

SPARK

New York Yearly Meeting THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Address Service Requested

VOLUME 45 NUMBER 4

15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003

SEPTEMBER 2015



Quakers and Other Faiths

Part Two

continued from May 2015

Seeking

**Susanrachel Condon,
Old Chatham Meeting**

As a ten year old growing up in a secular household, with a non-observant Jewish mother and a devout Catholic stepfather, I began my search for a faith community. To this day, I have no idea what triggered this seeking. Perhaps it was curiosity about what others “did” when they went to church. The appeal of community was certainly a draw.

I ventured to churches with some of my school friends. There were no synagogues or mosques in my small, suburban town. Nothing really struck me until, through family friends, I discovered and eventually settled easily with Friends at Chatham-Summit Meeting. There, I began a lifelong journey of quiet seeking and a mission of social justice. The unprogrammed meeting I attended until I requested membership at age 15 was a welcoming place in which to thrive. I loved my youth group in first day school. My parents were supportive. I joyfully attended Powell House conferences, yearly

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Friends and Zen Meditation

**Gallia Taranto,
Scarsdale Meeting**

I have been attending Scarsdale Friends Meeting for twelve or more years. It has been welcoming and enriching. I found the retreats to be a deepening of soul and mind and of the body of the meeting. After a few retreats I decided to become a member.

I have always been interested in creativity and spirituality. The meeting for worship and all the subgroups of Scarsdale Friends taught me new ways to explore the true meaning of these words and how to sit quietly seeking inner peace and love. I also learned to accept that there is that of God in everyone. This added to my knowledge of twelve steps programs and to the meaning of forgiveness.

I joined a Zen Buddhist center a few years later and the practice of meditation deepened my understanding of corporate silence. The simplicity found in the Zen tradition paralleled the one taught by Friends. A couple of Friends from Scarsdale also attend my Zen Center. I learned to sit upright and it infused my

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Quakers & Other Religions

**Marilyn Henry,
Binghamton Meeting**

I am not a Quaker by birth or even formal membership. A few years ago, I went to my first “meeting for worship” as a friend, a “seeker.” What I sought was fellowship, and shared union with something greater than the participants. I came trailing various personal experiences with many different Christian and non-Christian groups—Mennonite, Methodist, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, to name a few. In my opinion, there is rich universal wisdom to be found in all of the above. I wouldn’t have said that 50 years ago. It has taken years of devoted study and much Grace to surrender to Love’s leading as I try to see beyond what I now call my “tribal” Christian conditioning. Who am I to judge the worthiness of another’s faith? Are we not all a part of God? Created by and equally “beloved of God.”

I continue to attend worship occasionally with people of different faith traditions; I have cultivated relationships there that I cherish. It is not because of

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Quakerism in a Multifaith Environment

**Turtle MacDermott,
Stony Point Retreat
Center**

Stony Point Center may be familiar to some New York Yearly Meeting Friends as a conference center in the Lower Hudson Valley that has welcomed meetings of several groups related to our yearly meeting. With a focus on hospitality work, the Center is home to the Community of Living Traditions, an intentional multifaith residential volunteer community that supports the work of the Center from its own focus on peace, sustainability, nonviolence, and social justice. The Conference Center is the property of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Community welcomes adherents of the traditional Abrahamic faiths—Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

So how do Quakers come into all this? The co-directors of the Center are a couple. Kitty Ufford-Chase is Quaker, her husband Rick is Presbyterian. Both a current volunteer and a former volunteer have been frequent visitors at Quaker meetings for many years.

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Around Our Yearly Meeting

Meeting News

Chatham-Summit Meeting holds AVP camp

Approximately twenty high school youth attended a two-week Alternatives to Violence Project Camp held at Chatham-Summit's meeting-house. Most of the youth were in the 9th and 10th grades from local schools and most were of Latin American heritage. The youth received Basic and Advanced AVP training coupled with fun activities. (See the article on page four.)

The camp was conducted in co-operation with Wind of the Spirit, a local immigrant rights group whose leadership (Diana Mejia & Stuart Sydenstricker) also attend CSM, and with the support of AVP-New Jersey. Many of the volunteers who helped with the camp were from Chatham-Summit Meeting and the camp received some of its funding from NYYM.

Flushing meetinghouse a featured sacred space

The Flushing meetinghouse was a featured site for the 2015 open house celebration of sacred spaces organized by the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The meeting offered free tours and refreshment. For more information, visit Flushing Meeting's website: flushingfriends.org/2015/05/15/sacredsites/.

Housatonic Meeting writes Mother Emmanuel AME Church

After the shooting of members of Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, Housatonic Meeting wrote the following letter:

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We write to extend our heartfelt sorrow for the recent loss of your good and faithful pastor and eight beloved members of your congregation. We write also to thank you for the inspiration you have provided the entire Nation by the generosity of your response to an unspeakable act born of fear and hatred.

