



2014 Minutes

**of the Annual Sessions
of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends**

**Three Hundred Fifty-Fourth Year
Castleton State College | Castleton, Vermont
August 2–7, 2014**

Welcome to the 2014 Edition

Dear Friends,

As you may know, this is the third year that the Yearly Meeting office is publishing the Minutes of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends in this format. In consultation with Coordinating & Advisory Committee, we've made some changes this year that we hope will be helpful.

Here's a summary:

The enclosed document includes general minutes, memorial minutes, epistles, 2014–2015 committee rosters and the annual reports of committees and staff.

In response to requests, we are also including the approved FY2015 budget (which runs from October 1, 2014, to September 30, 2015) and related financial reports. We hope this will be another useful step in our continuing work to make our shared finances more accessible and transparent.

Because the committee rosters and budget information is included in the Minutes, we have scheduled the new NEYM Directory for publication in mid-January 2015. The Directory will include 1) updated directions and contacts for local and quarterly meetings; 2) contact information for YM staff, officers, and Friends active on NEYM committees; 3) year-end closing financial reports; 4) statistical reports and other helpful information on Friends Organizations, Funds and wider Quaker resources.

Publishing the Directory at this time will allow us to provide the most current updates from local meetings which change committee years in January. We believe this new schedule will also make the office workload more manageable through distributing the workload throughout the year.

We are sending a printed copy of the Minutes to every monthly meeting, preparative meeting and worship group in New England. It is available to all online at www.neym.org/minutes, or by requesting a printed copy for personal use by e-mailing office@neym.org or calling Sara Hubner at 508-754-6760. This letter-sized document is ready to be enclosed in a three-ring binder if printed from the web site.

As always, if you have suggestions for how we might improve how this important information is updated, published and shared, please don't hesitate to share them. Corrections or additions of any information should be sent to office@neym.org or mailed to the NEYM office.

We look forward to an exciting year of worship, fellowship and growth together.

In faith and service,



Noah Baker Merrill
Yearly Meeting Secretary

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2014 New England Yearly Meeting Sessions Schedule

	Saturday, August 2	Sunday, August 3	Monday, August 4	Tuesday, August 5	Wednesday, August 6	Thursday, August 7
6:30-7:00			6:30-7:00 Early Morning Worship (See YM News for locations)			
6:45-8:45			6:45-8:45 Breakfast (Huden Dining Hall)			
8:30-11:30	9:30 Permanent Board & Ministry & Counsel (See YM News** for locations) 10:00 Registration begins* (Fine Arts Center Lobby)	8:30-9:00 Registration* (Fine Arts Center Lobby) 9:00-11:30 Worship (Pavilion) -All-Ages Worship -Junior YM leaves (9:45) -Bible Half Hour with Tom Gates	8:30 Bible Half Hour with Tom Gates (Fine Arts Center) transitioning worshipfully into... 9:00-11:30 Meeting for the Conduct of Business (Fine Arts Center)			8:30 Bible Half Hour transitioning worshipfully into... 9-11:00 Meeting for Business Worship for Business 11-11:30 Concluding worship (all ages)
11:15-1:15	11:30-1:00 Lunch (Huden) Noon-12:30 Registration lunch break		11:15-1:45 Lunch (Huden Dining Hall)			11:30-1:15 Lunch
1:00-4:45	2:00 Meeting for Worship (Hoff Hall Conference Rm) 3:00-4:15 Parent/Sponsor & Youth Orientations (See YM News** for locations) 5:00 Registration closes*	1pm Orientation for first-time attendees (Hoff Hall) 1:45-2:45 Plenary w/ Niyonu Spann: (Pavilion) followed by small group sharing in... 3-4:30 Anchor Groups	1:30-2:45 Afternoon Opportunities I or Anchor Groups 3:00-4:00 Afternoon Opportunities II	1:30-2:45 Afternoon Opportunities I or Anchor Groups 3:00-4:00 Afternoon Opportunities II	1:30-2:45 Afternoon Opportunities I or Anchor Groups 4:30-5:15 Quaker Quorale (Jeffords Auditorium)	1-3:00 Permanent Board 4:00 Check-out ends (details to be posted in dorms and YM News) Youth Programs Childcare: Su: 8:45-11:45am, & 1:30-4:45pm; M-W: 8:15-11:45am & 1:15-4:15pm; Th: 8:15-11:00am Junior High YM, Junior YM, Young Friends, Young Adult Friends: See respective schedules
4:45-6:45		4:45-6:45 Dinner (Huden Dining Hall)				
6:00-9:00	6:45 Opening Celebration (all ages) (Pavilion) 7:30 Children & youth staff leave 8:00-9:00 Anchor Groups (Pavilion)	6:15 Vespers Singing for all ages (outside, TBD) 7-9:00 Meeting for Worship for Business (Fine Arts Center)	6:15 Vespers: Singing for all ages (outside, TBD) 7-9:00 Meeting for Worship for Business (Fine Arts Center)	6:15 Vespers: Singing for all ages (outside, TBD) 7-8:30 Jon Watts Concert all ages (Fine Arts Center) 8:30 Coffee House (Huden)	6:15 Vespers: Singing for all ages (outside, TBD) 7-9:00 Meeting for Worship for Business (Fine Arts Center) 8:30 Coffee House (Huden)	
9:00-11:00	9:00-10:00 Registration Continues* (Fine Arts Center Lobby)	9:00 Interest Groups (Stafford & Leavenworth)	9:00 Interest Groups (Stafford & Leavenworth)	9:00 Interest Groups (Stafford & Leavenworth)	9:00 Interest Groups (Stafford & Leavenworth)	
*	Registration Hours Saturday (Fine Arts Center Lobby): 10 am-noon, 12:30-5 pm; 9-10 pm Sunday (Fine Arts Center Lobby): 8:30-9 am; 12:15-1:15 pm, 7-9 pm Monday-Wednesday (Fine Arts Center Lobby): 9:30-10:30 am, 4:30-5 pm For registration needs outside these hours, please contact Laurel well in advance at registrat@neym.org or 978-494-6396 to make alternate arrangements.					
**	Yearly Meeting News Published Saturday through Wednesday mornings at breakfast and on the web at neym.org/sessions , with information about events at Sessions. Deadlines for submissions: Sunday, Monday and Tuesday at 1:30 pm. Drop off materials at the Info Desk, located in the Fine Arts Center Lobby. Announcements, notices and flyers not specifically related to Sessions will not be included in the YM news. Please check with the Info Desk for where to post these items.					

2014 Sessions Coordinators, Officers, Speakers & YM Staff 5

Access Needs Coordinator	Jana Noyes-Dakota
Accounts Manager	Frederick Martin*
Audio-Visual Coordinator	Neil Blanchard
Bible Half Hour Speaker	Thomas Gates
Bookstore	Dulany Bennett & Virginia Bainbridge
Children's Bookstore	Jean McCandless & Karen Sargent (mgrs), Chris McCandless
Communications Director	Jeffrey Hipp*
Housing Coordinator	Katherine Fisher
Information Desk	Eric Edwards, Chris Jorgenson, Nancy Marstaller
Sessions Coordinator	Kathleen Wooten
Sessions Office Assistants	Kenneth Glover, Sara Hubner*
Pastoral Counselor	Kevin Lee
Plenary Room/Display Coordinator	Tom Jackson
Clerks	Jacqueline Stillwell (presiding), Karen Sánchez-Eppler & Will Taber (recording), Susan Davies & Andrew Grannell (reading)
Registrar	Laurel Swan
Religious Education and Outreach Coordinator	Beth Collea*
Sessions Committee Clerk	John Humphries
Shuttle Coordinator	Barbara Dakota
Spanish Interpreters	Mary Hopkins, Benigno Sánchez-Eppler
Speakers/Presenters	Niyonu Spann, Jon Watts
Treasurer	Benjamin Guaraldi
Volunteer Coordinator	Mary Chenaille
Youth Coordinators	Gretchen Baker-Smith* (Junior High YM), Betty Ann Lee (Junior YM), NiaDwynwen Thomas* (Young Friends/YAF)
YM News Editor	Liz Yeats
Yearly Meeting Secretary	Noah Baker Merrill*

* = YM Staff

Child Care

Coord: Kimberly Walker-Gonçalves
 Bob Irwin
 Christine Hamilton
 Rainer Humphries
 Whitney Mikkelsen
 Holly Lapp
 Zan Walker-Goncalves
 Greg Williams

Junior High Yearly Meeting

Coord: Gretchen Baker-Smith*
 Anne Anderson
 Dylan Anderson
 Michael Anderson
 Buddy Baker-Smith
 Jerry Carson
 Emily Edwards
 Adam Kohrman
 Doug Lippincott
 Felice Lopez
 Alma Sánchez-Eppler
 Russell Weiss-Irwin

Junior Yearly Meeting

Coord: Betty Ann Lee
 Carol Baker
 David Baxter
 Brad Bussiere-Nichols
 Margy Carpenter
 Rebecca Edwards
 Lisa Forbush-Umholtz
 June Goodband
 Janet Hamilton
 Ruth Mobilia Heath
 Avery Johnson
 Elizabeth Kantt
 Amy Lee-Vieira
 Paula Rossvall
 Laura Street
 Lynn Taber
 Jay Vieira

JYM Afternoon Choices

Coord: Cynthia Rankin
 Zoe Kay

Young Friends

Coord: NiaDwynwen Thomas*
 Asst Coord: Hilary Burgin
 Tom Antonik
 Lucy Churchill
 Peter Colby
 Allon Dubler
 Elaine Mar
 Willis Monroe
 Meredith Noseworthy
 Wendy Schlotterbeck
 Meghan Sebens

Young Adult Friends

Sessions Coord: Chloe Grubbs-Saleem

Minutes of the Annual Sessions

Saturday Evening, August 2, 2014

2014-01 The New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends gathered on Saturday evening, August 2, 2014, for its 354th Annual Sessions, held this year at Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont. This is the first time that New England Yearly Meeting has met in the state of Vermont. Our theme this year is “You are my witnesses,” from Isaiah 43:10-12 and 44:8. The presiding clerk, Jacqueline Stillwell (Monadnock) welcomed us. How are we witnesses? What is our witness? What are we witnesses to?

