



# SPARK

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

Volume 50, Number 1

15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003

January 2020

## What's Happening Now

### Our Responsibilities as Neighbors

Sunfire  
Easton Meeting

I was raised in the Methodist Church. Every Sunday, when the ushers had collected the offerings, they marched down the aisle with the collection plates while the choir and congregation, without prompting or printed words, sang:

We give Thee but Thine own,  
whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is Thine alone,  
a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

The idea that people have a responsibility for the stewardship of what they possess is part of the heritage of all religious traditions. Those of us who have attended recent Summer Sessions know that Silver Bay is on land that was once part of a hunting ground used in common by all the Indian nations of the area, and that the treaty they had with each other was called "the dish with one spoon," showing that each nation should take from the land only what they needed.

Now, in a Eurocentric society with a capitalist economy, land titles are contingent on having deeds and paying taxes, and land rights are regulated by law. This may incline us to forget the theological idea of our land being held in trust from God.

On October 22, more than seventy people of faith were registered for an all-day seminar at Pace University Law School sponsored

*continued on page 4*

### Quaker Family Sunday Suppers

Ann Pettigrew Nunes  
Clerk, Wilton Children's Meeting

Quaker meetings can sometimes feel small, and parents of young and busy children may struggle to attend. A handful of children attend our own meeting in Wilton, and while we feel supported by the community of regular attenders, connection with other families deepens our experience and sense of belonging like nothing else can. Our family has found that Powell House weekends and Summer Sessions connections have opened up relationship with many other families, a number of whose meetings are in similar situations to ours. The quiet of adult worship is comforting, but our children also need the fun—and challenge—of connecting with other kids.

The Wilton Children's Meeting Committee sought to support parents in our meeting and our adjacent preschool through a book discussion of *Paths to Quaker Parenting*. This quickly led to further connection through the Quaker Parenting Initiative online discussion group led by Harriet Heath. By chance, three parents in the initial online discussion group came from the same quarter. We met online and wondered about possibilities for local gatherings.

At the suggestion of Melinda Wenner Bradley through the Vital Meetings Partnership Project from

*continued on page 4*



Eleven NYYM Friends attended a seminar titled "Who is My Neighbor?" on October 22 at Pace University Law School. The event was sponsored by the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC), of which NYYM is a member. More seminars will be held around NY state in the coming months. For more on the seminar, read the article "Our Responsibilities as Neighbors," by Sunfire, in this issue.

Registration for Summer Sessions opens Feb. 1!



### World Ministries Committee

Susan Weisfeld  
Scarsdale Meeting

The World Ministries Committee (WMC) is a wonderful and unique committee in that it provides a means whereby individual NYYM Friends and meetings can bring "Quaker love to the wider world." This is the committee's ministry: to make possible leadings and projects which promote peace, healing and material help for those who need support worldwide.

The WMC has been an active part of the NYYM since 1889. Although WMC is a grant-funding committee, it is more than just a distribution point of money. It makes possible new books delivered to a rural school for orphaned children in Kenya; trauma healing workshops

*continued on page 5*

### Summer Sessions July 19-25, 2020 Silver Bay, NY

2020 is New York Yearly Meeting's 325th year! Inspired by this anniversary and current period of change, the theme for Summer Sessions is **Embracing our Past, Envisioning our Future**. Payment will again be Pay as Led. See more Summer Sessions information on pages 6-8. Registration opens February 1!

### More Inside:

**Around Our Yearly Meeting** page 2

325  embracing our past  
envisioning our future  
**Summer Sessions**  
pages 6-8



## Notices

### New Members

**Ami Corleto-Bales** —  
Mohawk Valley  
**Samuel Corleto-Bales** —  
Mohawk Valley  
**Scott Blumenthal** —  
Morningside  
**Samuel Hartman** —  
Manasquan  
**Robert Schwab** —  
Morningside  
**Daniel Won** — Manasquan

### Transfers

**Annie Bancroft**, from Butternuts to Poughkeepsie.  
**Sarah Faith Dickinson**, from Butternuts to Poughkeepsie.

### Marriages

**David Obermayer**, member of Binghamton, to Marie Sager, on October 18, 2019.

### Deaths

**Jeff Hinkle**, member of Albany, on November 5, 2019.

## MEETING NEWS

### New NYYM Witness Video Series!

“Witness in the World” is a new series of videos about Friends in NYYM who are active in Witness activities. The series is produced by Leo Quirk, co-clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee, and stars NYYM Friends like you. View the videos on the NYYM YouTube channel—go to YouTube.com and search for “NYYM Videos.”

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Coordinating Committee Weekend

**Jan. 24-26, 2020, Powell House**  
Coordinating committees (CCs) coordinate the work of NYYM committees with a related purpose or focus; there is a Witness, Ministry, and General Services CC. This weekend is an opportunity for CCs



Shrewsbury Meeting has installed new, bright outdoor signs for their meetinghouse. Photo by Gay Edelman

## Around Our Yearly Meeting

to get their work done and to share that work with others, and is open both to those serving on NYYM committees and those interested in the work of NYYM committees. Please register at [poho.org](http://poho.org) ASAP.

### Winter Meeting for Discernment Feb. 8, 2020 (snow date: Feb. 15)

#### Ithaca Meeting

Meetings for Discernment are periods of extended, waiting worship designed to discern leadings and strengthen connections in our yearly meeting. Worship will begin at 9 a.m. and will continue into the afternoon with a break for lunch in the middle. The following topic and queries are offered as focal points for worship:

**Seeing and being seen in community: reflections on Friends' experiences of power and authority.**

- When have unequal power dynamics gotten in the way of your/our best spiritual discernment?
- When have you felt powerful? When have you felt powerless?

Please register at [www.nyym.org/meetingfordiscernment2020](http://www.nyym.org/meetingfordiscernment2020) or call the registrar, Bronwyn Mohlke: 607-220-3219. Meeting for Discernment will be followed by a retreat for young adults; see “Upcoming Programs for Young Adults.”