Too often we have witnessed times when an act of violence has given rise to words of recrimination and the desire for retaliation. You, on the other hand, responded from your deep and abiding faith in God and demon-

strated the power of forgiveness to change a Nation's conversation and take down a long-standing symbol of dominance and hatred.

In your response, you have challenged us to examine more deeply both our individual and collective hearts and minds and to take whatever action is necessary to remove the residue of injustice and systemic violence that is part of our Nation's history. We pray that we may rise to the opportunity this tragic event has offered.

We join our hearts in prayer with you and others throughout our beloved country that we might come to know the power of God's grace, the transformative power of love.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father ... comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17).

With love and blessings, Housatonic Monthly Meeting Friends (Quakers)

Rochester Meeting honored by the NY State Judicial Process Commission

The New York State Judicial Process Commission awarded Rochester Meeting its Outstanding Funding Award for outstanding contribution to the Commission over the years and gave the meeting a Tea Light Holder as a token of appreciation.

Faith & Practice 2015 Edition available

The 2015 Edition of *Faith & Practice* is now available. This edition includes earth-care advices and queries, as well as a section on worship groups. The price is \$7.00 a copy, \$10.00 if we ship it to you. Order your copy by contacting the office at 212-673-5750 or office@nyym.org. You can pay by check or online at nyym.org/?q=donate (write "Faith & Practice" in the field labeled "This payment is for:").

NYYM writes letter to Pope Francis (see page 5)

At Summer Sessions, the gathered body approved a minute brought forward by Indian Affairs Committee that directs the clerk of the Yearly Meeting to send a letter to Pope Francis upon his visit to the United States asking the Pope to repudiate the so-called Doctrine of Christian Discovery, and to rescind the papal bulls written in the 1490s and early 1500s upon which the Doctrine rests. These papal bulls and the Doctrine of Discovery conferred upon "Christian princes" who "discovered" new lands occupied by "pagans" the right to claim and govern those lands and subjugate their inhabitants. You can learn more about the Doctrine of Discovery by visiting our website at nyym.org/?q=doc_of_disc_factsheet.

Upcoming Events

Quaker Outreach Roundtable

October 10 – Shrewsbury Meetinghouse


Shrewsbury hosts an Outreach Roundtable on Saturday, October 10, from 9 to 3:30. The morning session features speakers on several topics related to meeting outreach: "Lessons, Inspirations, and Surprises from NEYM's Quaker Outreach Pilot Project," "Inreach+Outreach=Upreach," and "Marketing 101 for Quakers." The afternoon session features open sharing of your ideas and experiences in outreach and exploration of possible next steps. Please RSVP to Robin Whitely at rhwhitely@comcast.net or 973-634-5742. You can download the flyer on our website at nyym.org/sites/default/files/OutreachRoundtableFlyer2015.pdf.

17th Annual White Privilege Conference

Date: Thursday, April 14th – Sunday, 17th, 2016

Location: Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, Philadelphia

New York Yearly Meeting is one of the host organizations for 2016's White Privilege Conference, and a NYYM working group is helping to plan the conference and urges NYYM Friends to attend. The theme is *Let Freedom Ring: Re-imagining Equity and Justice in the United States*. A

participant in a previous conference observed that it "laid excellent groundwork for establishing a culture of open mind, open heart, and open arms." For more information, visit whiteprivilege-conference.com. 

Won't You Support NYYM?

New York Yearly Meeting supports programs and projects that benefit our members and our meetings in all kinds of ways: from ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation and Help) Visitor training and other kinds of pastoral care, to Tending the Garden, spiritual nurture programs for individuals and meetings, to financial help with meetinghouse repairs, to planning for the 2016 White Privilege Conference and other forms of witness. Won't you support NYYM in return?

You can contribute by mailing a check to the yearly meeting office or by credit card at

nyym.org/?q=donate.

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
www.nyym.org

Editorial Board:
Communications Committee
Editor: Steven Davison

SPARK deadlines are the first 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
Steven Davison
steven@nyym.org
Walter Naegle
walter@nyym.org
Christopher Sammond
nyym.gensec@gmail.com
Helen Garay Toppins
office@nyym.org

Seeking

Susanrachel Condon

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meeting summer sessions, and spent two years at Oakwood Friends School in the Hudson Valley. For the first time, I had a sense of home, for I had discovered enduring, unconditional love and acceptance by my peers.

Though I drifted away for a number of years, my husband and I would eventually be married at Powell House and have three children. When each of our kids turned ten, he or she was gifted with a first Powell House conference. They were hooked. Our kids went to yearly meeting summer sessions, where they continued to strengthen a sense of self as well as community. They JC'd at Powell House. Our daughter worked extensively with the K-1 JYM (Junior Yearly Meeting) group. Our older son attended Alternatives to Violence Project

This is the purpose of faith for me: reaching deeply down or far across expanses for a relationship with God and with others in community.

and clerking workshops and was JYM clerk his senior year.

