

**2017 NYYM Spring Sessions**  
**Hosted by Long Island Regional Meeting**  
**March 31-April 2, 2017**

**Saturday, April 1, 2017, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk*  
*Robin Mallison Alpern (Scarsdale), Reading Clerk*

2017-04-01. Friends gathered in Meeting for Worship at 9:00 a.m.

2017-04-02. Near the end of worship, the Reading Clerk read the roll of the regions and their constituent meetings and worship groups. Friends stood in response. All regions were represented. Kathleen Wooten from Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting in New England Yearly Meeting was introduced as a visitor.

2017-04-03. Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley) reminded us that we meet in the traditional homeland of the Matinecock people of Lenape heritage, who hunted and fished here, and who live among us today.

2017-04-04. After a break, Friends entered Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

2017-04-05. The Clerk welcomed Friends, reminding us of the ministry we heard this morning to be open to the Spirit's new offerings. She announced the presence of Listening Friends, identified by their green lanyards, ready to hear any concerns Friends might want to share one-on-one. The Clerk introduced the Clerks' Table, reviewed this morning's agenda, and reminded Friends of the Consent Agenda.

2017-04-06. Herb Lape (Westbury) welcomed everyone on behalf of the Host Task Group, commending Friends for braving traffic and rain to attend Friday night and today. Herb thanked individuals and the whole Host Task Group for the work needed to coordinate this gathering. The generosity of Friends Academy makes this work much easier than it would be in other locations.

2017-04-07. Andrea Kelly, the new head of Friends Academy, also welcomed Friends, citing the Quaker heritage, spirit and mission that marks all aspects of the school's operation and educational experience.

2017-04-08. Peter Phillips (Cornwall) reported for the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*. The section on "Spiritual Care of Members" in the monthly meeting section of Faith and Practice received its second reading (the first reading was offered in Fall Sessions 2016, minute number 2016-11-37). The new version adds language stating that monthly

meeting ministry and counsel is responsible for nurturing gifts of ministry in members. The second reading was approved as follows:

SPIRITUAL CARE OF MEMBERS. Seeking divine guidance in their discernment, members of ministry and counsel should seek to:

- foster the spiritual growth of the meeting membership and enhance their religious life and fellowship, including especially the nurture and strengthening of corporate worship of the meeting;
- consider individual needs for guidance and to make provision for personal counsel and assistance in matters of interpersonal relationships among members;
- assist individuals and families confronting problems pertaining to illness, financial matters, marital relations, and decisions of conscience, keeping in mind at all times the limits of ministry and counsel's expertise;
- review annually the spiritual condition of the meeting and its membership and to write the State of the Meeting reports;
- develop programs and conferences, study groups, and public meetings to disseminate information regarding Friends' spiritual concerns and to assist members and attenders to deepen the life of the spirit;
- where desired by local meetings, consider qualifications and make recommendations concerning recording gifts in ministry or engagement of pastors or meeting secretaries;
- foster a meeting culture that encourages the emergence of gifts, and assures support and accountability for Friends who carry individual gifts in ministry.

*[This replaces the section on p. 122. Note also the language addressing related topics at p. 118.]*

2017-04-09. Peter directed Friends to the newly revised Handbook page for the Committee to Revise Faith and Practice and read several passages from the revision. As this was a first reading, Friends are advised to contact the committee with comments. Second reading will be given at Summer Sessions.

Friends received the report, attached.

2017-04-10. Kathleen Wooten (Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting) re-introduced herself, describing her mission to strengthen the bonds of love and friendship around New England and beyond, with particular concern for digital ministry and the community we form through various electronic media. Friends approved having the Clerk sign Kathleen's letter of introduction, attached.

2017-04-11. Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag (Adirondack), co-executive directors of Powell House, updated Friends on the excellent participation of youth and adults in Powell House programs. In 2016, Powell House youth programs had 215 individual participants who came a total of 595 times. There were 20 youth conferences, plus a sponsored trip to

the White Privilege Conference. Adult/intergenerational programs drew 515 adult visits and 107 children. With much enthusiasm, Regina and Dennis described exciting coming programs and urged Friends to attend.

2017-04-12. Gabrielle Savory Bailey (Chatham-Summit), Young Adult Field Secretary, described a moving spiritual experience in which God let her know that the work of the Young Adult Field Secretary is no longer hers to do. "It was as if God was touching my face, and turning my head." Gabrielle (Gabi) explained that the work is not yet done. She described the struggle we all feel at times in balancing work life, family life, and Quaker life. Yet that struggle vanishes when there is one life, connected to God, with integrity. Gabi spoke of the stubborn plant pachysandra, whose roots run so deep and strong that the plant cannot be removed, however one might try. Gabi hopes that she and her meeting can be like pachysandra. The faith of early Friends had extraordinary tenacity and power because they were rooted so deeply in the direct experience of the Divine. This is a much more powerful source than the accompanying virtues of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and equality. Living deeply in our faith does not mean doing more, but living differently, living our lives directly informed by God. This is a big change for liberal, unprogrammed Friends, but it offers true connection not just to God but to each other. To that end, Gabi has written a pamphlet describing the first steps of nourishing vital multi-age communities rooted in the direct experience of the Divine. She expects that someone else will fill the position of Young Adult Field Secretary, but urges us to see that the work belongs to all of us.