### Powell House is for you!

Powell House is NYYM's conference and retreat center in Old Chatham, NY. Visit [powellhouse.org](http://powellhouse.org) or call 518-794-8811. Upcoming events: **Friends Decision-making and Clerking: Participating in Meetings for Business with Joy and Confidence** with Arthur M. Larrabee and Steve Mohlke, Jan. 31–Feb. 2, 2020. This workshop is for everyone who wants to deepen their understanding of Quaker decision-making—an opportunity to get better grounded in what Quaker decision-making is all about.

### Brent Bill: Beauty, Truth, Life, and Love

— A Pilgrimage on Positive Spirituality, Feb. 7–9, 2020. Join us for this journey away from duty and obligation and into Brent's latest book: *Beauty, Truth, Life, and Love: Four Essentials for the Abundant Life*.

### Upcoming youth conferences:

**Freeze!** — 6th–8th Grade, Jan. 31–Feb. 2. January is like this in Old Chatham: Freeze. Thaw. Freeze. So that is what we will do—play

Freeze! Through improv games and other creative activities we'll try on different ways of being and connecting in the world. Then we'll thaw with relaxation activities and warm nourishing treats.

**Stars & Space** — 9th–12th Grade, February 21–23

“Light comes from a time already gone.” It is a new moon this

## Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Volunteers Needed

Do you or someone you know have a gift and a leading for working with children? It's not too early to start thinking about volunteering with Junior Yearly Meeting at Summer Sessions 2020. The time you give to our young Friends at Summer Sessions has a great impact on their lives. For many of our youngsters, that week at Silver Bay is the highlight of their year.

Registration for Summer Sessions (July 19-25, 2020) will open on February 1. If you're interested in volunteering with JYM, please contact us before you register, as being a JYM volunteer includes financial support for attending Summer Sessions.

JYM volunteers will meet together at the JYM Planning Weekend held at Powell House on June 5-7. The weekend will give us a chance to get to know each other, both as the whole JYM volunteer crew and within each of the groups. Before the end of the weekend, we want to enable you to have fully fleshed out plans for Summer Sessions and have letters written to your group. We want time to play games together, both old and new; to learn from each other; and to have fun together.

Please contact the JYM coordinators, Dawn and Ellie, with any questions as soon as you know whether you are led to volunteer in 2020. We hope to hear from you by **February 15**.

—The Coordinators:

Dawn Pozzi: 609-571-5672, [quakerdawn@gmail.com](mailto:quakerdawn@gmail.com)  
Ellie Rosenberg: 607-227-1403, [ellierosenberg7@gmail.com](mailto:ellierosenberg7@gmail.com)

weekend, so the stars will shine brighter. The far-away stars will spark our close-to-the-heart discussions around energy and light and feeding our souls.

### Upcoming Programs for YOUNG ADULTS

• **Retreat: Discovering and Living into my Spiritual Gifts**, Feb. 8–9, 2020, (6:00 p.m. Sat.–4:00 p.m. Sun.) (begins with Meeting for Discernment on Feb. 8), at Ithaca Meeting  
• **Workshop: Giving Vocal Ministry and Lifting my Quaker Voice**, March 14, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., at Manasquan Meeting (NJ)

For registration: [www.tickettailor.com/events/newyorkyearlymeetingyoungadultfriendactivities/](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/newyorkyearlymeetingyoungadultfriendactivities/)

### Anti-Racism Workshop

The Center for the Study of White American Culture's next workshop is “Why Color Matters” — a three-part online webinar that examines racial colorblindness and considers the alternative of color consciousness as a pathway to achieving racial justice and equity. The webinar meets February 1, 8, & 15, 2020, at 5-7 p.m. EST.

Visit [www.euroamerican.org](http://www.euroamerican.org) for more information.



SPARK (ISSN 00240591)

New York Yearly Meeting News  
Published five times a year:  
January, March, May, September,  
November by

New York Yearly Meeting  
Religious Society of Friends  
15 Rutherford Place  
New York, NY 10003  
212-673-5750  
[office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org)  
[www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org)

Editorial Board:  
Communications Committee

Editor: Sarah Way

SPARK deadlines are the first week of the month preceding the publication month. Permission is granted to reprint any article, provided Spark is acknowledged as the source.

Periodicals Postage Paid  
at New York, New York  
Postmaster: Send address changes to:

**SPARK**

15 Rutherford Place  
New York, NY 10003

Sarah Way  
[communications@nyym.org](mailto:communications@nyym.org)

Chad Gilmartin  
[web@nyym.org](mailto:web@nyym.org)

Walter Naegle  
[walter@nyym.org](mailto:walter@nyym.org)

Steve Mohlke  
[genssec@nyym.org](mailto:genssec@nyym.org)

Helen Garay Toppins  
[office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org)



## Editor's Note

Welcome to the January *Spark*. This issue is un-themed and is full of news from around the yearly meeting. Read about Quaker Family Suppers, epistles from Powell House youth conferences, and a report from the World Ministries Committee.

The winter **Meeting for Discernment** is on February 8 at Ithaca Meeting. See more details in the "Around Our Yearly Meeting" section.

**Summer Sessions** registration opens on **February 1!** This earlier and longer registration period helps the NYYM office, which now handles all aspects of registration and payment. Turn to page 6 for more information about Summer Sessions, happening July 19-25, 2020, at Silver Bay YMCA. Sessions will again be "Pay as Led" in 2020, which means Friends can choose their level of payment. Some Friends will pay more so that other Friends can pay less, making Sessions more accessible to everyone. The registration deadline is **June 1**. After that, Pay as Led rates lower than standard may not be available, and room choices may be limited.

Friends are invited to write an article for *Spark*. Please limit yourself to 400-600 words. Please send article submissions and meeting news to [communications@nyym.org](mailto:communications@nyym.org) by the 1st week of the month prior to the month of publication.