To my amazement, when our youngest son was ten, having grown up with Quakers, he felt called to return to my Jewish roots. We enrolled him in school to pursue Judaic studies, and to learn Hebrew and to read the Torah. In a few short weeks, he will become a bar mitzvah. The synagogue we chose requires that the parents be involved in this process. For three years, we have attended many Shabbat and holiday services and b'nai mitzvah classes. We have dipped our tentative toes into the depths of Jewish history, spiritualism, and mysticism.

While our young son has ventured on his own path, attending services and classes with him and seeing him thrive and learn his own spiritual truth has yielded a powerful gift to us, his parents. The mechanics couldn't be more different. While Friends frequently worship in unstructured silence, the Reconstructionist Jewish congregation we call home worships with a

Friends and Zen Meditation


Gallia Taranto

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life with opening to situations and change. I have been meditating every day for the last ten years and part of it is just a discipline. However meditation often brings a new angle to the day. Also one can count on this practice for support in any given situation.

When I look at drawings of Friends history or childrens books I see that Quakers also sat upright for meeting for worship . . . and I am almost positive they also honored the breath and how it hones you. Our meeting was blessed for several years by a member who was always on time and sat as sturdy as a mountain. I sat behind him in meeting for worship. I connected almost immediately to the quiet voice inside just by being surrounded by Friends such as him and sitting upright.

Meanwhile Zen teachings stress the fact that one is to continue this uprightness into our dealings with the world at large. It resounds in me with the Quaker focus on honesty and integrity. I feel very privileged that I am able to be part of these two groups that complement each other or rather parallel each other. 

predictable, orderly service, printed texts, consistent rituals, and learned, chanted prayers. There is joyful singing of psalms and drumming and shaking of instruments. Yet I am pleased to discover that what lies at the essence of both ways of worship is the seeking. Regardless of denomination, we are seeking.

I have learned to embrace the journey of reaching deeply down or far across expanses for a relationship with God and with others in community. This is the

Quakers and Other Religions

Marilyn Henry

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any particular practice or shared theology that I return to these gatherings. It is the people. We recognize and respect the Divine in each other. I am blessed by each intentional act of joining with others to express devotion to the Source of all things and people. Similar to Quaker meetings, in these gatherings of sacred time and space, I often experience a sense of deep peace and resonance with Spirit, regardless (sometimes, in spite of) what is going on in the service.

So, what attracted me to Quakerism and why do I continue to feel a special bond with Quakers? I did some homework before attending my first meeting. I read about Fox and Woolman; I was impressed. The Advices and Queries suggested possibilities. Could this be a group that expected more than lip service to beliefs about the inherent dignity of all life? Had this group evolved beyond the destructive process of demonizing other traditions and sects that is so characteristic of any religion's birth and history? More than any other statement of purpose from any tradition I have known, what I read spoke to me. I interpreted an assigned priority in a Quaker's life, "Seek first the kingdom . . ." Each individual was called to develop a direct relationship with the Divine. The result of that relationship then became the

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What I sought was fellowship, and shared union with something greater than the participants.

purpose of faith for me. It doesn't matter exactly what the pretext is or what the process looks like. If Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus, etc. could respect and embrace that we are all seeking a spiritual truth and that the ways in which to do so are myriad and diverse, perhaps peace could be possible. I have always been troubled by the notion that we should "teach tolerance." To be tolerant means to "put up with." We need to dig much deeper than this. Peace can only come when

Notices

New Members


- Lisa Dukielski** – Rahway-Plainfield
- Robert Fatherley** – Wilton
- Elizabeth Marie Gill** – Chatham-Summit
- Mark Joseph Harper** – Chatham-Summit
- Andrea Jaquette** – Chatham-Summit
- Kevin Johnson** – Poplar Ridge
- Patricia Runkle** – Chatham-Summit
- Cora Waldman** – Brooklyn

Transfers

- Margot Kimball**, to Brooklyn from Radnor (PhYM)

Deaths

- Joseph Anzalone**, member of Buffalo, on June 26, 2015
- Marilyn Zoty Atkin**, member of Wilton, on May 5, 2015
- Richard Goodman**, member of Manhasset, on September 10, 2015
- Dorothy Johnson**, member of Farmington, on May 15, 2015
- Richard McClurg**, member of Farmington, on April 16, 2015
- James Oltman**, member of Purchase, on July 21, 2015
- Richard Padgham**, member of Farmington, on April 3, 2015
- Virginia Perry**, member of Wilton, on June 21, 2015
- Doris Belle Randall**, member of Wilton, on April 23, 2015
- Cora Lee Snyder**, member of Purchase, on June 17, 2015
- William Sims**, member of Poplar Ridge, on June 26, 2015
- Marion Swinden**, member of Cornwall, on June 27, 2015
- Jane Taylor**, member of Rahway-Plainfield, on February 8, 2015
- Lynn Estella Vail**, member of Rahway-Plainfield, on April 27, 2015
- Mark Wiegand**, member of Chatham-Summit, on June 12, 2015

we respect our differences AND see what we hold in common. 