2014-02 The presiding clerk introduced the other members of the clerks’ table: Karen Sánchez-Eppler (Northampton) and Will Taber (Fresh Pond), recording clerks; Andy Grannell (Portland) and Susan Davies (Vassalboro), reading clerks.

2014-03 The reading clerks read the roll of quarterly and monthly meetings. Friends stood when their quarter was called and waved when their meeting was called. We noted with joy that people from Middletown Monthly Meeting, Bennington Monthly Meeting, Wilderness Monthly Meeting and the new Poultney Worship Group were attending for the first time in many years.

2014-04 Jacqueline Stillwell welcomed us to our new space and invited us to consider all of the changes that are happening within and around us. Sometimes we can get stuck in our old roles. Take a moment to consider how we are growing into new roles. Change can sometimes make us grumpy. We can also see change as opportunity for adventure and to be transformed.

2014-05 The clerk asked those who were attending New England Yearly Meeting for the first time to stand and be welcomed. We welcomed with particular joy Arthur Francis Zimmerman (South Starksboro) and Elias Quentin Hipp (Amesbury), who were born since our last Sessions.

2014-06 We welcomed the following visitors to New England Yearly Meeting Sessions this year:

Norge Alvarez, Puerto Padre MM, Cuba YM
 Joseph Andugu, Central YM, Kenya
 Beverly Archibald, New York YM
 Leila Archibald, New York YM
 Steve Bradley, Ottawa MM, Canadian YM
 Susan Elliot, Chester MM, Philadelphia YM
 Elizabeth Gates, Lancaster MM, Philadelphia YM
 Thomas Gates, Lancaster MM, Philadelphia YM
 Julian Martinez Alfonso, Bocas MM, Cuba YM
 Anne Pomeroy, New Paltz MM, New York YM
 Niyonu Spann, Chester MM, Philadelphia YM
 Gretta Stone, Doylestown MM, Philadelphia YM
 Jacob Stone, Doylestown MM, Philadelphia YM
 Elizabeth Yates, FM Austin, South Central YM
 Leon Zealand, Alexandria FM, Baltimore YM

Organizational Representatives

Margaret Cooley, Woolman Hill Retreat Center, Mt. Toby MM, New England YM
 Barry Crossno, FGC, MM of Friends Philadelphia, Philadelphia YM

Laura Everett, Massachusetts Council of Churches
Lucy Duncan, AFSC, Philadelphia YM
Sharon Frame, Friend in Residence, FM at Cambridge, New England YM
Kate Gould, FCNL, FM Washington, Baltimore YM
Eden Grace, FUM, Beacon Hill MM, New England YM
Christine Greenland, Tract Association of Friends, Plymouth MM, Philadelphia YM
Barbara Price Monahan, FCNL, New London MM, New England YM
Brian Eric Moon, FGC, Pacific YM
Jeff Perkins, Friends Fiduciary Corporation, Philadelphia
Jenny Rowe, Friends School of Portland, Monte Verde MM, Costa Rica
Addy Simwerayi, AFSC, Concord MM, New England YM
Gloria Thompson, FWCC Region One, Section of the Americas

2014-07 John Humphries (Hartford), clerk of Sessions Committee, introduced Sessions staff and volunteers and thanked them for their work. We had an excellent response—by way of the registration form—to our request for volunteers.

2014-08 Noah Baker Merrill (Putney), Yearly Meeting Secretary, introduced the Yearly Meeting staff: NiaDwynwen Thomas (Beacon Hill), Young Friends/Young Adult Friends Coordinator; Jeffrey Hipp (Amesbury), Communications Director; Sara Hubner (Gonic), Information Management Assistant; Frederick Martin (Monadnock), Accounts Manager; Beth Collea (Wellesley), Religious Education and Outreach Coordinator; Gretchen Baker-Smith (Westport), Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator; and Kathleen Wooten (Lawrence), Sessions Coordinator. We are grateful for all of the work that they do on our behalf throughout the year.

2014-09 Betty Ann Lee (Westport), JYM Sessions Coordinator, Gretchen Baker-Smith and NiaDwynwen Thomas introduced the Youth Program staff by program. As the staff was introduced, the members of those groups left to attend their programs. Kimberly Walker-Gonçalves (Northampton), Childcare Coordinator, introduced the childcare staff and Beth Collea introduced the Family Neighborhood.

2014-10 Jacqueline Stillwell encouraged us to read the Advance Documents in preparation for our business sessions. They contain much information about the exciting work that has been done by committees and individuals throughout the year.

2014-11 We concluded our evening with brief worship and adjourned to Anchor Groups.

Sunday, August 3, 2014

Afternoon Plenary

2014-12 During Sunday afternoon's plenary session, Niyonu Spann wove together song, story, and her own prophetic voice to tell resonant truths about the difficulties we face in effecting justice. She spoke about the power of what she called "gracious acts of recognition" to transform divisions, pain, and differences into truth and mutual understanding. "Lord don't take away these stumbling blocks," she sang, "but lead us all around them." Witnessing involves both an inward sensing (seeing, hearing, touching, experiencing and, most of all, that pause of attention that notices wrongs) and an outward action (speaking, writing, intervening). There is a tension, a dual register, in every moment of witness. We live in a nation and a time rife with illusion, powered by lies and denials; it is our responsibility to work to see through these illusions to truth. Niyonu

taught us to sing “I can see through illusion, I can see ALL I can see through illusion” which called for syncopation, an act of learning to step out of the comfort on the beat. Singing in what for many of us may have been an unfamiliar rhythm felt risky. We need to depend on each other to sing together. Together we find our way around the stumbling blocks in and amongst us. Niyonu named many of these stumbling blocks: waste, greed, war, homophobia, racism, lies, distrust of each other, a blindness to how these have roots in our own Quaker communities and interactions. She described and modeled the tenderness and honesty of listening for the multiple frequencies and tones, the varied beats, in every encounter. To witness to the truth in a faith tradition that recognizes continuing revelation calls for just such open hearts and prophetic voices.

Sunday Evening

2014-13 Out of waiting worship, the reading clerk read excerpts from the 2014 Epistle of Northern Yearly Meeting. “Spiritual hospitality was the theme of our gathering. We explored ways that monthly meetings and worship groups can reflect spiritual hospitality, recognizing how we create holy spaces for listening and challenging each other and the benefits of dispersion of authority and learning from new voices. Spiritual hospitality is our personal statement about God in dismantling the barriers of the world.”

2014-14 The reading clerks reviewed guidelines for meeting for worship for the conduct of business from the Advance Documents. Jacqueline Stillwell reminded us of the importance of providing a safe space for all to speak. She encouraged us to be patient with each other.

2014-15 The clerk introduced the Unity Agenda which will be considered later in the week. Friends are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Unity Agenda and bring concerns or questions to the Friends named for each item. More general issues can be raised with the presiding clerk. Items on the Unity Agenda about which there are significant concerns will be removed from the Unity Agenda and brought to business meeting for corporate discernment.

2014-16 Friends approved the following visitors to the Youth Yearly Meetings and to Young Adult Friends: Ages 0–4, Suzy Klein-Berndt (Northampton); Grades K–2, Anne Nash (Wellesley), Tom Bagdad-Peyton (Cambridge); Grades 3–4, Skip Schiel (Cambridge); Grades 5–6, Mary Gilbert (Cambridge), Rebecca MacKenzie (Quaker City Unity); JHYM, Mary Anne Ruppert (Hanover), Bonnie Norton (Wellesley); Young Friends, Carolyn Stone (Wellesley), Phil Veatch (Fresh Pond); and Young Adult Friends, Regina McCarthy (Wellesley), Jan Hoffman (Mt. Toby).

2014-17 The reading clerk read the list of people who are not able to attend Sessions due to age or illness. Cards will be available near the Information Desk to send greetings to these Friends.

2014-18 The reading clerks read Minute 2013-52, in which we pledged ourselves as individuals and meetings to consider the moral and spiritual implications of how we benefit from and have been harmed by the Doctrine of Discovery. Rachel Carey-Harper (Barnstable), clerk of the Racial, Social and Economic Justice Committee, read the following query: “What part of this work has touched your heart, has touched your soul?” We entered into a period of worship-sharing on this query.

The committee offered themselves as resources and invited the Yearly Meeting to continue on this sacred healing journey. We must open ourselves to transformation.

2014-19 Jan Hoffman, clerk of the *Faith and Practice* Revision Committee, joyfully presented an interim *Faith and Practice*, a work in progress now in book form. There are printed copies

available for every meeting and worship group and the text is also on the web site. This book is further evidence of a rising energy in the Yearly Meeting. This work has been undertaken in the committee's faith in the Inner Guide, continuing revelation and that we can be guided together.

Section 1 contains all of the chapters that have received preliminary approval.

Section 2 contains the appendices. The appendices have not yet received preliminary approval from Sessions. The committee encourages Friends to review the appendices and provide feedback on them. Section 3 contains an essay on moving forward to the remaining chapters.

If you find a mistake, let the committee know. Friends are invited to continue engaging with the committee as it continues its work.

2014-20 Our Secretary, Noah Baker Merrill, reflected on the work he does for the Yearly Meeting. He shared how powerful and vital the spiritual work of administration is. Administration is the encouragement of our ministries. Noah finds nourishment in seeing and feeling where the life is among us. In his travels among us he does a lot of listening.