### Upcoming Spark themes:

**March: Guest-edited by Indian Affairs Committee.** If you'd like to write an article or have artwork related to Indian Affairs, please contact the committee clerks: Buffy Curtis ([havehelpinghands@gmail.com](mailto:havehelpinghands@gmail.com)) and Liseli Haines ([liseli.haines@gmail.com](mailto:liseli.haines@gmail.com)) by Feb. 1.

**Email your meeting's news** to [communications@nyym.org](mailto:communications@nyym.org) so I can include them in Info-Share, NYYM's monthly e-newsletter.

### NYYM is on social media:

- [Facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/](https://www.facebook.com/NewYorkYearlyMeeting/)
- [Twitter.com/NYYMTweets](https://twitter.com/NYYMTweets)
- [Instagram.com/newyorkyearlymeeting](https://www.instagram.com/newyorkyearlymeeting)

Manage your NYYM email lists at [www.tinyurl.com/nyymconnect](http://www.tinyurl.com/nyymconnect)

Happy New Year! —Sarah Way

## How Does God Call Us to Act?

### FWCC Sustainability: An Online Conference with Friends Worldwide February 22, 2020

*"Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong."*

1 Corinthians 16:13


The Friends of FWCC (Friends' World Committee for Consultation) have recognized the need to respond to sustainability. In 2016, at our last world gathering, we generated the Pisac Sustainability Minute. This has led to exploring the work Quakers are doing on sustainability across the world, and asking Friends and yearly meetings to take action to promote sustainability at all levels, including the global level.

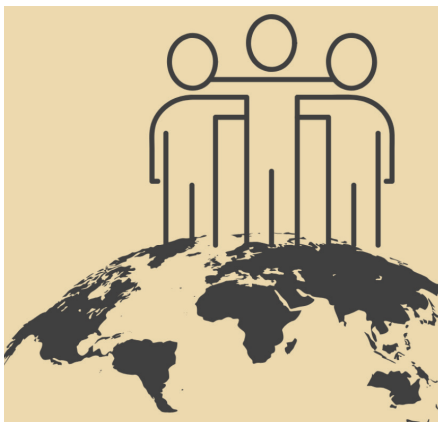
But now, almost four years on, we recognize the need to gather, to share, and to understand where we are as a family sharing this urgent concern.

This online conference will create space to hear from one another around the world on matters relating to sustainability and to understand how as Quakers we are being called to act. How do we feel called to act? How does our radical faith speak to us?

On Saturday February 22, 2020, there will be an online conference spanning 11 hours. You will be able to join one of three start times, for a duration of three hours. All of the worship sharing will be in English, but if you need French, you will be able to join in the second start time, and if you need Spanish, you will be able to join the third start time. We will be using the platform Zoom to host this call.

For the full breakdown of details, including technical requirements and a link to registration, see [fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020/info](http://fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020/info)

If you have any questions, please email [sustainability@fwcc.world](mailto:sustainability@fwcc.world). 



## Consider 2020 FGC Gathering!

June 28-July 4, 2020

Radford, Virginia

Christine Japely  
15th Street Meeting

We of NYYM are lucky to be able to look forward to Summer Sessions on Lake George. For Friends who cannot make it that week, or who want to extend their Quaker experience, there is the annual Friends General Conference Gathering. The Gathering is similar in many ways to Summer Sessions in that you are with many Quakers for a summer week away, enmeshed in a Quakerly tapestry of activities and renewal.

And of course election year 2020 will be frenetic; a summer escape for rest and replenishment will be an excellent tonic if we wish to maintain a healthy emotional balance.

I have attended FGC Gathering a number of times over the years. One of the attractions is that it always moves to a new geographic location within the USA (on verdant out-in-the-country college campuses mostly). This year the Gathering is at Radford University in Radford, VA (June 28-July 4, 2020). The theme is "Way Will Open." The location is a small town of under 20,000 residents near the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains of Southwestern Virginia. It's close to Blacksburg and Claytor Lake State Park, and about an hour from the Blue Ridge Parkway, among many other attractions.

I am offering one of the many morning workshops given that week; it's called **Quiet and Creative Spirit: Way Gently Opens**. What does that mean? Well, here's what I have been led to offer:

*We live in difficult and demanding times, and Friends need sustenance to continue "fighting the good fight." This workshop is designed to heal and strengthen friends through sustained meditation (worship) in a variety of nurturing, enriching, and gentle forms.*

*From 9–11 a.m. every morning, friends will greet each other in an opening circle of five or ten minutes, and then gently move into silence. In a meditative and creative spirit, and without spoken conversation, we will make art, listen to beautiful music, spiritual texts, nature sounds, and go on walking meditations. Simple art projects involving dried flowers, watercolor, and paper will be offered. Napping, handwork, and personal reading are allowed and encouraged. We will conclude the morning with worship sharing.*


This workshop is just one of scores of possibilities. Please consider FGC Gathering for that week touching on July 4th (the traditional week when FGC Gathering is held) this year! It is always an enriching and life-enhancing experience. You meet new friends and bump into folks you may not have seen for years. Visit the Gathering website at [fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering](http://fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering) 

## Online Articles

**Constraining Trustees' Power to Spend Unrestricted Trust Fund Principal Without the Body's Consent** by Tim Connolly, **Purchase Meeting**. "Currently, the NYYM Trustees have the power to use principal from unrestricted NYYM trust funds to pay for NYYM operating expenses. I believe this power should be constrained by the body. Monthly meetings that agree that this power should be constrained by the body should let our Trustees know this via minute prior to Spring Sessions, 2020."

Read the rest of this editorial article online.

**Jeffrey Aaron, Clerk of NYYM**, has written an article detailing an **Agenda Scheduling Concept**: a set of guidelines on how to add items to our business meeting agendas. This useful article explains how best to bring concerns to the yearly meeting.

