter to Pope Francis. The Yearly Meeting sent a letter to Pope Francis during his visit to the US asking him to repudiate the so-called Doctrine of Christian Discovery and to rescind the papal bulls upon which the Doctrine is founded.

Spiritual Nurture

Tending the Garden | T h e Spiritual Nurture

Working Group has rolled out and begun presenting exciting spiritual nurture programs designed for local meetings on twelve topics, including worship, pastoral care, vocal ministry, and others.



Meetings for Discernment | In March, 65 Friends met at Old Chatham meetinghouse for extended worship in Meetings for Discernment, our experiment in deep listening for the movement of Spirit among us without the constraints of agendas.

Youth

Youth Institute |

The Youth Committee, in conjunction with the Youth Directors at Powell House, the Yearly Meeting conference center, held the first Youth Institute, providing take-home skills for the participants and lifting up a multigenerational approach to youth programming.

JYM clerks |

The Yearly Meeting sent the youth clerks of this year's Junior Yearly Meeting high school and junior high school groups to a clerking workshop at Powell House.

Outreach

Outreach Roundtable |

In October, 26 Friends from 18 meetings attended New York Yearly Meeting's first Quaker Outreach Roundtable, held at Shrewsbury Meeting. It featured presentations on outreach topics, sharing of ideas and local meeting experience, and exploration of concrete next steps.

Glenn Josey of Fifteenth Street Meeting and Karen Tibbals of Rahway & Plainfield Meeting addressing the Outreach Roundtable



Yearly Meeting Staff

ARCH. Aging Resources, Consultation and Help restructured this year, with Barbara K. Spring soon to retire, Anita Paul transitioning to ARCH Specialist, and Callie Janoff becoming ARCH Director. Their network of trained Visitors in local meetings continues to expand and they are developing regional Coordinators to coordinate their work.

Interim Young Adult Friends Secretaries. We expect Gabrielle Savory Bailey, our Young Adult Field Secretary, to return from her medical leave in the next few months. In the interim, Emily Provance is doing visitation and Jillian Smith handles communications and social media for Young Adult Friends.

Communications. Steven Davison has added several new sections to the website, including Resources for Meetings, About Quakers, and a portal for Quaker Videos. He also leads the effort to bring the Yearly Meeting a new website, due in the spring of 2016.

General Secretary. Christopher Sammond works from his passions for community building, spiritual deepening, and releasing others' gifts in ministry. He continues to visit meetings, and frequently offers workshops and retreats on deepening worship, vocal ministry, and discernment. In the wider Society of Friends, he helped redefine FUM's North American Ministry program and participated in FGC's consultation on Spiritual Deepening.

Associate Secretary. Helen Garay Toppins continues to visit meetings and prison worship groups with programs in advancement and racial equality, including a keynote and discussion at Farmington-Scipio Fall Gathering in Orchard Park, New York, on "Quakers and Race: What Can We DO NOW?"

Administrative Associate. Walter Naegle visited several meetings and Quaker schools to talk about his book *Bayard Rustin: The Invisible Activist*, a young person's biography of his late partner, civil rights leader, and New York Yearly Meeting Friend, published in November 2014.



Young Adult Friends Mini Retreat at Brooklyn Meeting

Local Meeting Witness & Outreach

Sing Sing Worship Group: After the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, the men in the Sing Sing Worship Group, all of whom come from communities of color, began looking at the issues of policing and violence, focusing ultimately on the query "How Would We Help

Our Community Reduce Violence?" The resulting five-section minute will be part of an article in this December's *Friends Journal* issue on Justice and Poverty. Each section describes the relevant Quaker testimonies and what the men in the Worship Group will do themselves.

Chatham-Summit Meeting organized the first-ever AVP camp for youth. Twenty mostly undocumented Latino high school students attended the two-week Camp at the meeting-house, participating in both Basic and Advanced AVP training.

Housatonic Meeting wrote a letter to the members of Mother Emmanuel Church in South Carolina, extending

sympathy for their loss and gratitude for their inspiring example.

Yearly Meeting Committees

Witness Activities Fund

This year the Fund supported the witness ministries of several Friends and several meetings, including, among other grants, \$2,400 to Chatham-Summit Meeting for their AVP summer camp and \$1,000 for Morningside Meeting's "Hope Lives for Lifers" program.

Conflict Transformation

The Conflict Transformation Committee created and distributed DVDs of the movie they have made of their workshop, *Conflict in Quaker Meetings: Crisis or Opportunity?* The workshop was featured at two gatherings of Friends World Committee for Consultation—Section of the Americas.

Prisons Committee

Prisons Committee has led the Yearly meeting in its efforts to end the practice of solitary confinement and continues to support our prison worship groups.