We live in creative tension and this creative tension allows us to grow. We live in a world of dramatic change. The things that used to work don't seem to work anymore and we need to find new ways. We are profoundly conservative in looking to the cloud of witnesses who have come before us. We are also profoundly progressive in our openness to what God is calling us to now. What does it mean to live into a new world?

We are being called into wholeness in many ways. How can we more fully include the whole human family? We are working toward healing religious trauma and the divisions among Friends. We must embrace the whole of who we are across all ages. NEYM has worked to develop and nurture our younger members. We also need to encourage the gifts and roles of our elders. We need to allow younger members to take up fuller participation in our work and we need to encourage our older members to see how they can become elders and mentors.

Noah, taking a tomato and a tomato stake in his hands, said that we, as a Yearly Meeting, have spent a lot of time working on our stakes. But our stakes make no sense without the tomatoes that they allow to grow and flourish. All our work on finances and structures only makes sense if it supports the vines that produce the fruit.

Monday Morning, August 4, 2014

2014-21 We heard the 2014 Epistle from the Friends Association for Higher Education and Friends Counsel on Education joint conference at Haverford College. They are actively searching for ways to reorder attitudes and actions towards justice, challenging the obsession with money that so often diverts decision-making attention away from ethical concerns.

2014-22 Beth Collela (Quaker Youth Education Committee), Dorothy Grannell (Portland, Friends World Committee for Consultation–New England), and Cynthia Ganung (Wellesley, Puente de Amigos Committee) reported on the collaboration of these three NEYM committees to publish a Spanish translation of the Friends General Conference *Faith & Play* youth religious education curriculum. This was in response to requests from Friends first in Cuba and then in other Latin American Friends communities.

Beth told the story of how the translation came about using the format of the curriculum, placing colorful felt figures on a board to illustrate and perform the tale. When our words and actions don't match, it feels like a broken place inside. When we don't keep our promises, our hearts remind us. That's one way we can feel the Light at work within. Beth told of a Friend wrestling with how to live into a big promise to make connections with Friends who lived far away and believed different things. Spirit planted a "leading tree" to share our Quaker experience through translating, publishing and disseminating stories. Other leadings of other Friends in and beyond

New England have created a grove of leading trees around this one that have helped to spread these stories titled, *Jugar llenos de fe* ("to play full of faith").

This project exemplifies the FWCC goals of connecting Friends, crossing cultures, and changing lives. The power of this project was testified to by the words of Friends in Cuba and Bolivia who had called for and who have now begun to use these materials. The initial leading for outreach rose in Beth Collea; FGC released the copyright to *Faith & Play*; Obadiah Brown/Sarah Swift Benevolent Fund, Mosher Book and Tract and monies from three committees and some individuals helped cover the costs of production; Benigno Sánchez-Eppler (Northampton) and Susan Furry (Smithfield) translated the text; David Botwinik designed the book; Robin Mohr for FWCC's Section of the Americas and evangelical pastor Ken Comfort (Reedwood Friends Church, Northwest YM) took on much of the administrative work of disseminating *Jugar llenos de fe* in Central and South America; and Caryl Menkhous Creswell (West Hills MM, Northwest YM) has helped to train Latin American youth workers in the book's unusual teaching method. The process of translating these stories, produced out of our liberal Quaker perspective, and sharing them with more Christ-centered and Evangelical Quaker communities has called for much deep learning, listening and tenderness. This is another way that the leading trees of this collaborative project continue to sprout.

2014-23 The clerk invited quarterly meeting clerks to speak at Sessions. We heard reflections on how the Spirit is moving in our quarterly meetings.

Connie Kincaid-Brown (Hanover), clerk of Northwest Quarterly Meeting, shared that Northwest Quarter, like the Yearly Meeting as a whole, has been doing the work of structural reorganization. They have created new committees that seem to be working better. Changes in traditions of time and place of gathering have led to enlivening new experiments.

Dorothy Grannell, clerk of Falmouth Quarterly Meeting, reported that Falmouth Quarter consists of six meetings and one worship group, two quite large and four small. Two of the six are pastoral meetings so there is much diversity in forms of worship within this Quarter. Durham Meeting is seeking a new pastor. In recent years the Quarter decided to rescind a recorded gift of ministry, a painful process that put great demands on Ministry and Counsel. The laying down of the Oxford Hills Meeting was another painful process for the Quarter and one that revealed the ways in which the Quarter had not been as attentive as it could have been to the health of all its meetings.

Marian Baker (Weare), clerk of Dover Quarterly Meeting, reminded us that North Sandwich Meeting, formerly of Falmouth Quarter, joined Dover Quarter several years ago. There are now five meetings in Dover Quarter as well as a worship group and a preparative meeting. Some are large meetings where some members feel little need for quarterly gatherings. The Quarter meets on the fifth Sunday of the month, whenever those occur. This year the listening session for concerns about FUM proved a time of true healing and a renewal of communication between meetings.

Jay O'Hara (Sandwich), recording clerk of Sandwich Quarterly Meeting, read a report from Sally Fritz (West Falmouth), clerk of Sandwich Quarter. She reports that there had been real revitalization for the Quarter through a spirited gathering about recognizing our role in the revitalization of the earth. The Quarter was drawn powerfully together by speaking honestly to the queries "When the realm of God is on earth, how will we live? What keeps us from living that way now?" The powerful sense of community felt in that gathering has not been sustained. It is clear that there is pain in some of the Quarter's monthly meetings and that the Quarter is not being used as a resource.

Susan Davies, Ministry and Counsel co-clerk of Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, reported that the work of balancing structure and ministry remains a complex dance. After a period of jubilee in which the Quarter laid down committees, the Quarter has now reconstituted Ministry and Counsel, Finance Committee and Gifts and Leadings Committee, and a coordinating team to

assist monthly meetings in hosting quarterly meeting days. They do not have a presiding clerk of the Quarter but have experimented with clerks of the day to provide opportunities for building clerking skills. There are 13 monthly meetings in the Quarter, many of which have fewer than ten members. The Quarterly Meeting is an important source of community for Friends in northern Maine, and 10 of the 13 meetings regularly participate in Quarterly gatherings.

Dwight Lopes (New Haven), clerk of Connecticut Valley Quarter, reported that the mix of small and large meetings in this Quarter proves to be both a strength and a challenge. New London meeting has only five or six members. They considered laying the Meeting down, but have decided they want to continue. They welcome visitors and prayers. The Quarter has been holding an annual residential meeting at Woolman Hill. The Quarter has been working to recognize and articulate stewardship responsibilities on climate change, approving this minute:

Climate Minute of Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting, May 2014

Quaker testimony urges Friends to be good stewards “so that future generations may inherit an earth on which they can live in hope and dignity” (NEYM *Faith and Practice*, 1985, p. 189). It is time to urgently affirm the overwhelming scientific consensus that greenhouse gases released by human activity are causing climate change, that these changes threaten life in our planet as we know it, and that we have a responsibility to address the very real threats that will impact both rich and poor. Those on earth who have contributed least to this crisis are likely to suffer most from it. While systematic change is necessary, we cannot wait for governing bodies to do what is needed: change must begin with individuals and groups of people acting together. As Friends living in a high-carbon society we have a special responsibility and opportunity to live up to our testimony of stewardship

We believe that although the problems we face are large, complex, and overwhelming, following our faith can lead us to unity and hope.

Friends are encouraged to move from this affirmation to specific action as led.

Queries

Do you revere all life and the splendor of God’s continuing creation, and are you actively addressing the habits and expectations of your culture that threaten the extinction of many species, destroy habitat, cause water and food scarcity, hunger and weather-related economic dislocations? Are you committed to passing on a habitable planet to future generations and is this evident to others in how you live and how you witness?

Do you live in possibility, knowing that with the Spirit “way may open”? Do you acknowledge the scientific facts of global warming and that it is impacting everyone on the planet—rich and poor? Do you witness to yourself and others that we have a responsibility to act in ways that encourage adaptation to current realities and that will help mitigate the severity of global warming. How? Why? When?

Do you take whatever small steps are within your present capacity, trusting that if you follow the truth you have, more will be given you?

1. What changes in your lifestyle are reducing greenhouse gases and what might be your next steps?
2. What are you doing to help your meeting reduce its carbon footprint?

3. Are you uniting with others who share your concern for stewardship? Do you bear public witness to the Spirit and the urgent need to reduce carbon use and greenhouse gases in the atmosphere? How? Why? When?
 - Are you meeting and working together with others in your monthly meeting and/or your communities?
 - Are you reaching out to other faith communities to encourage and support work on climate issues at local, state, federal and international levels?
 - Are you open to a Voluntary Carbon Tax or other actions to move public opinion and governments toward better stewardship of all resources?
4. Are you supporting your local economy and strengthening community?
5. If you have investments, have you divested from fossil fuel companies? If you have a pension fund, have you asked the directors to divest from fossil fuel companies? Are there organizations you are affiliated with that you could urge to do so?

The presiding clerk asked Friends to carry this minute back to their monthly and quarterly meetings, with the hope that it might be seasoned over the coming year.

In reflecting on these reports from quarterly meetings, we heard commonality of problems and found useful ideas to borrow, confirming the value of this conversation.

We heard from the floor that Rhode Island-Smithfield Quarter's spring meeting was cancelled. It has four member meetings, including one pastoral meeting. Two meetings are committed to remaining vital even though small in number. Salem Quarter, our largest Quarter in terms of membership, did not offer a formal report.