You can find both articles by clicking on "Spark, January 2020" at [nyym.org/content/spark](http://nyym.org/content/spark). 



Rahway-Plainfield Friends Meeting has replaced their school wing with a mostly new building called the community wing. Photo from Leisel Dreisbach-Williams





# What's Happening Now

## Our Responsibilities as Neighbors

Sunfire  
Easton Meeting

*continued from page 1*

by the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC). The theme of the seminar was “Who is My Neighbor?” Eleven Friends from NYYM meetings, including both of our representatives to the NYSCOC Executive Committee, attended.

It was the first of a series of seminars; a second one was held in Medina, NY, on November 12. Future seminars will be in Western Long Island on January 28, in Saratoga Springs on March 17, and in Syracuse on May 19. Information is on the NYSCOC website:


[nyscoc.org/events/community-development-and-church-property-initiative/](http://nyscoc.org/events/community-development-and-church-property-initiative/)

We began with a worship service that included everyone singing a song made popular by Mr. Rogers—the one that begins, “It’s a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.”

We sat at tables and discussed questions like, “Why should faith communities care about building inclusive communities?” We learned about “Root Theology,” about “Mindy Fullilove’s Nine Keys to Restoring Joy,” and about how some congregations have developed affordable housing on space they owned but were not using, or on space that was integrated with buildings they used.

A Friend from the New York City area said, “I was particularly moved by the suggestion to not simply assume that the community of people who live and work near our meetinghouses need what we think they need, or to offer what we are moved by our own conscience to offer, but to genuinely and thoroughly ASK our neighbors what their greatest struggles and finest hopes are, and in conversation with our neighbors, consider how our property could most benefit the community as a whole.”

What did I take away from this seminar? For the last three or four thousand years, humans have been engaged in struggles—often violent struggles—to obtain and keep land. We have justified these conflicts with the “Doctrine of Discovery” and the concept of “Manifest

Destiny.” Those of us who are white have, for the most part, profited by these struggles, but no one can claim a clear moral title to the lands they occupy. Nevertheless, when we collectively aim to make this planet a place where all peoples can thrive, we find ways to fulfill our obligations to our Creator. Everyone becomes our neighbor. 



Singing “All God’s Critters” following the story “Love’s Way” at Wilton Meeting, part of a Quaker Family Sunday Supper. Photo via Ann Nunes

## Quaker Family Sunday Suppers

Ann Pettigrew Nunes  
Clerk, Wilton Children’s Meeting

*continued from page 1*

New York Yearly Meeting, we began this year to gather in Purchase Quarter for Quaker Family Sunday Suppers. These quarterly gatherings have been a delightful way to foster a sense of belonging within Purchase Quarter and to expand our circle of young families. To date we’ve met twice (June 2019 in Scarsdale and October 2019 in Wilton); a third supper will take place December 15 at Chappaqua Friends Meeting. We rotate hosting with the intention of broadening our reach.

The Sunday Suppers follow a simple format: families arrive and children play together while parents meet and greet. We gather in meeting for worship for a family-friendly story and singing, followed by pot luck and pizza for dinner, and inevitably more playtime. Faith & Play stories have been an integral part of the format. Start-to-finish the gathering lasts no more than



Rachel Dannefer sings with her son Fynn at a Quaker Family Sunday Supper. Photo via Ann Nunes

2 hours, scheduled early so that families with younger children can be home in time for bed.

At our first gathering, families settled into meeting for worship together in the Scarsdale Meetinghouse, forming a circle on the floor. Ann laid out the underlay, introducing the story called “Gifts.” “Gifts are very special things,” she began. “Gifts can come wrapped in a colorful package with a bow...” With that, toddler Friend Marshall crawled right into the center of the story underlay and sat up, curiously watching to see what was coming next. “That’s right,” his mother, Hallie, assured him, “Marshall is our gift!”


“Faith & Play is a way for kids and parents to learn about our faith and what it means in our daily lives,” commented Daniel Werges of Scarsdale. “Singing with kids and families is wonderful. It doesn’t happen much in our Meetings; I think it really helps our boys to connect spiritually by joining the singing,” he added.

It’s a special moment to witness and share the parenting experience together. The connection with other parents has opened up peer support for Quaker parenting. And our children who once were strangers to each other now recognize young Friends at quarterly and yearly meeting gatherings, remembering this unique time they’ve spent together.

These suppers have been so very Friendly and fun for all, offering another touchpoint for our children to get to know one another and share in an intimate way. The suppers have attracted families to Quaker worship who otherwise are not able to attend meeting, and have even served as an introduction to Quaker practice for new families. Invitations for the suppers have been distributed widely, including to our preschools. We hope to continue the practice and to welcome new Friends as we move forward.

For future gatherings, Friends may picnic or go for a hike together to give our children space to run around more. “Walking in nature is a great way to start conversations and connect further,” notes Daniel. In our hectic lives so full of work, activities, parenting challenges, and rushing around, a couple of hours

spent locally with other Quaker families invite a pause and a deep breath. We find ourselves singing *Rise up Singing* songs in the car, carrying the story conversation and the wondering into our daily family life. Thank you, Friends!

*It’s just like a magic penny  
Hold it tight and you won’t have any  
Lend it, spend it and you’ll have so many  
They’ll roll all over the floor!* 



Manasquan Friends held a vigil against gun violence on Nov. 23, 2019. Photo via Chad Dell

## Quakers Offer Vigil to End Gun Violence

Chad Dell  
Manasquan Meeting

A vigil to end gun violence drew more than 65 people to the Manasquan Quaker Meetinghouse on November 20, 2019.

The event began with silent contemplation in the meetinghouse. Some participants stood to share their reflections about the epidemic of gun violence in communities throughout the nation. Participants then stood outside in a vigil on the Route 35 circle for an hour, signifying their witness to end gun violence, as passing drivers honked or waved in support.