Quakerism in a Multifaith Environment

Turtle MacDermott

(continued from page 1)

Several volunteers have studied at Quaker high schools and colleges, and yet others (both volunteers and paid staff) have had shorter or longer experiences and comfort with Quaker worship.

Worship practices vary extensively among and even within the faith traditions represented in the Community of Living Traditions. Experiencing and exploring this diversity enriches and deepens the life of our Community. At times, we find that the practice of silent worship creates a space in which each of us can engage internally in our own worship practice; at the least, confrontations over differences are avoided, while at the best a shared spirit arises out of the collective worship, an effect Quakers might call a covered meeting, but which, in the silence, transcends any need to name it.

Quaker attitudes, with their emphasis on listening for the Inner Light, both in each other and in ourselves, work well in this multi-cultural setting. Quaker business procedures, with a clerk who facilitates rather than leads, and a group effort to build consensus rather than simply to get a majority vote, form the underpinnings of how business is done in the Community. We have even experimented with a clearness committee.

Requests for “holding in the Light” fit comfortably among the various ways we bring our concerns to the Community. And at times of both heated argument and deepest remembrance, we stop for a Quakerly moment of silence. It has been a joy to welcome Friends here, both in groups and as individuals. In many ways, the Community of Living Traditions helps to make Stony Point Center a Friendly place.



Stony Point Center

White Privilege Conference 2016 – Philadelphia

See nym.org/?q=WhitePrivilegeConference for more information

Quakerism and Other Religions

Gallia Taranto

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core motivation for that individual’s action in the larger world. It seemed to me, Quakers valued this type of spiritual development within their community while somehow holding the tension of, even honoring, individual differences. Adherence to a mutual doctrine or organizational structure seemed less important. Could this group be where I belonged? I was curiously hopeful. I felt a mysterious stirring.

As simple as it may be, the fact that I attended a very small unprogrammed meeting was a turning point. At that moment in my life, I really needed a lack of words and a lack of faces to meet and greet. There were no mandatory beliefs proclaimed, no sacred scriptures read, no sacraments performed or received. There was no “offering” taken, no payment of tithes, no indication of obligation on my part for anything. Just God, me, and a couple of Friends. I perceived only welcome and unconditional acceptance. I was not “the other,” someone to be converted, recruited, or saved; I was simply a respected friend. I can tell you, these observations created an impression that was HUGE.

For some, a tiny silent Quaker meeting for worship may not be something you enjoy. For me, it is a treasure. I have not found its equal. That is why I keep returning with joyful anticipation.

AVP Summer Camp at Chatham-Summit Meeting

Jeff Bird, Chatham-Summit Meeting

This summer Chatham-Summit Meeting in northern New Jersey was the site of the first Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) summer camp for high school students in the nation. The idea for the camp grew out of the realization that AVP, although originally developed to deal with violence among inmates in prison environments, would also provide an excellent framework for the development of skills and techniques for dealing with violence among students in high schools in our local communities.

For two weeks, for four mornings a week, twenty-two students who are primarily in grades nine and ten and of Latin American background participated in the AVP workshops. The first week took them through the AVP basic training and the second week finished with advanced AVP training. Afternoons were for recreational activities with the emphasis on fun. The activities included, making personal journals, making videos about the AVP experience, swimming at the local pool, visiting the Newark Museum, and various physical activities, such as hiking, yoga, and soccer.

AVP workshops emphasize experiential activities like role playing, one-on-one interaction, and group discussion. Exercises focus on affirmation, communication, cooperation, forgiveness, and creative conflict resolution. While the workshops can be intense, special activities called Light & Livelies make everyone laugh and relieve the stress.

While working in prisons presents its own set of problems, working with children in a community setting requires significant manpower, so the camp had to rely on a large number of volunteers working as facilitators and providing supportive activities, such as food

preparation and transportation. For our camp we had the cooperative participation of volunteers from both the Chatham-Summit Meeting community and Wind of the Spirit, a locally based immigrant advocacy organization.

Funding and support for AVP Camp came from AVP-New Jersey, AVP-USA, Chatham-Summit Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, and Wind of the Spirit.



2015 Chatham-Summit AVP Camp participants

On the final day of camp, the students received certificates of completion for the basic and advanced AVP training. This is traditionally done in all AVP workshops and recognizes the hard work and effort the participants put into the training. Many of the students’ parents made the special effort to be present for the awarding of the certificates. The kids were obviously excited to be receiving their certificates and the enthusiasm they displayed showed that AVP camp had been a success.