Friends received the report. In worship, they spoke in response.

2017-04-13. Steven Mohlke (Ithaca), Kathleen Slattery (Orchard Park), and Karen Snare (Bulls-Head Oswego), among others, invited us to this year's Friends General Conference Gathering, to be held at Niagara University, New York, July 2-8. In addition to the conference, there will be many excellent field trips to places such as Underground Railroad heritage sites, the Erie Canal, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin Martin's house. A roster of speakers and performers will come to the conference, bringing intensive workshops, plenaries, concerts, and multi-media experiences. There are also pre-Gathering retreats. Friends are urged to seek transformation by attending.

2017-04-14. Minutes were read, corrected, and approved over the course of this session.

2017-04-15. After worship, we closed with announcements.

Saturday, April 1, 2017, 1:15 p.m.  
Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk  
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk  
Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Recording Clerk  
Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Reading Clerk*

2017-04-16. Friends gathered together in Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

2017-04-17. Our clerk reminded us to read the consent agenda, which will be considered for approval tomorrow. She introduced those at the Clerks' Table and reviewed this afternoon's agenda.

2017-04-18. Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), serving as our General Secretary, reported. He invited us to first reflect on the joy of gathering here as a Yearly Meeting. He noted that his written report will be available later today and attached to the minutes, but he has been led to focus on work not included in that report. His overall sense of where we are now is: we are poised. Poised for growth, new life, and change. Poised to enter the Promised Land. He is feeling wistful that he will not be with us though now that it has become clear to him that this is not his work to do as our General Secretary. Christopher reminded us of the six areas he felt most needed our attention back in 2006. Since those days, we have worked hard and he is optimistic. Our primary work now is learning to practice our faith with more Light, integrity and passion. He especially called out our need to continue to acknowledge white privilege and work towards equality. "Can we stand in a truth that is broader than the polarization, which divides us as a nation?"—a polarization that demonizes some people as the "other." He encouraged our embracing the introduction of elders to our processes and hopes that we will give strength to our acknowledgement and embracing of those with gifts in ministry, those friends of all ages with gifts to enliven our yearly meeting. His report includes a list of our new and continuing work. Christopher closed with a story of how we have grown, specifically around our yearly meeting budget. Where we were once afraid and paralyzed, we have grown stronger, more trusting, and more faithful to the work we are called to do. We have come a long way and he celebrates our capacity to care for one another and discern way forward in our work together.

Friends received this report.

2017-04-19. Robin Whitely (Chatham-Summit) and Arlene Johnson (Chatham-Summit) reported for the Outreach Working Group. This group grew out of a rising interest in outreach and the temporary suspension of the NYYM Advancement Committee. Robin and Arlene, co-convenors of the Outreach Working Group, read their report (see attached), which covered their initial work on creating a structure for the work, working with the many Monthly Meetings that indicated an interest in outreach, and creating two entities – the Steering Circle and the Outreach Practitioners' Circle. The report details the work of these two bodies and their key learnings to date; effective outreach needs to be a Quaker practice, greeting is not the same as welcoming, and it is worthwhile to consider what is good, better, and best in Quaker outreach. The report ends – "As we grow toward an understanding of how outreach fits within fundamental Quaker practice we are also helping to ensure that the Quaker message remains alive, speaking with power to the condition of those who seek to know it."

Friends received this report.

2017-04-20. Christopher Sammond, serving as our General Secretary, spoke to the staffing structure and changes over the past few years, centering first on the creation of a communications director and hiring of Steven Davison (PYM) to fill that position. Steve is

retiring, and Sarah Way (Brooklyn), who was first hired as interim communications director, is now our Communications Director. Chad Gilmartin (attender, Morningside) has recently been hired as our Web Administrator. Chad spoke for a moment to introduce himself. Christopher continued, informing us that because Gabrielle Savory Bailey was led to retire as our Young Adult Field Secretary, Emily Provance (Fifteenth Street) has been hired as interim YAFS until the beginning of the 2017 NYYM Summer Sessions. Personnel Committee has begun a search to fill that position.

Friends received this report.