2014-24 Holly Baldwin (Fresh Pond), clerk of Permanent Board, described the responsibility of Permanent Board to carry the work of the Yearly Meeting between Sessions. In 2013 at the request of Sessions, the Permanent Board appointed the Structural Review Committee to examine the organizational structure of our Yearly Meeting and to address a number of growing concerns about the ability of NEYM's current structure to adequately support our work and vision.

Members of the Structural Review Committee, Honor Woodrow (Beacon Hill), Alana Parkes (Beacon Hill), and Lisa Graustein (Beacon Hill), asked the body to serve as "infograms" to display the demographics of our Yearly Meeting, making visible how many of our meetings have fewer than 20 members, and that only 14 meetings have more than 80 members; indeed these 14 meetings contain half of the membership in NEYM. These human "infograms" were also used to display the enormous committee burden of our present structure: NEYM has 28 committees, more than any other yearly meeting in the United States.

We need our new structure to help us provide a faith-filled witness to the world. Our new structure should have ample space and flexibility for listening to and doing God's will. We need a structure grounded in Spirit-led eldership that provides transparency and accountability for our finances and our processes of leadership and discernment. We seek a structure that will support all of us in living whole, Spirit-led lives.

The Structural Review Committee will draft a model for a new organizational structure and share it with regional gatherings and across the existing committees of the Yearly Meeting before bringing it back to Sessions for discernment in August 2015. Throughout the coming year the committee will provide space for continuing threshing of potential organizational structures and work to include the perspectives of as many Friends as is possible.

2014-25 Recognizing the financial pressures facing the Yearly Meeting, the Permanent Board charged Finance, Personnel, Development, and the Coordinating and Advisory Committees to develop a path towards financial sustainability. At its meeting just before Sessions, Permanent Board endorsed the Financial Sustainability Working Group's efforts toward accountability and long-term planning.

The following Working Group members presented a Financial Sustainability Progress Report: Noah Baker Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary; Holly Baldwin, clerk of Permanent Board; Ben Guaraldi (Beacon Hill), Treasurer; Fritz Weiss (Hanover), member of the Personnel Committee and Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary; Sara Smith (Concord), clerk of Development; Jeremiah Dickinson (Wellesley), member of the Finance Committee; and Muriel Farrar (Gonic), clerk of the Finance Committee.

Last year at Sessions, we recognized that our expenses had grown greater than income and initiated a five-year process to bring expenses and income into proper alignment through urgent but achievable change, and without drastically curtailing the ministries central to our communal and spiritual life. The plan initiated last year entailed accepting deficit spending over a five-year span at a rate that would draw our reserves down, but would give us time to build capacity so that by 2018 we could anticipate income exceeding expenses, allowing us to then begin to rebuild our reserves. One year into this experiment, the Working Group reported measurable progress on reaching these goals.

The presentation to Sessions illustrated both accountability and transparency in this process. The Minute from 2013 outlined the following five specific steps that NEYM has begun taking to shift to a long-term model of financial planning.

1. *Transparent long-term financial planning.*

The budgeting process consulted more widely than in prior years, consulting with 15 different groups. This presentation is but one of many efforts to engage in long-term financial discernment with the gathered Yearly Meeting and with its constituent parts.

2. *Shifting the Yearly Meeting Secretary's work plan to spend more time on development.*

During the past year the Yearly Meeting Secretary's job description was shifted so as to devote 10% of his time to development work. This work is not, in fact, separate from other spiritual and community-building aspects of his job, since development conversations center on our visions and hopes for the vitality of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends.

3. *Strengthening the Development Committee.*

The Development Committee's budget was increased to enable their work, and they have made good use of these funds. New print materials and the new web site have strengthened our capacity for outreach and communication.

4. *Improving technological and administrative support for Development efforts—and for other work of the Yearly Meeting.*

In the launch of the new web site and the new database this year, the Yearly Meeting has made effective improvements in our communication, visibility, and administrative tools. All this was achieved through the hard work and skill of Jeff Hipp, for which we are grateful. The benefits of the web site and database are already being felt in many aspects of NEYM work and communal life beyond the financial.

5. *Strengthening the relationship between monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting.* Permanent Board agreed to carry this responsibility. A significant increase in inter-visitation by staff, committee members, and Permanent Board members has brought news of fresh life and strengthened community among a widening circle of Friends. These actions were undertaken initially in an effort to build capacity and to increase our income. Permanent Board and the Working Group also recognized that these actions were good in and of themselves because they strengthen all our ministries.

In this first year, through these intentional actions to build infrastructure, connections, and financial capacity, the Yearly Meeting has not only increased our capacity, but has already reaped increased donations. Individual giving exceeded our budget by 31% in FY2013. At this point, this year's donations are 38% higher than they were at this time last year. Several monthly meetings have increased their giving as well. The committee expressed gratitude for all the ways that individual members and monthly meetings have responded to this challenge. The Working Group showed a video of Friends from across the Yearly Meeting speaking in joyous, funny, intelligent ways about the wonder of our life in all its diversity. As our Yearly Meeting Secretary shared with us Sunday evening, these are the beautiful, delicious tomatoes whose growth is the reason we do the work of erecting all these financial stakes.

Slides provided a progress report from the Treasurer, comparing our projections last summer to our current expenses and income. Last year's Sessions income was lower than expected, and some forms of income—like retreat fees—probably cannot be increased as hoped, but the increase in individual giving exceeded expectations and expenses were slightly lower than budgeted. The result is that FY2014 current income and expenditures come very close to those projected.

This year Sessions, with the new “pay as led” structure, seems to have brought in significantly more income than anticipated. Projections for the next four years call for monthly meeting and individual giving to increase by 4% in FY2016, and 5% in fiscal years 2017 and 2018. If we meet these goals, income will meet expenses by FY2018 and reserves (not counting the Legacy Gift Fund) will be drawn down to just over \$105,000. (Last year, we predicted the reserves might be drawn down to \$90,000).

Following this report the Financial Sustainability Working Group asked that the gathered meeting affirm this process by approving these four statements:

1. We ask Permanent Board to bring to Sessions each year a report on the progress toward financial sustainability and the long-term financial health of the Yearly Meeting. This will allow the Yearly Meeting in Session to evaluate and discern whether we have made sufficient progress to continue on this course.
2. We commit to each doing our essential part to increase giving from individuals and our monthly meetings.
3. We prioritize maintaining the ministries of the Yearly Meeting, anticipating that our deficits will be drawn from our reserves in the short run. We ask Finance Committee to present budgets that support the ministries we have prioritized.
4. Once our budget is balanced, we prioritize creating surpluses to replenish our reserves.

Friends accepted the report with gratitude. After a time of clarifying questions we held consideration of the four statements until later in the week.

Comments from the gathered body noted that the shrinking numbers of Friends attending worship is an important aspect of our financial and spiritual health that needs to be included in reports and accountability as we move forward. Concern was raised about the proportion of monthly meeting giving compared to individual giving and that this be intentionally considered and planned.

2014-26 In closing worship Friends heard a memorial minute for John Carey, Barnstable Friends Meeting.

Monday Evening, August 4, 2014

2014-27 The reading clerks read the 2013 Epistle from Ireland Yearly Meeting. The theme of the Yearly Meeting was “Living in the Spirit,” taken from 1 Corinthians 2:10: “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” Their keynote speaker challenged them to worship Jesus “a little less and listen to him a little more.”

2014-28 The reading clerk read a letter from Peter Shumlin, the Governor of Vermont, welcoming NEYM Sessions to the Green Mountain State and recognizing Friends leadership in a number of progressive issues in the 19th and 20th centuries, and in particular, the movement for marriage equality.

2014-29 In preparation for our continued discussion of financial issues, the presiding clerk shared some words from a NEYM Treasurer of more than a decade ago: “On our spiritual path we should manage money in right order as a discipline in managing power and control, both personally and corporately. What is even more important is to manage our lives in the Spirit and not to put the power of money ahead of the power of the Spirit.”

2014-30 On Monday morning we heard and accepted a progress report from the Financial Sustainability Working Group. At that time we did not seek approval of the four statements they brought to us affirming their process. The clerk asked us to consider those statements and to think together more generally about the path to financial stability charted by the Working Group. A Friend noted that at this Yearly Meeting we have talked about witnessing, and the difficulties of speaking our truth and seeing through illusions. The relation between Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, Development Committee, Permanent Board and their relative authority is unclear. How are other parts of the Yearly Meeting participating in this decision-making?

In the priorities process 15 different groups in the Yearly Meeting, including monthly meeting treasurers and elders, Young Adult Friends, and many Yearly Meeting committees, were consulted. In order to increase income we need to increase membership in our monthly meetings. Part of addressing the financial sustainability challenge is building our foundation and growing the monthly meetings.

We did not approve a path to financial sustainability last year; we only received and minuted reports about our financial situation. One of the hopes of the Financial Sustainability Working Group this year is that we might approve the general notion of long-term financial planning. NEYM’s budget arises out of a priorities process in which it is clear that the Yearly Meeting’s priority is to support our ministries. This process continues to seem opaque to many in the Yearly Meeting. The goal of a priorities process is powerful, but some feel that the sharing around this plan has not been as rigorous and open as it needs to be. Even as we worry about transparency and inclusion in our budgeting practice, we also know that it is good process to release committees to do work and to trust them to do so.

Budgeting year to year without a bigger context leaves us *budgeting year to year without a bigger context*. Friends recognize the relation between immediate and long-term planning. One

Friend noted that reserves are crucial. Allowing our reserves to go much below six months of operating expenses—e.g., \$400,000 for an approximately \$800,000 annual budget—is in this view irresponsible. Another Friend noted that reserves are for a rainy day, and asserted that this is that rainy day. A long-range planner and demographer described the presentation of the Financial Sustainability Working Group as a careful long-range plan. Friends noted that there are priorities evident in our budgeting process, especially priorities of staffing programs for our youth. The present leadership of our Yearly Meeting is young; they are the future of the Yearly Meeting, a sign of how we are building the base. Trusting them and their energetic commitment to building our income capacity and long-term planning is part of the process of building the base.