Share Your Info

Share your meeting’s news, announcements, and upcoming events with the rest of the Yearly Meeting through *InfoShare*, our digital newsletter. We publish *InfoShare* between issues of *Spark*, in February, April, June, August, October, and December. Send your items to steven@nym.org. Don’t get *InfoShare*? Contact the Yearly Meeting office to get yourself on our email mailing list.



Pope Francis

New York Yearly Meeting Writes Letter to Pope Francis

And a Press Release Regarding the Doctrine of Discovery

Letter to Pope Francis

Dear Pope Francis, Bishop of Rome:

We in the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends are called to answer “that of God” in our Indigenous neighbors as in every person. We therefore begin by expressing gratitude for your recent words in Bolivia, recognizing the humanity and dignity of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and of the world, and apologizing and asking forgiveness for “grave sins” and “crimes” against Native Peoples of America in the name of God. We too in the Religious Society of Friends have been complicit in the wrongs done to Native Peoples, and we unite with the call for justice that we hear in your words.

We believe that the deepest movement towards seeking forgiveness includes steps to remedy the evil that occurred as a result of those acts. In this case, the acts were founded in several papal bulls, notably the papal bull *Inter Caetera*, issued in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, which expressed the doctrine that certain human beings, because they were not Christian, were not entitled to fundamental dignity and rights. In particular, rights that this Doctrine denied to them included the right to control over their ancestral homelands and the right to remain and live there in peace, the rights to self-government and civil organization, and even the right to life itself. The Doctrine of Discovery stated that any “Christian prince” whose representative first came upon

such lands (“discovered” them, in the language of the papal bulls) was entitled to own and control the lands and to displace, kill, or enslave the inhabitants. This Doctrine is referred to as the Doctrine of Christian Discovery, or sometimes just the Doctrine of Discovery.

This Doctrine has led to and served as justification for exploitation, discrimination, and genocide carried out throughout the following centuries against many peoples of this earth, including the area now known as the United States of America. This Doctrine has been absorbed into our thinking, our culture, and our social fabric. It has been formally engrafted onto the law of the United States, as well as other nation-states, and remains in effect today. The harm that this has caused continues into our current age and today’s society. The Doctrine continues to cause further harm and suffering to Indigenous peoples within the borders of the United States and in many other places around the world.

We are moved by the words of your encyclical *Laudato Si*, that “disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbor, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth.” (*Laudato Si* 30) Jesus showed by example that we must be open and accepting of all as brothers and sisters, even those whose faith is different from ours, when He healed “pagans” such as the servant of the Roman

At our Summer Sessions this year, the gathered body of the Yearly Meeting approved a minute and the text of a letter addressed to Pope Francis asking him to renounce the so-called Doctrine of Discovery and to rescind the papal bulls upon which the Doctrine is established. The papal bulls conferred religious sanction upon “Christian princes” who were “discovering” the New World to seize those lands for their empires and to subjugate those lands’ “pagan” inhabitants.

In 2012, New York Yearly Meeting approved a minute repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and sent a press

release about our actions to the mainstream press and to the First Nation contacts we had at the time.

In this issue of *Spark*, we include

- the NYYM minute from 2012 (page 6),
- the letter written to Pope Francis (opposite), and
- the press release we sent a few days ago to the press and our current First Nation contacts (page 6).

You can learn more about the Doctrine of Discovery on our website, at nyym.org/?q=IndianAffairs.

centurion and the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, spoke with and accepted water from the Samaritan woman at the well, and gave the parable of the “good Samaritan” (Matthew 8:5-13; Mark 7:24-30; John 4 :7-27; Luke 10:25-37).

The traditional practices of our Indigenous sisters and brothers are founded in great respect for our common mother, the Earth. Traditional teachings require taking no more from the Earth than necessary to sustain life and preserve it, considering at every step the effect of one’s actions for seven generations into the future. But the Doctrine of Christian Discovery expressed in the papal bull *Inter Caetera* denies Indigenous People full control even of the land that has been left aside for them to dwell on. Because Native Peoples were considered “pagans,” control of the land passed to and remains with those who claimed the land in the name of “Christian princes.” The time has come, we believe, to repudiate that doctrine so we may all join with our Indigenous sisters and brothers to meet “the urgent challenge to protect our common home [which] includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development” (*Laudato Si* 13).

In 2012, New York Yearly Meeting approved a minute of conscience, a formal statement repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and calling for instituting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007 as law of the land. A copy of that minute is attached. We believe that continuing revelation is available to all.