Theresa Turner, State Legislative Leader of the nonpartisan national group Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, spoke about the organization’s mission to reduce the number of homicides, suicides, and accidental gun deaths occurring annually in the United States. According to the Pew Research Center, nearly 40,000 people a year are killed in gun-related incidents nationally.

Eleanor Novek, a member of Manasquan Meeting, said the event was an important step for her community. “Our faith compels us to take a stand on this important issue,” she said. “As Quakers, we





*Tears*, fabric, by Ruth Ralston. This piece currently hangs at Powell House.

revere life and believe that there is that of God in every human being.”

Jim Jones, clerk of Manasquan Meeting, called on elected officials to “adopt common-sense gun-control measures that balance public safety interests with individual rights—and to do so immediately, before one more needless death.”

A petition in support of universal background checks addressed to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was circulated.

The vigil was covered by nj.com in the Jersey Journal’s “Faith Matters” column.



## World Ministries Committee

Susan Weisfeld  
Scarsdale Meeting

*continued from page 1*

in the poorest areas of Central America; technical scholarships for Bolivian Aymara Quaker teenagers; maternal health instruction for new mothers in East Africa; a new roof for an old crumbling meetinghouse in Cuba which is being converted into an “Institute of Peace”; teacher training for young Indonesian women; creating a “cultures of peace” project in the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Ukraine, and Chechnya; partnering with Right Sharing World Resource organizations in Sierra Leone to prevent further spread of Ebola; supporting a Friends United Meeting initiative in Belize City to combat human trafficking; secondary school scholarships for three rural tribal African girls who otherwise would have been forced to marry very young and can now go on to train to be teachers; translation of *Faith*

and *Practice* into Tagalog (Filipino); Quaker books for a Ramallah school; and so much more, year after year. This work is possible thanks to the bequests of Friends whose objective was that their legacy be to insure this wonderful ministry, and thanks to Friends who contribute to the Sharing Fund so that this ministry can continue.

We who serve on this committee are grateful to have the opportunity to help enable the projects Friends choose to accomplish. The committee invites applications at any time of the year. The guidelines for grants are on the NYYM website at [nyym.org/committee/world-ministries-committee](http://nyym.org/committee/world-ministries-committee) and the form is easy to download.

One can say that the WMC is at the heart of what defines Quakers. Creating a path to peace and bringing Quaker love to the wider world is both a mission for the committee and a serious charge to its members who evaluate each grant proposal. As long as NYYM Friends are led to bring peace and love to the wider world, the World Ministries Committee will continue to try to give support within its means, in the spirit of those Friends who make this committee possible.

—The committee: Edward Doty, David Gerhan, Martha Gurvich, David Herendeen, Arlene Reduto, Lisa Stewart, Susan Weisfeld.



From the Quaker Faith & Play story “Gifts.”

Epistles from two recent youth conferences at Powell House:

## Epistle: *Falling Up*

6th to 8th Grade  
Nov. 15-17, 2019

PoHo was great this weekend. We fell into a huge amount of fun. Friday night we were welcomed by old friends, new friends, and the warmth of the community. The trust and falling began during Friday night’s chair relay, followed by trust falls and themes of supporting one another. We wrapped up the evening with listening to poems from Shel Silverstein’s *Falling Up*. The game Islands, led by Kwame on Saturday morning, helped us gain insight on gravity and balance. We all took turns learning different falls during small groups and discussed the variety of emotions that come with falling. Laughs, music, and creative skits were shared during Cabaret and all were excited to play Body Body. The night finished with a peaceful moonlight walk and huggles before bed. Singing and worship ended a wonderful weekend where we learned to roll with the falls in life. This weekend has now fallen into our collection of PoHo memories.

## Epistle: *Future Scape*

9th to 12th Grade  
Sept. 27-29, 2019

On Friday night we arrived, some of us adjusting to new schools and social situations. We were met with joy and laughter and bright smiles from dear friends. We enjoyed a spaghetti dinner and conversation. We then circled up for session where we practiced the playful tradition of dancing the Salty Dog Rag. After a great deal of stumbling and mirth, we sat and listened to a beautiful song “Everything Possible.” The song was soothing and allowed us to release some built up tension about the future. We discussed what parts of the song were most meaningful to us and when we feel most comfortable being ourselves. We then settled into silence to share news in our lives. People carried different burdens and we were able to connect more deeply by sharing with each other. After some free time, we formed a big huddle and went off to bed.

We rose the next morning, ate, and circled up for session once

again. This time, we exercised our imaginations in an improv game called “Will You Buy My Anything.” After a lot of laughter we formed small groups where we discussed the Quaker practice of discerning what is important in life. We realized many of the things that seemed important were not deeply important in our lives. We discussed other’s expectations for our futures and the resulting pressure we felt.

We then moved outdoors where we grounded ourselves through listening and connected to the group’s energy.

We walked up to Lynn’s field where we shared meaningful songs with ourselves and the wind. We then paired up and accompanied each other, one blindfolded the other not, allowing us to connect and trust one another. We enjoyed indoor and outdoor work projects, then relaxed with a 3-way massage. After a tranquil self-space we reveled in dinner and some free time. We moved into an Experiment with Light meditation where we processed hardships and important questions internally. We talked things through with trusted friends, then broke into more free time with couch piles, games, and laughter. After a Cabaret filled with creativity, beautiful music, and hilarity, we went off to bed, dreaming fondly of the future.

We ended the conference with an opportunity to suggest future conferences, an affirmation exercise, singing and worship.

Overall, we felt sessions were fun and light hearted, yet carried the spiritual undertone had by all at Powell House gatherings. We felt that Powell House truly is a place where it’s okay to relax and be ourselves, and where personal growth is encouraged. During the light meditation, we were able to make peace with ourselves and our lives just a little bit more. The tone of the conference was one of peace and contentment. We saw our friends again after a very long time apart, and were able to give them lots of hugs. One adult-ish presence said he re-met a lot of heckin’ dope people. We shared stories and experiences and all became wiser for it.