Friends were not clear to approve the four statements brought to us by the Financial Sustainability Working Group.

2014-31 The Yearly Meeting Treasurer, Ben Guaraldi, presented his reflections on the past year. He has a two-fold job: to keep an eye on our financial picture and to educate us so that we can understand the financial context of our decisions. We had a challenge budget in FY2013; we did not know where \$38,000 of our income was coming from. The challenge turned out to be even larger than expected because Sessions revenues came in well below budget. This would have left us with a \$60,000 deficit. Fortunately, individual contributions came in 31% over budget, which cut our deficit to \$30,000. It could have been better but it could have been a lot worse.

Much of our income comes in between Sessions and the end of our fiscal year on September 30, so any figures from this year are very preliminary. In general, income is \$70,000 ahead of where it was last year at this time. Most of this is due to receiving at least \$40,000 more in Sessions fees than we did last year. Provided that Friends and meetings continue to give as they have in the recent past, the Treasurer believes that we shall meet our budget for income and we may perhaps even have a deficit smaller than the \$50,000 that we budgeted.

We have \$303,000 in operating reserves, or about 5 months of our annual budget. That is a small part of our \$2.2 million in assets, including board-designated and permanently restricted funds. That \$2.2 million includes the \$1.1 million which is the Legacy Gift.

The Treasurer has been working hard and his support committee encourages him to slow down and to realize that all this work is not his to do alone.

2014-32 Muriel Farrar (Gonic), clerk of Finance Committee, introduced the FY2015 budget. Naming the fear in the room, she recognized that budgets can be scary. What if we do not meet our goals? Does NEYM have the capacity to meet the increases in giving that our budget requires? Can we change our Yearly Meeting culture and meet the challenge to give more?

The Finance Committee expressed appreciation for the tremendous efforts of the NEYM Treasurer, Ben Guaraldi; Yearly Meeting Secretary, Noah Baker Merrill; and Accounts Manager, Frederick Martin, in providing clear and comprehensive financial information and support for the Finance Committee. They have a concern that, without additional help, the needs of the Yearly Meeting may overtax our staff and our volunteer Treasurer. The Finance Committee feels there is an urgent and immediate need for an Assistant Treasurer and seeks help in locating candidates.

Jeremiah Dickinson presented the draft FY2015 budget in two forms, as a pie-chart program budget and as a traditional line-item budget. The program budget categories presented do not match up to individual line items because they include such things as the allocation of staff time. This is a challenging budget to bring and the Finance Committee worked hard on it. In the end the committee was in unity with the budget they are bringing forward, although two members stood aside because of concerns over the size of the deficit. The Finance Committee had been instructed to not include any income from the Legacy Gift funds received from the sale of the New England Friends Home in constructing the FY2015 budget.

Principal issues of concern raised by the draft budget were a budgeted 60% reduction in contributions to FGC, FUM and FWCC, and the inclusion of additional staff time in a deficit budget.

The projected deficit in the FY2015 draft budget is \$59,554.

Friends were encouraged to take their questions, feedback, and advice to the listening sessions hosted by the Finance Committee before the budget comes back to us for final approval.

2014-33 In our closing worship Friends heard a memorial minute for Eleanor Plank, Storrs Friends Meeting.

Tuesday Morning, August 5, 2014

2014-34 We heard the Epistle from the midwinter gathering of Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns—striving to be a radically inclusive beloved community. They testify to their experience of how diversity enriches and strengthens their gathering, beginning a dialogue about how to welcome “all those whom society excludes as ‘queer’ for any reason,” including the challenges of being differently abled physically or mentally. They wrestled with the ways oppressions of race, nationality, theology and ability entwine with issues of gender and sexuality. Describing the courage of Friends claiming their identities as both gay and Christian they “are reminded to not turn our backs on these Friends or the communities in which they seek belonging.” In worship they felt the deep call “to let our first motion always be to love, especially in response to fear and hatred.”

2014-35 The clerk spoke to the dynamic tension between our concern for the events in the wider world and the attention we are giving to our internal structures and housekeeping. We have faith that this structural and financial work will prepare the ground from which our ministry will grow and witness in the wider world.

2014-36 We heard reflections from our Yearly Meeting staff.

Beth Collea, Religious Education and Outreach Coordinator, spoke of the Friends that she has met who are re-ordering their lives around the leadings they have felt and their relationship with God. She spoke of a 4-year-old who said, “If you hear the voice you follow it.” When asked if he had heard the voice the boy said, “No, but my brother has.”

Nat Shed (Vassalboro), Friends Camp Director, spoke of the privilege he has coaching campers. As they are returning home he reminds them that their parents really do have good intentions. He advises them that their parents think that they are two years younger than they are, and they think that they are two years *older* than they are. These four years make a large difference. He also spoke of the joy of working with the young adults who are serving as counselors. He tries to help them find their counselor voice, so they can speak with integrity. He is working to leave the Camp in good shape as he moves towards retirement in a few years.

Jeffrey Hipp, Communication Director, told two stories about the web site. He is often asked if there will be a search tool on *neym.org*. He thought that search on the new web site worked well. One day he went to the web site without logging in as administrator and found it didn’t work. In spite of his desire for radical equality he was not prepared to give administrator privileges to the entire world. He is working to make search work for everyone.

He told of a home-bound Friend who has asked to be added to many mailing lists because she is no longer able to attend Sessions. After the new web site went up, he got a message from her thanking him for the new web site. She found the recordings of Michael Birkel, and listening to them she felt as if she had been there. The web site allows people who are not able to be with us in person a seat in our community.

Sara Hubner, Information Management Assistant, said that, working 8 hours a week, she feels like a “semi-professional” Quaker. She receives a lot of bits and pieces of information from many people and organizations. She has to sort this information and put it where it belongs on the web

site or in the database. When her job interview started with meeting for worship, she knew she had found the right job. Actually, her job is not about data. It is about people, and making and strengthening the connections between them. Life is not about what happens to people, it is what happens *between* people.

Frederick Martin, Accounts Manager, said that he is the person who handles the money as it flows in and out. He admitted that sometimes this work can be boring. He warned Friends of his dry sense of humor and mentioned that he identified with the suffering servant mentioned in the Bible Half Hour. The transition to the new accounting software caused delays in the processing of expense reports because banks are reluctant to issue credit cards to non-profits. He lives at the intersection between our sense of integrity and the processes of the world.

Gretchen Baker-Smith, Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator, reported that this is the first time that she has attended adult business meeting in her 22 years of attending NEYM Annual Sessions. She showed us the bird cage that she uses during art meditations in JYM. She tells the children that they can take the bird on their shoulder that says that they cannot do something and put it in this cage. After they are done they can take it back out if they want to. This year as she moved into a larger role, she found that she had forgotten to put her own birds in that cage. She has felt surrounded by love from the rest of the staff this year. She read a letter from a 4th grader who concluded “You are my person, I care for you.” Extraordinary things happen when you surround yourself in love.

2014-37 Sara Smith from the Development Committee thanked Nancy Haines (Wellesley), past clerk of the committee, for all of her work this year. Sara feels that she is stepping into large shoes. In FY2013 we not only met our budget goal of raising \$97,000 from individual donations but exceeded it by 31%, raising \$126,000 for operating expenses.

The Development Committee passed out donation envelopes while leading us in a spirited rendition of NEYM’s ode to joy:

*Joyful, joyful, we are joyful,
Friends have given gen’rously
Friends gave more and more Friends gave
Gifts have poured in plentifully.
We met last year’s goals for giving
We are full of thankful praise,
Now’s the time to thank each other
Raise our arms and shout hoorays.
Joyful, joyful, we are joyful,
Ministry and Life abound,
Yearly Meeting’s full of Spirit,
Let us raise a joyful sound.
Let’s all pledge to one another,
We’ll give as our means allow,
We’ll support the work we treasure.
We can do it, I and thou!*

2014-38 Margaret Cooley (Mount Toby), clerk of NEYM Ministry and Counsel, called specific attention to the efforts of three Ministry and Counsel working groups: the Resources Working Group, the Pastoral Care Working Group, and the Intervisitation Working Group, and asked us to appreciate their work and to hold them in the Light.

For the past year Ministry and Counsel has been experimenting with new, unwritten, forms of sharing the variegated experience of the Yearly Meeting with the gathered body. Ministry and Counsel’s preparation of the NEYM State of Society presentation has been like a garden tour, walking between the beds seeing what is in bloom and where fruit has withered on the vine,

bending tenderly over plants that are dying, and celebrating new sprouts. Ministry and Counsel has read the State of Society reports of 33 monthly meetings and 3 Quarterly meetings. It has also received reports from the youth programs and the Young Friends Ministry and Counsel. Four friends appointed by Ministry and Counsel—Gina Nortonsmith (Northampton), Carl Williams (Plainfield), Avery Nortonsmith (Northampton), and Marian Baker—read all these reports, and spoke to us out of worship about the spiritual condition they witness in the Yearly Meeting.

A common concern appeared in many reports that committee staffing was falling short in both monthly and quarterly meetings compared to expectations from previous years, even as the same communities showed great vibrancy and joy in their worship and in their gatherings. Are we tethered to the past in our visions of good stewardship or are we chained to the past? Don't we need to prepare ourselves for the future, to think about who we are now and what we wish to do now? There are more experiences coming. Some of the new things coming may be differences of background, experience, and belief, as well as differences in the condition of the world and technological differences. No more weeping and wailing, let us be open to who we are today.