We direct this appeal to you in particular as you visit our country, because you, as Pope, are both the head of the Roman Catholic Church and the direct successor to those who issued these papal bulls, which we believe to be so contrary to the foundational teaching of Jesus and Holy Scripture, as well as your namesake Francis of Assisi. We call upon you and upon the Roman Catholic Church to repudiate and revoke, clearly and formally, this pernicious doctrine, which was enunciated by your predecessors, and we ask you in turn to call upon the nations and peoples of the world to repeal and renounce any laws, policies, or acts based upon this doctrine and to take appropriate steps towards healing the harm that has resulted from it.

Yours in peace,
Lucinda Antrim
Clerk, New York Yearly Meeting

Press Release re Letter to Pope Francis

September 7, 2015

NEW YORK QUAKERS CALL ON POPE FRANCIS TO REVOKE THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY

Ask him to rescind the papal
bulls on which the Doctrine is
established

[September 15, 2015; New York, NY] Quakers of New York Yearly Meeting are calling on Pope Francis and the Catholic Church to revoke the “Doctrine of Discovery,” which granted “Christian princes” religious sanction to seize lands occupied by “pagans” and enslave or kill them, treating the inhabitants and lands however they wished. In their letter to the Pope, the Quakers ask Pope Francis to rescind the papal bulls that first established this doctrine five centuries ago. The full text of the letter is attached and can be found on the Yearly Meeting’s website: <http://www.nnym.org/sites/default/files/Letter-Pope-Francis-reDoctrineofDiscovery.pdf>.

The so-called Doctrine of Discovery is still today the underlying basis on which all law affecting Indigenous people is founded in the United States and elsewhere, denying Native people control over their own lands and governments, and it continues to support the destruction and loss of even the most sacred Native homelands without giving them any voice in those decisions. Native people are denied even the right to determine their own membership and their own legal existence as a tribe.

The message to the Pope begins by expressing gratitude for the Pope’s “recent words in Bolivia, recognizing the humanity and dignity of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and of the world, and apologizing and asking forgiveness for ‘grave sins’ and ‘crimes’ against Native Peoples of America in the name of God,” and the Friends (Quakers) unite in their letter with his call for justice.

The letter of New York Yearly Meeting further states, in part:

“This Doctrine has led to and served as justification for exploitation, discrimina-

tion and genocide carried out throughout the following centuries

against many peoples of this earth, including the area now known as the United States of America. This doctrine has been absorbed into our thinking, our culture, and our social fabric. It has been formally engrafted onto the law of the United States, as well as other nation-states, and remains in effect today. The harm that this has caused continues into our current age and today’s society. The Doctrine continues to cause further harm and suffering to Indigenous Peoples within the borders of the United States and around the world.

[The Yearly Meeting] “call[s] upon you and upon the Roman Catholic Church to repudiate and revoke, clearly and formally, this pernicious doctrine, which was enunciated by your predecessors, and we ask you in turn to call upon the nations and peoples of the world to repeal and renounce any law, policies or acts based upon this doctrine and to take appropriate steps towards healing the harm that has resulted from it.”

Acknowledging that Quakers also have been complicit in the wrongs done to Native Peoples, New York Yearly Meeting formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery in 2012. (See http://www.nnym.org/sites/default/files/Minute_Doctrine_of_Discovery.pdf.)

New York Yearly Meeting agreed to write the Pope after their Indian Affairs Committee consulted with Native American Elders, who strongly encouraged and supported this action.

For more information on New York Yearly Meeting and the Doctrine of Discovery, visit the New York Yearly Meeting fact sheet on its website.

See also the following independent resource:

UN Preliminary Study on the Doctrine of Discov-



Christopher Columbus claiming the new world

Minute on the Doctrine of Discovery

Approved July 25, 2012

New York Yearly Meeting Summer
Sessions
Silver Bay, New York

2012-07-25. Indian Affairs Committee Co-clerk Susan Wolf (Ithaca) presented the proposed minute regarding repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery (also known as

the Doctrine of Christian Discovery), a principle of international law that originated in Christian church law and has long been invoked as a basis for past colonization of indigenous lands and peoples. She cited examples of current uses of land in America that Native peoples consider to be desecrations.

The Committee has engaged the Yearly Meeting on this issue and its current relevance in U.S. law in conversations, publications, and postings on its page of the Yearly Meeting Web site. On July 9, 2012, the Witness Coordinating Committee approved the minute repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery.

In worship, we heard that churches worldwide have credited Friends and Anglicans for bringing to their attention the injustice of the Doctrine of Discovery, which was promulgated in Jesus’ name, and which has profited Friends’ historic migrations and settlements as well as those of others. We also heard a call to repentance, confession and the necessity of ongoing stewardship. The Yearly Meeting approved the following minute as proposed, with one Friend standing aside:

We seek to live in a just peace with our fellow human beings, both as individuals, and as peoples.


The United States has formally declared its support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007. We now call on the United States Senate to enact the legislation that will make this the law of the land in the United States of America.

We repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which originated in the 15th century from Papal Bulls and European royal charters issued at that time. The Doctrine of Discovery mandated the seizure of lands belonging to any non-Christian peoples and encouraged the enslavement, exploitation, or eradication of those peoples. We cannot accept that the Doctrine of Discovery was ever a true authority for the forced takings of lands and the enslavement or extermination of peoples. It is reprehensible for the United States to use the Doctrine of Discovery as a legal doctrine to compel a jurisdiction over Indigenous Peoples or their lands.

We honor the inalienable rights of Indigenous Peoples to their homelands, water, spiritual practices, languages, cultural practices, and to self-government, all of which sustain life and the life of a People, and the autonomy of Indigenous Peoples. An Indigenous People has the right to make decisions and establish constructive arrangements with other nations, governments and peoples on their own behalf.

2012-07-26. At the request of the Indian Affairs Committee and the Witness Coordinating Committee, Friends directed the incoming Clerk and the General Secretary, in consultation with the incoming or continuing clerks of those committees, to disseminate widely the foregoing approved minute and its underlying concerns to the monthly meetings and Friends within New York Yearly Meeting, and to government officials, Friends organizations, other faith groups, Native nations, and other appropriate organizations.

2012-07-27. Friends approved minutes 25 and 26. 

ery <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/E.C.19.2010.13%20EN.pdf>. 

New York Yearly Meeting Fall Sessions

November 6–8, 2015

Doane Stuart School (Saturday)
Powell House (Friday evening and Sunday)

Registration deadline: October 21, 2015

Northeastern Regional Meeting invites you to Fall Sessions 2015, which will be held November 6–8 at the Doane Stuart School in Rensselaer, NY (Saturday), and at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY (Friday evening and Sunday morning).

When Friends from all monthly meetings participate, you bring the wisdom of a variety of Friends to our business and ensure that the decisions we make will be reported back to your meeting.

Locations: Our weekend will begin with fellowship on Friday evening at 8:15 p.m. at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY. On Saturday, we will gather at the Doane Stuart School. We return to Powell House on Sunday. See below for directions to the school.

Meals: Coffee, tea, and bagels will be available Saturday morning in the school cafeteria. Meals on Saturday will be at the Doane Stuart School and on Friday and Sunday at Powell House. See prices on the registration form on the next page.

Hospitality: On the registration form you may request hospitality with local Friends for Friday and/or Saturday night. Indicate your special needs for food. Hospitality cannot be guaranteed after the 10/21/15 registration deadline.

Powell House:

Friends may also stay at Powell House. PoHo is offering discount rates: \$75 per person which includes both Friday and Saturday nights. Friends must register directly with Powell House either online at www.powellhouse.org or by calling Sharon Koomler at 518-794-8811. Friday's supper is \$15. Breakfasts each day will be \$7.50. Sunday lunch is \$10. Let Sharon know which meals you would like when registering with Powell House.



Fall Sessions 2012 at Powell House (shortly after Hurricane Sandy)

NYYMOnline

Spiritual Nurture Resources for Individuals & Meetings

The Resources for Meetings section of our website (nnym.org/?q=MeetingResources) includes a link to *Tending the Garden*, programs for deepening the spiritual life of your members and your meeting. Here are workshops you could bring to your meeting:

- Sacred Journeys
- Opening to Deeper Worship
- Vocal Ministry
- Experiential Quakerism
- Discernment
- Pastoral Care
- Spiritual Support & Accountability
- Prayer
- Quaker Toolbox
- Forgiveness
- A Deliberate Faith
- Sense of the meeting

Contact Anne Pomeroy (apomeroy10@gmail.com) or Lu Harper (luharper@gmail.com) for more information.

Fall Sessions Schedule

Friday—Powell House

8:15 p.m. Fellowship

Saturday—Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer, NY

8:00 a.m. Registration with coffee, tea and bagels
8:30–9:15 a.m. Meeting for worship
9:30–11:45 Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
12:00–1:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00–2:15 Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
2:30–4:00 Committee meetings*
4:05–5:30 Committee meetings*
5:45–6:45 Dinner
7:00–8:45 Coordinating committee meetings

Sunday—Powell House, Old Chatham, NY

9:00–10:00 a.m. Meeting for worship
10:15–12:15 Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
12:30–1:30 p.m. Lunch

*Committee meeting space to be reserved by committee clerks

Childcare will be available. Parents are responsible for their children during mealtimes. If you are bringing one or more children, please request a children's registration form. Childcare must be requested by October 23.

Registration: To register online, download the registration form at nnym.org's home page and email it to Helen Garay Toppins at office@nnym.org. To register by postal mail, send your form to NYYM, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003. Pay by mailing your check to NYYM or pay online at nnym.org/?q=donate and write "Fall Sessions 2015" on the donation/payment page's "This payment is for:" field.