We left carrying newfound wisdom, wonderful memories and contentment in our hearts.

— Rebecca Anacheke-Nassemann & James Russell-Peters





## Welcome! You are invited to join New York Yearly Meeting Friends at Summer Sessions!

Welcome to Summer Sessions 2020, New York Yearly Meeting's 325th annual gathering, and to the second year of the Pay as Led experiment, designed to encourage as much participation as possible. Not all of those 325 years were at the beautiful Silver Bay YMCA facilities on Lake George, but we are their longest returning organization, having met there for more than a half century. (Are there any among us who remember summer gatherings before Silver Bay?)

This year's theme is **Embracing our Past, Envisioning our Future**. We are a yearly meeting in transition, and we are facing many different

changes, as is the rest of the world. Change can be difficult, but our Quaker process, rooted in deep listening to all voices, helps us move forward in the Light with love for each other and for our community. As a community, we have much to offer to each other and to the wider world. The summer schedule is chock full of opportunities to gather, as it always is, but each of us can participate to the extent we are led. What is your favorite part of the day? Morning worship sharing? Group singing on the front porch of the Inn? Bible Study? Interest groups? Intergenerational activities, planned or unplanned? Maybe even the good

work we accomplish when we labor together in committees and in business sessions? Come for the spiritual re-charge that a week in a beautiful setting with hundreds of Friends can be.

Last summer, Pay as Led was a wonderful success. It helped bring more Friends to Summer Sessions, some new or coming back after a long absence, and led to an increase in youth and young adults. We look forward to more of the same this year. Read below for more details. All Friends are welcome to attend this year's historic 325th gathering of New York Yearly Meeting!

—Jeffrey Aaron, NYYM Clerk

### STEPS TO SUMMER SESSIONS

- Decide on your arrival and departure dates. The full week is July 19-25, 2020. You can also attend for a half week or single day(s).
- Determine who you will be rooming with, if possible. *Please note that children under 18 must room with a parent or in an adjoining room.*
- Choose your housing preference. The building and room rate list will be available online by Feb. 1.
- *Parents of children ages 3-18:* Read the **Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM)** section on page 8.
- *Parents of children ages 0-2:* Read **For children under 3 years old** within the JYM section on page 8.
- Read the Participant Expectations and Agreements on the [nyym.org/sessions-committee](http://nyym.org/sessions-committee) page, as registering indicates that you agree to follow them.
- Register online at [www.nyym.org/summer-sessions-registration](http://www.nyym.org/summer-sessions-registration). If you cannot register online, or need assistance, please email [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org) and provide your phone number and times that we can call you. If you don't have email, please mail in the form on page 8.
- You will receive a confirmation email after you've registered.
- Within two weeks, once you've been assigned to a room, you will receive an email with the Pay As Led rate options. If your local meeting, regional meeting, or committee will be financially supporting your attendance, you should request that now, and factor in that amount when determining which rate you will pay.
- Parents will receive a follow-up email that will include any additional forms they may have to fill out for their children. Parents and children will also receive information from their JYM group.



The Fun(d) Fair takes place on the lawn next to the Auditorium.

**NYYM Summer Sessions** is a week-long gathering for Friends to strengthen our bonds with one another, to renew ourselves spiritually, and to discern and conduct business as a body. Together we form a blessed community.

Our host is Silver Bay YMCA, a conference and family retreat center on the shores of Lake George within New York State's Adirondack Park. Silver Bay has a variety of buildings for meetings and accommodations scattered across a beautiful campus. Staying at Silver Bay includes access to swimming, boating, a craft shop, and a gymnasium, among other amenities. Friends often take advantage of these activities during their free time. Visit [silverbay.org](http://silverbay.org) for more information.

On Sunday July 19, our arrival day, there will be a first-time attenders orientation at 2:30 p.m., then registration starts at 4:00 p.m. Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) registration is also at that time. After dinner, there is opening worship with a roll call and introductions, including JYM groups and leaders.

### TRAVEL

The address for Silver Bay YMCA is:  
**87 Silver Bay Rd., Silver Bay, NY 12874**  
If you can offer a ride, or if you need a ride, please visit [www.groupcarpool.com/t/0654yo](http://www.groupcarpool.com/t/0654yo).  
**Via public transit:** You can take an Amtrak train to Ticonderoga or an Adirondack Trailways bus to Lake George Village. Going by train or bus and want to travel with other Friends? Contact Helen Garay Toppins at [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org).



Intergenerational community worship is held every morning.

**New Morning Schedule:** For 2020, Sessions Committee has approved shifting the morning schedule. Instead of community worship followed by worship sharing followed by JYM and business meeting, we are experimenting with the following changes: community worship at 8:45 a.m. will be followed by both JYM and business meeting, then worship sharing at 11 a.m. The idea behind this is that there will not have to be a break and a moving around (of adults) between community worship and the following business meeting. This new arrangement is an experiment that will hopefully allow community worship to set the tone for business meeting, as well as save time.

The daily schedule for Monday-Friday this year:

- 7:30-8:30 a.m.: Breakfast
- 8:45-9:15 a.m.: Community Worship
- 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.: JYM Programming
- 9:15-10:45 a.m.: Meeting for Business (Tuesday: Discernment)
- 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Worship Sharing
- 12:00-1:00 p.m.: Lunch
- 1:00-2:00 p.m.: Rest and Relaxation
- 2:15-5:15 p.m.: Committee Meetings, Free Time, Special Events...
- 5:30-6:30 p.m.: Dinner
- 6:45-7:30 p.m.: Bible Study (Mon-Thurs)
- 7:45-10:00 p.m.: Special events: Plenary, Interest Groups, Contra Dance, Café Night...