All living things have cycles and seasons. Gritty diversity creates tension. We often forget that Jesus said, "my yoke is easy, my burden light." We can be joyful not in spite of our condition, but because of it. When we are young we call and God listens. Later God calls and we listen. Ultimately we listen and God listens.

Diversity has been a central topic of consideration in Young Friends. Friends may have witnessed Young Friends hugging. The ease of our affection is one of the joyous aspects of the community of Young Friends. But we have been wrestling this year with how some may experience embraces differently. We have been discovering ways to carry the joy of our love for each other in ways that are careful to make space for consent. We have also been wrestling this year with gender identity. We have begun marking our nametags at Sessions with the pronouns with which each of us prefers to be addressed, making visible that our gender identity is an aspect of ourselves that we can name and choose. As is true for many older Friends in Yearly Meeting, Young Friends are looking around for new elders. Some of our leaders have left and we recognize that we need to step into those roles ourselves and to welcome the next generation moving into Young Friends. We appreciate the ways in which NEYM can create a safe space cordoned off from the busyness of our lives. We have been using this space not only as a refuge but also as an opportunity for deep seeking about difficult issues in the world. Wrestling with theology, including non-theist understandings, has been an important strand of these discussions. This is one issue that NEYM as a whole needs to carry tenderly. Young Friends are taking on more important roles in NEYM. Two Young Friends are now members of Permanent Board.

Our Yearly Meeting is full of joy and love this year, and blessed with the beauty of being in Vermont together and waking up with birds. Our programmed meetings are shrinking. Some are being laid down. Some of our pastors are struggling with their roles and with their callings. Loss of our programmed meetings would narrow our theological richness in New England.

How are we supporting callings amongst us? We can all learn from the youthful leadership of NEYM. This is a wonderful model of rising to leadings. We need to nurture those leadings. It is good that we love each other, but we must be sure also to respect each other and listen to each other.

2014-39 Margaret Cooley reported for the Ministry and Counsel Working Group on FUM. In 2009, in response to serious concerns about the sexual ethics portion of the FUM personnel policy, the Yearly Meeting adopted a policy that allowed monthly meetings to withhold the portion of their Yearly Meeting contributions that would go to FUM.

This year the FUM Working Group has done three things. They have collected information on this issue and posted it on the NEYM web site. They have collected personal stories that were printed in the *New England Friend* and posted to the web site. This information is also available

in printed form from the Yearly Meeting Office. They have held eight listening sessions during the course of the year.

During these listening sessions they were surprised, and somewhat uncomfortable, to find that they have heard what feels like a sense of the meeting to make a recommendation to the Yearly Meeting. Friends accepted the report of the M&C Working Group on FUM. We will return to a consideration of their recommendations at a later time.

2014-40 In our closing worship Friends heard a memorial minute for Mary Snieckus, Hartford Friends Meeting.

Tuesday Evening, August 5

2014-41 Jon Watts combined video lectures, slam poetry and the skillful notes of his guitar to tell of witnesses from Quaker history in ways that demonstrate the resonance of the historical acts of nakedness, truth and resistance for our present ways of living. He spoke of the need to strip ourselves so that we may be vulnerable. Standing in our nakedness and vulnerability, we find ourselves clothed and protected in something new. He told, and sang, of Solomon Eccles, a songwriter and musician of the 17th century who burned his music and instruments in a public bonfire when he became Quaker. Later, Solomon Eccles walked naked through the streets of London with a basket of burning coals on his head. What we actually do, rather than what we say, is an indicator of our true priorities. Do we value our frappuccinos more than world peace? Are we willing to strip away everything that stands in the way of what we claim to be the most important things in our lives? Are we willing to give up everything that keeps us from living in the dominion of God?

Wednesday Morning, August 6, 2014

2014-42 Out of gathered worship we heard together a memorial minute for Alanna Connors, Fresh Pond Meeting.

2014-43 We heard a travel minute from the Yearly Meeting Visiting Committee of FGC for Eric Moon and a travel minute from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Monthly Meeting for Thomas Gates, who is leading the Bible Half Hour at our Sessions.

2014-44 Holly Baldwin, clerk of Permanent Board, and Suzanna Schell (Beacon Hill), clerk of the Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee, accompanied by members of the committee, brought us the committee's proposal for how to use the Legacy Gift Fund, an unencumbered fund that the Yearly Meeting received from the sale of the Friends Home. The changes over recent years in our relationship with the Moses Brown School and the closing of the Friends Home are a source of sadness, but also of realism, truth, and learning. Since 2012 the committee has engaged in a broad consultative process throughout the Yearly Meeting of listening for how the Legacy Gift Fund can best nurture the new life in our spiritual community. In this process NEYM has asked ourselves crucial questions about stewardship and has clarified our sense of vision and calling. As we share our dreams with each other we recognize the vitality and large visionary reach of our dreams. We have explored the meaning and demands of good stewardship, and this process has helped the Yearly Meeting as a whole to reflect on how we carry our funds and our leadings.

The Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee brought three specific recommendations to the body and asked for approval.

1. The immediate release of \$100,000 to Friends Camp for the retirement of its mortgages and for infrastructure improvements.

2. The establishment of the Legacy Designated Fund (LDF) with \$750,000—only the interest on these funds will be available for use—and the Legacy Undesignated Fund (LUF) with the remaining balance (approx. \$350,000) which we will expect to spend down as it is called upon.
3. The establishment of a Legacy Gift Committee to develop procedures and oversee the disbursement of monies from both of these funds.

The presiding clerk asked the body for clarifying questions. Friends asked how long we anticipate holding on to the Legacy Gift. We were told that Friends from Cuba were surprised by this proposal and remarked that if the church is not outspending its income, it is not doing the work of the church. The security of holding savings can be an impediment to the work of the Spirit. Friends asked what restrictions we were putting on the use of these funds. Any restrictions we put on the use of the Legacy Gift are restrictions that we have made and that we can change. The specific guidelines on the uses of these funds have not been drawn up yet. We remain open to seeing what sorts of ministries of NEYM and, more generally, what Quaker work in New England might be funded from this source. These funds are to support the ministries and emerging Light of Friends in New England. How will these guidelines be developed and administered? We are a community of doers. In order to prevent the appearance of self-dealing, let us consider adding to the discernment process those who would not directly benefit—perhaps by adding Friends from outside our Yearly Meeting to the new committee. A Friend noted that the money in this fund comes from the sale of land that ultimately came to us through the Doctrine of Discovery, and asked that we consider the reparations that might be appropriate out of this sale. How does our use of these funds, and indeed of all Yearly Meeting resources, reflect our testimony of integrity?

We accepted the report of the Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee. The clerk informed the body that this proposal would come back to us for approval later in the week and urged individuals to approach the Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee with questions and comments.

2014-45 Holly Baldwin, clerk of Permanent Board, reported that we review the Purposes and Procedures for all our committees every three years. She brought the revised Purposes and Procedures for the Friends Camp Committee for approval. She reported that this year Friends Camp received accreditation from the American Camping Association for the first time.

Jeremiah Dickinson from the Ad Hoc Friends Camp Governance Committee reported on the proposed revisions to the purposes and procedures for the Friends Camp Committee. The Friends Camp Committee is different from other committees because it is responsible for the liabilities of running a camp and it deals with the management, acquisition and disposition of property. The committee needs people with specific skills and to include non-Friends, such as people from the South China community, who have an interest in the Camp.

The closing and sale of Friends Home raised significant concerns about Yearly Meeting's oversight of programs under its care. At the prompting of our current Friends Camp Director, Nat Shed, and with his full support and participation, Permanent Board established an ad-hoc Committee on Friends Camp Governance. Working from an understanding that Friends Camp continues to be a vital ministry of the Yearly Meeting, the ad-hoc committee sought to clarify and strengthen the relationship of Yearly Meeting and Friends Camp. This revised Purpose and Procedures for Friends Camp Committee is the result of that work. A more detailed document, the beginnings of an Operations Manual for the Camp Committee, that outlines more fully committee responsibilities and structures was also developed and is available on the NEYM web site.

Revised Purposes & Procedures for Friends Camp Committee

Purpose: The Friends Camp Committee ensures that the mission of Friends Camp is fulfilled and acts on behalf of New England Yearly Meeting to ensure that these areas of oversight and fiscal responsibility are attended to properly. The Friends Camp Committee is part of the governing structure for Friends Camp, and shares its duties and responsibilities with the Permanent Board, the Yearly Meeting Sessions and, on a limited basis, the Yearly Meeting Secretary. In recognition of the Camp's unique place in the Yearly Meeting organization, the areas of responsibility are delineated:

1. Initiation of the sale and purchase of property will be by the Committee. Final authorization will be by Permanent Board.
2. The hiring, probation and dismissal of the Camp Director is the responsibility of Sessions or its designated representative. Supervision and evaluation of the Director is the responsibility of the Committee.
3. Permanent Board will implement and maintain a successful nomination structure for the Friends Camp Committee.
4. NEYM Finance Committee will provide ongoing financial oversight, with regular professional reviews every third year, or more often as needed.
5. Approval of all loans, lines of credit, and mortgages lasting more than twelve months or beyond the end of the fiscal year will rest with Permanent Board.
6. All payments and debts that cannot be paid out of Friends Camp accounts will be appropriately assumed by the NEYM general operating accounts.
7. The Committee will define and implement the vision and short- and long-term objectives to fulfill the mission of Friends Camp as determined by NEYM at Sessions.
8. The Committee will arrange for outside review every third year by the American Camp Association's accreditation system, the cost to be included in the NEYM operating budget.
9. The Committee will coordinate with Permanent Board to convene an ad hoc Friends Camp Review Committee every five years that will focus on one or more queries, such as: What is the mission of Friends Camp? How are Quaker values integrated into the programs and schedule at Friends Camp? What is the financial health of Friends Camp? What is the condition of the physical plant at Friends Camp? Is this work an ongoing and vital ministry of the Yearly Meeting? Or any other issues of interest or concern.