2017-04-21. Melinda Wenner Bradley (Westbury), serving the yearly meeting as our Children and Youth Field Secretary, reported (see attached). She began with the verse from Isaiah 11:6:

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Melinda especially noted the verse says a small child *shall* lead, not *can*. Rather than creating community, we need to be creating a weaving—nurturing relationships, connections, and sustained service to all ages—threading together the touch points of possibility and hope. Melinda listed the three hopes she holds for her continuing work—first, building bridges between generations and between stages of youth; second, gathering and supporting a community of practice among Friends called to youth ministry; and third, asking how to better communicate with and gather older youth.

Friends responded to this report and the reports of the afternoon. The Children and Youth Field Secretary report was received.

2017-04-22. The minutes were read and approved over the course of the afternoon.

2017-04-23. Friends returned to gathered worship before adjourning.

Sunday, April 2, 2017, 10:15 a.m.  
Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Bridget Bower (Perry City), Recording Clerk*  
*Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk*

2017-04-24. Friends gathered in worship.

2017-04-25. The Clerk introduced the Clerks' Table, and the agenda was reviewed and adjusted.

2017-04-26. The Clerk noted that no concerns had been raised about the consent agenda, and it was approved as follows.

CONSENT AGENDA, Nominating Report for Spring Sessions 2017

**Alternatives to Violence Project Board**

Robert Martin	Poughkeepsie Meeting	class of 2019
Karen Reixach	Ithaca Meeting	class of 2019
Susan Wolf	Ithaca Meeting	class of 2019

**Audit Committee**

Steve Reul	Schenectady Meeting	class of 2019
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**Friends United Meeting Triennial – July 2017**

Beverly Archibald	Manhattan Meeting
Marissa Badgley	Poughkeepsie Meeting
Gabrielle Savory Bailey	Chatham Summit Meeting
Emily Provance	Fifteenth Street Meeting
Christopher Sammond	Poplar Ridge Meeting
Gloria Thompson	Manhattan Meeting

**Powell House Committee**

Susan Bingham	Montclair Meeting	class of 2019
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**Recording Clerk**

Karen Reixach	Ithaca Meeting	class of 2017
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**RELEASE FROM SERVICE**

Wilma Campbell – Audit Committee	Rochester Meeting
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**CONSENT AGENDA, Report by the Clerk and General Secretary to Spring Sessions, 2017**

The following are actions taken on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting by the Clerk and General Secretary since Fall Sessions 2016. Actions that we were directed to do by Minutes during Fall Sessions are not included here.

1. We added our names as to a list of signatories to a letter from faith leaders to Governor Cuomo in support of the Home Stability Support Act. The New York State Council of Churches states: "HSS is a very thoughtful bill crafted by Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi. HSS essentially provides funds to help people who are precariously housed remain in their homes. We believe HSS offers a more humane and cost effective approach than allowing people's living situations to become so destabilized that they become homeless and end up in a more expensive shelter and motel system. The Act would also help people get out of shelters." You can find the text of the letter at [https://www.scribd.com/document/343550176/HSSFaith-Leader-Letter#from\\_embed](https://www.scribd.com/document/343550176/HSSFaith-Leader-Letter#from_embed).
2. We added our names to "Faith Leader Letter: Welcome Refugees of all Nationalities & Religions." You can find the letter and its many other signatories at [www.interfaithimmigration.org/5000religiousleaderletter](http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/5000religiousleaderletter).

3. We issued a press release (available on [www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org)) on the politics of division.
- 4 We designated six NYYM Friends as a delegation to the Standing Rock Sioux tribe as requested by the Witness Coordinating Committee on 12/1/2016.
5. We submitted a comment to the Securities and Exchange Commission on Section 953(b) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, after consultation with the clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee. (Available on [www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org))

2017-04-27. Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay) brought forward one more nomination – Alternate to FUM Triennial, David Herendeen (Farmington). Friends approved.

2017-04-28. Jennifer Perry (Farmington) reported for Nurture Coordinating Committee. NCC engaged with the Friends World Committee for Consultation Pisac minute on “Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth”, which asks that each yearly meeting to take two radical and concrete actions in support of climate justice. The NCC minute in response is attached (#1). Friends spoke to the minute; many Friends are under the weight of this concern. Friends received the report. (The Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas worked further on this issue at their March 2017 meeting; a report on their work is attached (#2).)

Friends asked that some of the information shared be included in the minutes. Powell House comes under the weight of the Pisac minute and Nurture Coordinating Committee work. Specifically they will consider these issues throughout their strategic plan and facilities assessment process. Another Friend highlighted the section on Summer Sessions 2017 that directly cites the Pisac minute as inspiration: Our work for eco-justice reflects the injunction in the Epistle from 2016 Friends World Committee for Consultation World Plenary: “We call on Friends everywhere to take practical actions to sustain life on Earth.”

2017-04-29. Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale), clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, reported. The New York State Council of Churches has created a political action wing. Letters will go out to monthly meetings from Witness offering the opportunity join the action alert list.