## Monday Evening Plenary

### A screening of the documentary film *Quakers: The Quiet Revolutionaries*

Followed by Q&A with Janet Gardner, Producer-Director, and Richard Nurse, Narrator

Janet Gardner and Richard Nurse are members of Princeton Friends Meeting in Princeton, NJ, part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. They will present their acclaimed documentary about Quaker history up to and including the present and talk with us afterward. A shortened version of the documentary was presented on WLIW21 Public Television, at the NJ Film Festival at Rutgers, the New Hope Film Festival, and elsewhere. The documentary celebrates the good works and deep spirituality of Friends, but does not shortchange some of the problems in our history. It will serve as a good starting point for a week of exploration of our strengths and our weaknesses. It will help us discern how to go forward with joy and pride, with a recognition of the need to labor together to remedy those areas where we sometimes fall short. You can watch a short preview of the film at [gardnerdocgroup.com/other/quakers.html](http://gardnerdocgroup.com/other/quakers.html)

## Worship at Summer Sessions

NYYM Summer Sessions provides many opportunities to worship and share with the Peaceable Community. Everyone is invited to attend opening worship on Sunday evening, community worship each morning, meeting for discernment on Tuesday, and closing worship on Saturday. Worship sharing groups will meet every morning after business meeting. Need time for quiet reflection during the course of your day? Waiting worship is available all day, all week. In addition, your worship and your discernment are needed at meetings for worship with a concern for business. Join us!

## Interest Groups & Meals with Meaning

Interest groups are a good way to introduce yourself to a topic or dive deeper, to learn and to share, and can consist of a presentation, slide show, film, discussion group, or other activity. For the list of interest groups offered last year, visit [www.nnym.org/InterestGroups](http://www.nnym.org/InterestGroups). Meals with Meaning are conversations or presentations on topics of interest to Friends given during a meal.

Do you have expertise or knowledge to share with Friends? Volunteers are needed to lead interest groups. Interest groups should relate to our theme and/or the NYYM Leadings and Priorities in general. If you feel led to run an interest group, contact Martha Gurvich ([margurvl@aol.com](mailto:margurvl@aol.com)) or Helen Garay Toppins ([office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org)).

## Special Events

On Wednesday afternoon, the Junior Yearly Meeting presents the Fun(d) Fair, a fundraising fair that includes games, crafts, and refreshments. At the same time, there is the Tagless Tag Sale, at which you can "pay what you wish" for items donated by Friends. Please consider bringing used items in good condition to Summer Sessions so they may be sold at the tag sale. On Thursday evening, the senior high group produces Café Night, an all-ages talent show during which hats are passed to collect donations. Bring your instruments and props and join the fun! All of these events raise money for the NYYM Sharing Fund and Powell House.

## Room and Rate Information

Silver Bay YMCA is a campus of buildings with different levels of accommodations, with a range of prices to match. We are a little heartbroken to announce that Hepbron Hall, one of the largest and oldest buildings on campus, has been deemed unsafe and is no longer available. To make up for the loss of those rooms, the Sessions Committee is working with Silver Bay YMCA to identify cottages and other rooms we can use.

Rooms generally don't have air conditioning, phones, or televisions. If you require air conditioning, we can work with Silver Bay on your behalf to reserve rooms in the new, air-conditioned William Boyd Center. Rooms in the Boyd Center are substantially more expensive than other buildings, and Pay as Led minimum rates are not available.



The front porch of the Inn is lined with rocking chairs.

Room fees include three meals per day and access to all of Silver Bay's facilities.

When you register, you will choose your room and building preference. Room rates vary. If you are a single person sharing a double room in a dormitory-type building (the most common room type), the Pay as Led standard rate, which is the actual amount NYYM owes to Silver Bay, is around \$550 per person. The most affordable building, Overlook, is around \$350 per person in a double (there are no singles) but fills up quickly. If you'd like your first choice of room, register as early as possible. Rooms that are more central or have a private bath cost around \$850-1,000/person in a double.

Children ages 0-5 are free, and there are reduced rates for older children. Rates per person are also discounted if more than two people are sharing a room. Half-week and single night stays are pro-rated. Room rates include meals!

If you will be staying with a roommate(s) or in a family group, please make sure you name each other on your registration forms. If you need a roommate, NYYM will make every effort to assign one to you.

The 2020 room rates with their Pay as Led options were not ready at press time but will be available by the start of registration on Feb. 1.

## Camping and Staying Off Campus

Do you camp? Silver Bay YMCA offers lean-tos and tent platforms on their campus. Experienced woodland campers may consider the Silver Bay YMCA Adirondack-style lean-tos on Ryan's Ridge. Closer to campus are two raised wooden tent platforms near the gym. Rental is \$30 per night, per person, and includes the daily membership fee which allows campers to use the Silver Bay facilities. Meals are not included and must be purchased separately.

Off-campus camping options include Rogers Rock State Park, near Ticonderoga; find it on [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com) or call 800-456-2267. The nearby Brookwood RV Resort has tent platforms: [www.brookwoodrvresort.com](http://www.brookwoodrvresort.com). Friends staying off campus must still pay the Silver Bay day membership fee and register with NYYM.

## On-Campus Resources

### Food Service

Meals are included in your room fee if you stay on campus. Off-campus and campers can buy meals separately. You will be asked if you are vegetarian, vegan, dairy-free, or gluten-free when you register. If you have other questions about Silver Bay's food service and accommodation of special diets, ask Martha Gurvich, [margurvl@aol.com](mailto:margurvl@aol.com).

### 12-Step Meetings

12-Step Meetings will be held every day during Summer Sessions. 12-Step Meetings are under the care of Sessions Committee, which has named Roseann Press as coordinator. Roseann needs people who would be willing to facilitate one or more of the meetings. To volunteer, please contact Roseann at [rpress123@gmail.com](mailto:rpress123@gmail.com) or Susan Bingham at [smbjoyous@earthlink.net](mailto:smbjoyous@earthlink.net).