Procedures: Friends Camp Committee members shall be appointed by the Friends Camp Nominating Committee, which shall consist of two persons appointed by the Clerk of the Friends Camp Committee and three persons appointed by the Internal Nominating Committee of the Yearly Meeting Permanent Board. Appointments to

the Friends Camp Nominating Committee shall be for two years, with an option for reappointment.

When making appointments to the Friends Camp Committee, the Nominating Committee for Friends Camp will seek members who have experience and skills in finance, development, property management, personnel, business/not-for-profit leadership, education, accounting, law, youth services, and Quaker service and process.

The number of Friends Camp Committee members shall be at least seven and no more than fifteen, at least two thirds of whom shall be members or active attenders of a Friends meeting in New England. Meetings of the Committee shall be held three or four times each year after the manner of Friends.

The Friends Camp Committee meeting held between August 15th and November 15th shall be designated as the Friends Camp Committee Annual Meeting.

The original Operating Manual for the Friends Camp Committee shall be approved by Permanent Board. This operating manual will then be maintained by the committee and revised with two thirds of committee members present at a meeting; there must be at least 2 weeks notice of suggested changes. Any changes in the Manual shall be reported to the Permanent Board.

Friends approved the Purposes and Procedures as presented as a working document. It will be brought back to us next year. One Friend stood aside from this decision out of concern for legal liability issues.

2014-46 Holly Baldwin from Permanent Board brought a significant reworking of the Youth Programs Committee purposes and procedures for our approval, including a change of name to the Youth Ministries Committee. Sarah Gant from the Permanent Board working group on this issue reported on the changes to the committee's purposes and procedures. She presented Sam Gant as an example of someone who has grown up in the Yearly Meeting and is now serving on JHYM staff. She too brought tomatoes as a visual example of the fruits of the work of our youth ministries. Sam later demonstrated how the committee juggles its work by juggling these tomatoes.

Half of our JHYM staff at Sessions this year are people who grew up in our youth programs. The single most important factor in a 14-year-old becoming an active adult member of their denomination is a personal relationship with a mentor. This is what our youth ministries do.

Friends approved the following new purposes and procedures of the Youth Ministries Committee:

Revised Purposes & Procedures for Youth Ministries Committee (formerly Youth Programs Committee)

Purpose: The Youth Ministries Committee oversees the vitality and relevance of NEYM's youth ministries to nurture the spiritual growth and leadership of children and youth of Friends in New England.

Procedures: The committee acts as trustees to discern program design needs, and to implement and evaluate programming. The committee provides spiritual guidance and oversees right ordering of administrative aspects of youth programs—health and welfare of children; policy and procedures; ethical, legal and fiscal issues. The committee ensures that programs are a partnership between the staff, parents and all members of our spiritual community, and advocates for the needs of NEYM youth, families and

youth workers. The committee ensures that programming is vital and relevant to current needs.

The Yearly Meeting (YM) Secretary supervises youth program staff. The staff attend committee meetings to communicate the reality and needs of youth work. The committee supports, mentors and recognizes the staff in meeting the needs of youth ministries. Committee membership should reflect the theological and economic diversity within the YM, and have experience and skills in working with youth.

2014-47 Friends approved the following members of the clerk's table to begin service at the rise of Sessions 2014:

Presiding Clerk: Jacqueline Stillwell

Rising Clerk: Fritz Weiss (to begin serving as presiding clerk at the rise of Sessions 2015)

Recording Clerk: Will Taber

Recording Clerk: Rachel Walker Cogbill (Plainfield)

Reading Clerk: Susan Davies

Reading Clerk: Andrew Grannell

Friends approved the following four minutes as part of the Unity Agenda:

2014-48 Friends accepted the NEYM staff reports.

2014-49 Friends accepted the reports from our boards, committees and representatives.

2014-50 We approve the recommendations from Permanent Board to continue the employment of Nat Shed as director for Friends Camp and Noah Baker Merrill as Yearly Meeting Secretary for the FY2015 Fiscal Year.

2014-51 Friends approved the following bank resolutions:

1. That Ben Guaraldi be appointed New England Yearly Meeting Treasurer for the ensuing year or until a successor is appointed and qualified.
2. That Elizabeth Muench be appointed Friends Camp Treasurer for the ensuing year or until a successor is appointed and qualified. The Friends Camp Treasurer will work under the oversight of the NEYM Treasurer and the Friends Camp Director.
3. That the NEYM Treasurer be authorized to open and close bank accounts in the name of New England Yearly Meeting as needed.
4. That the Friends Camp Treasurer be authorized to open and close bank accounts in the name of Friends Camp as needed.
5. That the NEYM Treasurer, immediate past Treasurer, clerk of Permanent Board, and the Yearly Meeting Secretary be designated as alternate signers, individually, of all bank accounts of New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, except those checks for greater than \$5,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.
6. That the Friends Camp Director, the Friends Camp Treasurer, and a designated member of the Friends Camp Committee be authorized, individually, as signers

of the Friends Camp bank accounts, except those checks for greater than \$5,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.

2014-52 Friends approved the revised purposes and procedures for the following committees: Coordinating and Advisory, Development, Earthcare Ministry, *Faith and Practice* Revision, FWCC Committee, and Publications and Communications.

Coordinating & Advisory Committee (procedures only)

This small committee consists of the Yearly Meeting clerk, the clerk of Permanent Board, the clerk of Ministry & Counsel, either the Treasurer or the clerk of the Finance Committee, the Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary, and the Yearly Meeting Secretary. When appropriate this committee may meet without the presence of the Yearly Meeting Secretary. The committee meets at least bimonthly. It meets with other Yearly Meeting clerks and staff people as appropriate. The Yearly Meeting clerk convenes and clerks the meetings. While the overall supervision of the Yearly Meeting Secretary is provided by the Coordinating and Advisory committee, the day-to-day supervision is conducted by the Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary. The Supervisor also serves on the Personnel Committee of Permanent Board. At least once every three years the committee will solicit from various Yearly Meeting committees recommendations for changes to the description of their respective committees that is in the Minute Book.

Development Committee

Purpose: The purpose of the New England Yearly Meeting Development Committee is to help maintain a firm financial footing for the Yearly Meeting. We educate members and attenders about the Yearly Meeting's goals and achievements, we foster a culture of shared responsibility for sustaining the Yearly Meeting, and we raise funds from individuals.

Procedures: We understand development as a spiritual calling in support of the Yearly Meeting. We seek to represent the Yearly Meeting as broadly as possible. Our responsibilities include:

- Creating, implementing and evaluating a development strategy,
- Collaborating with other parts of the Yearly Meeting to learn from them and to offer a development perspective where it can be helpful,
- Nurturing relationships with individuals, staff and committees,
- Communicating with members and attenders through written and electronic media, e-mail, telephone and personal visits,
- Gathering five times a year and carrying out committee work between meetings, and
- Maintaining high standards for our work by learning from others, especially Quakers, with experience in development.

Earthcare Ministry Committee

Purpose: The Earthcare Ministry Committee urges New England Yearly Meeting and its monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, committees, and staff to actions based on awareness that destruction of Earth's fragile ecosystems is diametrically opposed to Quaker beliefs and values, and that the Religious Society of Friends must take a spirit-led, active stand against these trends and practices, inseparable from our other activities.

Procedures: The committee will help Friends to explore and nurture our spiritual responsibility to all of life and to create a collective vision of how we can live peacefully and respectfully in the world, sharing finite goods with other inhabitants. It will work to identify specific spirit-led actions that can turn this vision into reality, and help monthly meetings and other units of the Yearly Meeting to carry them out. As part of this mission, it will connect the Yearly Meeting with the North American Quaker Earthcare Witness organization by sharing information and calls to action. The committee also will encourage a growing awareness of global interconnections among social injustice, war, environmental harm, and the emphasis our society places on materialism and consumption.

Faith and Practice Revision Committee

Purpose: The committee is charged with revising our 1985 *Faith and Practice* and in the process, encouraging "substantive engagement" with perennial issues essential to the spiritual health of our monthly, quarterly, and Yearly Meeting.

Procedures: The committee meets for a full day seven times a year and for two overnight work sessions. In addition, it forms smaller working groups as needed. It presents drafts of each chapter to NEYM Sessions and invites comments from committees, meetings, and individuals. It considers these comments and brings a revised draft to NEYM Sessions either for additional comment or for preliminary approval. Its work will be completed upon final approval of all sections and the publication of the revised book. It welcomes input at any time from committees, meetings, and individuals.

Friends World Committee for Consultation—New England

Purpose: We encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends, connecting Friends, crossing cultures, and changing lives. We bring Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communication and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world. The NEYM FWCC Committee represents NEYM in the work of the international Friends World Committee for Consultation, and promotes and interprets FWCC's work within the Yearly Meeting. The international FWCC is a consultative body made up of yearly meetings and other Quaker bodies across the globe, and represents Friends' concerns at the United Nations, with offices in New York (administered by American Friends Service Committee) and Geneva. The international FWCC also consults with affiliated programs such as Friends Peace Teams, Right Sharing of World Resources, and Friends Committee on Scouting. The NEYM Committee hosts a periodic regional gathering for Friends from New York, New England, Philadelphia, and eastern Canada Yearly

Meetings. We facilitate visits within New England of Friends from other parts of the world, including cooperating with Puente de Amigos. We also promote programs of the Section of the Americas such as the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage and Wider Quaker Fellowship.

Procedures: We meet during Yearly Meeting Sessions and several times during the year. Meetings are frequently on Committee Days, and sometimes by conference call. The committee designates six of its members to represent NEYM at meetings of FWCC Section of the Americas. Some of these representatives also serve on Section committees. The committee recommends delegates to represent NEYM at periodic worldwide and sectional FWCC meetings.