2017-04-30. Mary introduced a concern from Prisons Committee. The governor of New York State is proposing to reduce the number of visiting days with the incarcerated in New York State maximum security prisons. On behalf of Prisons Committee, Judy Meikle (Wilton) read a letter for consideration for the Yearly Meeting to send to the Governor. This was approved for the NYYM Clerk and General Secretary to sign and send the letter, attached.

2017-04-31. Shirley Way spoke on her trip to El Salvador to facilitate Alternatives to Violence workshops there. She reported that it was very difficult work, but filled with joy. Her report is attached. Friends received the report.

2017-04-32. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, presented the 2016 end-of-year Treasurers’ report on behalf of Paula McClure. The report, attached, shows a net increase of over thirty-six thousand dollars. This is due to a combination of not requiring a full audit this year on the expense side and a transfer in of

the unused balance of the YFIR Fund. In addition, faithful fulfillment of covenant donations, generous donations of individual donors AND careful stewardship of resources contributed to our successful year. The 2016 report is the last year that will not show line-by-line ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation Help) grant figures. Mary Williams, as the new Treasurer, is combining the Trustee and Operating funds work as of First Month 1, 2017.

The report was received.

2017-04-33. John requested affirmation from the body to make a transfer of \$36,000 from the 2016 funds to the 2017 budget line "Other Sources of Revenue, from Provision for Next Budget." Friends approved the transfer.

2017-04-34. John also reported for the Search Committee for a General Secretary. The deadline was yesterday and they have begun consideration of applications. The report was received.

2017-04-35. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), clerk of Sessions Committee, announced that at Summer Sessions 2017, Sessions Committee will bring recommendations for a Pay as Led process for the Meeting to consider and possibly approve for the 2018 Summer Sessions at Silver Bay.

Pay as Led (PaL) is a Quakerly way to consider our financial condition when registering to attend our Summer Sessions and paying for our accommodations, working within the given guidelines of the detailed PaL process. So, through this process, we ask everyone to prayerfully consider: how am I led to participate in my NYYM sessions?

There are two motivations for all of us to consider moving forward with a Pay as Led process; first, to make it more affordable for Friends who have had to stretch mightily in the past in order to be able to attend Summer Sessions, and second to better welcome Friends who may have stayed away from Summer Sessions because of cost. We hope that PaL will open up the Yearly Meeting experience to more Friends.

Sessions Committee has conferred with members of the Financial Services Committee and has begun a conversation with the NYYM Trustees to make sure that we are moving forward in good faith in such a process, while still acting with prudence in accepting the risks, including the financial risks.

We base some of this faith in our knowledge of the New York Yearly Meeting Friends and some in the experience of New England Yearly Meeting successfully using a PaL process for their past three Summer Sessions.

Still. A Pay as Led process will require a leap of faith from all of us. We will have to take an active part in detailed planning and discussion and discernment, while acknowledging issues of race, class, wage inequalities, and accepting some level of inevitable struggle around trust, fairness and integrity.

But we are saying that the leap is what brings us closer to the Beloved Community, and the completeness of our Religious Society of Friends.

Sessions Committee encourages each of you to keep a close eye on the NYYM website and publications for committee reports, charts, and recommendations regarding the creation of the PaL process for New York Yearly Meeting. Most especially, we encourage your active engagement with the committee prior to and during 2017 Summer Sessions. The Ad Hoc PaL committee is Linda Houser (Purchase), Cheshire Frager (Flushing),

Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Dawn Pozzi (Rochester), Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), and Doug Way (New Brunswick). Serving as resources to the PaL Committee are Sunfire Kazmayer (Easton), Roseann Press (Housatonic) and Mary Williams (Bulls-Head Oswego). We are in the Yearbook!

2017-04-36. Melanie-Claire, continuing as Sessions Committee's Spring Fall Sessions Coordinator and Liaison, expressed her appreciation to the Host Task Group and the region for hosting Spring Sessions. We had a total of 129 participants this weekend; 8 youth and 121 adults. She announced dates for Summer and Fall sessions 2017 (July 23-29 at Silver Bay Association, and November 10-12 at Caldwell University in New Jersey and hosted by All Friends Regional Meeting, respectively). After the 2018 Fall Sessions, the date for Fall Sessions will move to the first weekend in November to avoid the conflict with the FCNL Annual Meeting.

Friends received the report.

2017-04-37. Deb Wood reported for the Nurture Coordinating Committee on the Revised Minute of Exercise regarding the Friends United Meeting's hiring practices and the Brooklyn Meeting minute in response. Originally presented in minute 2016-11-33 at Fall Sessions 2016, this minute of exercise was returned to Nurture Coordinating Committee for additional work and clarification. Deb read the revised minute, attached. The meeting approved the minute.

2017-04-38. The minutes were read and approved over the course of the morning. The meeting closed with a period of worship, followed by announcements.