### Healing Work

Friends create and maintain a Healing Center during the week. Modalities offered may include energy work (healing touch, Reiki), massage, craniosacral therapy, and spiritual counseling. The type of services offered depends on the skills of those who volunteer. If you are skilled in a healing art and you'd like to volunteer, please indicate that on your registration form.

### Disability Concerns

Friends who indicate special needs on their registration form will be contacted by the NYYM office to gather further information. Several mobility-accessible sleeping rooms with bathrooms are reserved in the Inn for those using wheelchairs (and their roommates). Other more accessible rooms in the Inn may be reserved by people who need them. Friends who require assistance with personal needs must arrange this assistance on their own, and the person assisting them must stay in their room with them. Please indicate on your registration form if you require help with hearing or movement. Note takers can be provided or accessible locations allocated for



## Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM)

Junior Yearly Meeting is the program for children ages 3-18.

Groups are arranged according to grade, and meet every morning, Mon.-Fri., from the rise of Community Worship to lunchtime at 12:15 p.m. JYM volunteers plan a community-building week of activities for the children, including games, discussions, art projects, and more. JYM is a time for young people to experience a community based on Friends' testimonies and practices. Age-appropriate, experiential Quaker content is part of the program, and groups will spend some time in quiet worship or worship sharing every day.

After you arrive at Summer Sessions and check in at the NYYM welcome table, you must bring your child to **JYM registration** in the Inn's Gullen Lounge. Parents should provide a cell phone number where they can be reached while on campus.

**For children under 3 years old**, Silver Bay offers childcare through their Silver Camp on Monday through Friday mornings from 8:30 to 11:45 a.m. Parents do not pay for this; NYYM covers the cost. We ask parents who are making use of this childcare service to sign up to cover the time from 11:45 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. one day so they can attend worship sharing on the other days. If you might use Silver Bay's morning childcare, you should complete the NYYM-Silver Bay camp form. It will be emailed to you after you register.

JYM volunteers will provide **afternoon (PM) childcare** in Morse Hall for children up to 10 years old. Parents using PM childcare are asked to volunteer some of their time when they are not in meetings. In a shift from past years, **evening (PM) childcare** will only be available on Monday, until 9:00 p.m., during the plenary session. Evening childcare will **not** be available on other evenings. If evening childcare is needed, a list of volunteers who are willing to babysit will be provided at JYM Registration and the JYM table throughout the week. Parents can contact one of those volunteers directly to make arrangements.

**Can my child go to Silver Bay without me?** Yes! If your child is under 18, they may attend Silver Bay with an adult chaperone. They must room with the chaperone if possible and appropriate; otherwise they should be in adjoining rooms. The chaperone must be designated by the parent/guardian on their registration forms, and must be at least 10 years older than the young Friend they are chaperoning. The chaperone and the child should know each other reasonably well. The parent/guardian must provide a signed note giving the chaperone the authority to care for their child, to be presented at JYM registration.



Café Night.

worship-sharing groups and committee meetings.

## Golf Carts

Silver Bay is a beautiful place, but it can be challenging to walk up and down its hills and from one meeting place to another. As in previous years, we will have golf carts to help Friends get around. We need volunteers to drive the carts. Driving is easy, fun, and a great way to get to know Friends of all ages.



Most meetings for business take place in the Auditorium.

## Volunteer Opportunities

There are many opportunities to help create the blessed community during our week at Summer Sessions. You can indicate your interest on your registration form. Please consider supporting our community by volunteering in one of these ways:

**Special needs volunteers:** Help someone by carrying a tray for them at mealtime, among other ways.

**Golf cart drivers:** Want to drive a golf cart all around campus—AND make it possible for people with limited mobility to attend Sessions? If you are at least 21 years old with a valid driver's license, you can!

**Healing Center volunteers:** Are you skilled in the healing arts? Help staff the Healing Center during the week.

**Other options:** You can also volunteer to serve as a microphone carrier during meetings for worship, including those with a concern for business, or to assist Friends with luggage.



All of Junior Yearly Meeting gathers together on Friday morning.

## Pay as Led

Within two weeks of registering (typically a few days) you will receive a follow-up email or paper letter with your Pay as Led rate options. The three options are: **the standard rate**, which covers the cost of room and board; **the full rate**, which helps others attend; and **the Pay as Led minimum rate**, which is the lowest suggested amount. Please factor in any financial assistance that you will request and expect to receive from your local or regional meetings or yearly meeting committee.

Friends should carefully consider how much they can afford to pay. The Pay as Led plan is designed to encourage new people to attend Summer Sessions, and it relies on generosity from those who can afford to pay more. Thank you.



## REGISTRATION

Registration for Summer Sessions is now completely online. Registering online is more efficient for staff. If you are unable to register online please ask someone you know to assist you, or fill out and mail the form below. We will have volunteers ready, willing, and able to provide online registration assistance.

The online registration form is not for making payments. It is for collecting your preferences so volunteers and staff can plan sessions and assign rooms. After you register you will receive a message describing your Pay as Led options. See the Pay as Led information above. You can pay online or send checks to the NYYM office.

Register online at [www.nnym.org/summer-sessions-registration](http://www.nnym.org/summer-sessions-registration). If you cannot register online, or need assistance, please email [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org) and provide your phone number and times that someone can call you. If you don't have email, please use the form below.

### The deadline for registrations is June 1.

If you register after that date, we can't guarantee that there will be a room available for you, and lower Pay as Led rates may not be available. So register as soon as you can! Please attend. We can't wait to see you.

Please register by June 1 at [www.nnym.org/summer-sessions-registration](http://www.nnym.org/summer-sessions-registration)

If you are unable to register online or to email this information to [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org), please fill out and mail this form to: NYYM, 15 Rutherford PL., New York, NY 10003

### PLEASE PRINT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time for us to call you (days of the week, times of day): \_\_\_\_\_