Meeting & Display Space: Requests to reserve committee meeting and display space should be directed to Regina Haag, haagrb@yahoo.com. Please reserve by October 21, 2015.

Emergency contact: For emergency contact during the weekend of Fall Sessions, you may call Anita Paul at 518-779-4835.

Hotels & Motels

Thruway exit 23 (I-87 & I-787):

Comfort Inn: \$93; 37 Rte 9W, Glenmont NY 12077; 518-465-8811

Econo Lodge: \$93; 15 Frontage Rd., Glenmont NY 12077; 518-449-5181

I-90 spur:

Ramada Plaza Hotel: \$90; 3 Watervliet Ave. Ext., Albany NY 12206; 518-438-8431

Motel 6: \$56; 100 Watervliet Ave., Albany NY 12206; 518-438-7447

All offer AAA, senior discounts

Driving Directions to Doane Stuart School: 199 Washington Avenue, Rensselaer, NY 12144.

From the West: take I-90 east through Albany across the Hudson River. Then immediately take exit 7 (Washington Ave.). At the top of the ramp go right & proceed two blocks. Just past the school, at the light, turn right and then left into the parking lot.

From the South: take exit 23 off I-87. Then follow I-787 north to I-90 east. Go over the Hudson River and follow directions from the west.

From the North: take I-87 south to I-90 east and proceed with directions from the west.

From the East and Powell House: take I-90 west to exit 8. At the first light go left on Washington Ave. Follow Washington Ave. until crossing over I-90, then follow directions from the west.

The school's website, doanestuart.org, has a link to Google maps.

Registration for Fall Sessions 2015

Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer, NY • Powell House, Old Chatham, NY

Friday–Sunday, November 6–8, 2015

REGISTRATION DEADLINE 10/21/15

You may download and fill out this form from nzym.org (home page) and return it to office@nzym.org; or mail this form to Helen Garay Toppins, NYYM, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003. You may pay online at www.nzym.org/?q=donate (write “Fall Sessions 2015 registration” in the “This payment is for:” field); or make checks payable to New York Yearly Meeting.

ADULT REGISTRATION

NAME	
Address	
Home & cell phone	
Email address	
Meeting	

HOSPITALITY

I will stay at Powell House. (Contact Powell House directly www.powellhouse.org or Sharon at 518-794-8811 ext 10.)					
I would like home hospitality		Fri. night		Sat. night	Can bring sleeping bag
I would like to be housed with:					
Stairs a problem		Allergies		Smoker	
Special Needs:					
MEALS		Vegetarian		Gluten Free	
Friday supper	\$15.00 pay Powell House directly				
Saturday breakfast	\$ 7.50 pay Powell House directly				
Saturday lunch	\$ 8.95 include payment with registration				
Saturday dinner	\$ 14.95 include payment with registration				
Sunday breakfast	\$ 7.50 pay Powell House directly				
Sunday lunch	\$ 10.00 pay Powell House directly				

TRANSPORTATION

Please meet me as follows	
Plane arrival	
Bus arrival	
Train arrival	
Departure Day, Time, Location	

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration	Amount Enclosed
Adult Registration Fee (\$25 per adult until 10/21/15)	
Late Registration Fee (additional \$10 per adult)	
Doane Stuart School meal costs	
Contribution to NYYM Equalization Fund	
Assistance requested from NYYM Equalization Fund	
Total	

Write for *Spark!*

November 2015

**Spiritual
Formation**

January 2016

**Family-positive
Meetings**

March 2016

Vocal Ministry

May 2016

Race

We invite your written ministry on the *Spark* themes above. Aim for 600 words, but let us know if you need more room. Deadlines are the second week of the month before publication. Send submissions to steven@nzym.org.

We look for pieces that are spirit-led and reflect your personal experience; or Quaker history or present faith and practice on the subject; things your meeting has done; a prophetic message—or whatever you are led to say.

Spiritual Formation

Spiritual Formation is seeking to become more finely tuned to the inner voice, the breath of God, within us, and more faithful to its behests. We welcome articles that describe your personal experience with the process of deepening spiritually. What helped you? What hindered you? How did the process change you? How has it changed your practice as a Friend? What role if any did your meeting play? Please send us your articles by October 15th. And thanks!

Quaker Outreach Roundtable

Saturday, October 10, 2015 • Shrewsbury Meetinghouse, 375 Sycamore Ave, Shrewsbury NJ 07702

Morning Session Featured Speakers & Topics 9:30 – 12:00

Lessons from NEYM Outreach Pilot Project Beth Collea
Inreach+Outreach=Upreach Chad Dell
Marketing 101 for Quakers Karen Tibbals

Afternoon Session Open Sharing & Next Steps 1:00 – 3:30

What’s Working in your meeting?
Next Steps for Your Meeting

See nzym.org for more information, or call the office, 212-673-5750.