Publications and Communications Committee

Purpose: The Publications and Communications Committee (PubCom) has care for the “public face” that NEYM shows the world on the Internet and in print. The committee offers advice and support to staff, Sessions and Yearly Meeting committees on technical aspects of communications and publication. It supports the Communications Director in his/her role as manager of the web site (www.neym.org), publisher of the minutes, directory, and the *New England Friend* and manager of data and communications for the Yearly Meeting. The committee develops policies relating to the use of electronic communication and the management of Yearly Meeting data. Publications and Communications Committee is responsible for the Mosher Book & Tract Fund that provides funding for publishing and distributing books and tracts promoting the principles of Quaker faith and practice. It may undertake publication and distribution projects. It is also responsible for deciding whether to maintain NEYM’s membership in Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP), and if so, providing a representative.

Procedures: The Publications and Communications Committee is made up of nine Friends appointed by the Nominating Committee of NEYM in three panels with three-year terms. The committee meets four times a year or as needed. The committee is accountable to NEYM through its annual report and the published materials that it oversees. The committee will, from time to time, distribute books or other materials without charge to meetings in NEYM. On occasion, it helps financially with printing, reprinting, or distributing existing material to meetings. If a committee of NEYM wants help with or discernment about publication, PubCom can offer counsel and/or technical, logistical, production and distribution support. This committee should maintain a general record of the various publications and media produced within NEYM.

The Finance Committee purposes and procedures were not ready for approval.

2014-53 Recognizing all the ways that Friends in NEYM are representing us to other Quaker bodies around the world, Marian Baker listed some of the important work we are doing as a Yearly Meeting to building spiritual bridges. To understand our own place in the Quaker world we need to share our experiences of community with Friends elsewhere. Marian, president of the United Society of Friends Women–New England, spoke about her own experiences with the burgeoning women’s meetings in Uganda, watching with reverence their empowering transformations, as women stand tall in ministry.

Len Cadwallader (Hanover) described how our Puente de Amigos builds bridges. Bruce Kay (Storrs) has visited Cuba Yearly Meeting's new Peace Institute, and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler and Susan Furry have served on the faculty there. Many NEYM Friends, including Len and Mary Ann Cadwallader, Penny Wright (Hanover), Erica Brinton (Hanover), Craig Putnam (Hanover), Fritz Weiss, Paula Rossvall (Hanover), and Jacqueline Stillwell traveled to Cuba this year to attend Cuba Yearly Meeting Sessions and support the new sister meeting relationship between Hanover meeting and the meeting in Havana. Len described a puppet show about diversity presented by the great-granddaughter of the first Cuban Quaker minister. We have tended this deep, multifaceted relationship with Cuba for over 20 years now. This sense of generations of growing trust has been a great source of spiritual growth and joy among us.

Many Friends attended the FUM Triennial and Jonathan Vogel-Borne (Cambridge) spoke of his experience there. He has only missed one FUM gathering over the last 20 years, and felt something different in this one, a true sense of Spirit moving. The General Board of FUM has minuted that they were not in unity with the sexual ethics section of the Personnel Policy. At this triennial, with many African representatives in the room but none from Uganda, the General Board took up the question of how to respond to the new laws in Uganda outlawing homosexuality. The concerns voiced centered on the need to hear from Ugandan Friends. The Executive Board of FUM is now more truly representative than it has ever been, with far greater African representation than ever before. We may still feel need for more transformations, but through its own hard work of restructuring, FUM governance is now coming to truly represent Friends across the world. NEYM Friends Jay Smith (Concord), Leslie Manning (Durham), Ann Dodd-Collins (Winthrop Center Friends Church), Jacqueline Stillwell, Ken Haase (Beacon Hill), Rosemary Zimmerman (South Starksboro), David Haines (Wellesley), Nancy Haines, Kristna Evans (North Shore), Eden Grace (Beacon Hill), and Marian Baker all attended the FUM Triennial.

Nataly Moran (Smithfield), Jonathan Vogel-Borne, Dorothy Grannell, Cynthia Ganung, Elizabeth Cazden (Providence), and Mary Hopkins (Fresh Pond) participated in the FWCC Section of the Americas gatherings this year. Elizabeth Cazden is serving FWCC at the world level, as clerk of the Central Executive Committee. Mary Hopkins reported on the FWCC Section of the Americas gathering in El Salvador, with its enormous variety of nations, variations of Spanish, and diverse forms of worship. Visiting among Friends it is clear that everywhere Friends want more intervisitation, more *puentes de amor*. There is much we can learn about spirit, about witness, and about good stewardship from our relationships with Friends in other places.

Donn Weinholtz (Hartford) spoke as our representative to both Friends Committee on National Legislation and Friends Association for Higher Education and described the ever-closer interconnection between FCNL's lobby work and programming and FAHE efforts to foster Quaker values in higher education. The synergy he has found in his work with both organizations demonstrates how we strengthen our ministries when our Quaker organizations work together. Because of George Fox University's decision not to provide general dorm housing to a transgender student, FAHE reconsidered their plan to meet at the George Fox campus next year. They have now decided to meet there and to prominently include presentations and discussions of transgender identity in their conference programming, an effort to stay in conversation about sexuality and gender identity with Friends from all branches of Quakerism that resonates with NEYM's long experience as a member of FUM.

We also celebrate the many other Friends who serve as representatives to other Quaker organizations: Marian Baker, president of USFW-New England; Nancy Shippen (Acton), Friends Peace Teams; Will Jennings-Hess (Beacon Hill), William Penn House; Rod Zwirner (Beacon Hill), Quaker Earthcare Witness; Sara Burke (Beacon Hill), Martha McManamy (Amesbury), Carole Rein (North Shore), Ann Nash (Wellesley), AFSC; Susanna Thomas (Storrs), Donn Weinholtz, Kaj Telenar (Wellesley), Rod Zwirner, Scott Drysdale (Hanover), Katherine Fisher (Beacon Hill), FCNL; Penny Wright, David Haines, Don Mick (Hartford), Elise Person (Cambridge), Michelle

Riendeau (Wellesley), FGC; Ed Mair (Amesbury), Friends Mutual Health Group (FMHG) Board of Directors.

Many Friends serve as representatives to ecumenical groups: Leslie Manning on the Maine Council of Churches, Betsy Morse (Hanover) and Marian Baker on the New Hampshire Council of Churches, Dorothy Carlsten (Providence) on the Rhode Island Council of Churches, Kathleen Kelly (Cambridge) on the Massachusetts Council of Churches, Rachel Guaraldi (Beacon Hill) as chair of the Board of Christian Peacemaker Teams, and Christopher McCandless (Burlington) on the Vermont Ecumenical Council and Bible Society. Christopher reported that the Vermont Ecumenical Society is struggling with shrinking church membership and attendance in many denominations. The Council has done good work with immigrant communities and in the distribution of Bibles in prisons. Christopher has felt the value of Quaker presence in this organization in modeling Quaker decision-making process. The Council now makes its decisions through consensus, and the practices of silent waiting have crept into the Council's meeting practices in addition to formal prayer.

FWCC at the world level will be trying something new this year. World Quaker Day will be the first Sunday in October; think about how your Monthly Meeting could participate in this project of learning about Friends around the world.

While we gather here at Sessions this summer Benigno Sánchez-Eppler is traveling in Peru and Bolivia with the FWCC Quaker Youth Pilgrimage.

We recognized that this year a representative to Friends General Conference was not invited to speak in this presentation of our links to the wider Quaker community. They too are a wider Quaker body that does much to support the work of NEYM. We value and recognize the importance of this organization and our rich relationship with it as well.

Let us follow our leadings and go forth, and not just sit.

2014-54 Lisa Appleton (Mount Toby) from the Correspondence Committee read a draft of our General Epistle.

Wednesday Evening, August 6, 2014

2014-55 Out of our opening worship, the reading clerks read the Epistle from our sister Cuba Yearly Meeting. They affirmed and answered the call to "be the living body of Christ." They give thanks to God for the continuation of the program of the Cuba Peace Institute. They celebrated the birth of the new Monthly Meeting of Pueblo Nuevo. They received with affection visitors from Monadnock and Hanover Monthly Meetings of New England Yearly Meeting. They are centered on the mission to which the Spirit of the Lord calls us: to serve and heal, to proclaim, to break the chains which bind us and prevent us from responding to the cry of Christ, which is visible in every human face and in the groans of suffering nature. Norge Alvarez from Cuba Yearly Meeting then read, in Spanish, the letter of introduction for our Cuban visitors.

2014-56 The presiding clerk shared with us that something is rising in us, but its shape is not yet clear. This feels both risky and exciting. There are many things in motion among us now. We are afraid that this thing we love might die, lost through deficit spending; we are afraid that it may die through restricting our spending in ways that stifle our ministry and the life we feel bubbling amongst us. We are being called to be transformed into something new that is emerging, that we can't quite see yet.

2014-57 The presiding clerk read the following minute on long-term planning and financial sustainability:

Yearly Meeting Sessions asks Permanent Board, in consultation with Finance, Personnel, Development, and Coordinating and Advisory Committees, to prepare and maintain a five-year

financial plan for the Yearly Meeting that will bring our income and expenditures into balance. We also ask Finance Committee to prepare our annual budgets in the context of this five-year plan.

Friends approved.

2014-58 Jeremiah Dickinson reported on the work of the Finance Committee, both in the months before Sessions and here at Sessions. Through listening, they heard concerns about the long-term projections to achieve a balanced budget, about the cuts to beneficences, and about the relationship between income from individuals and income from monthly meetings. The Finance Committee has revised the budget to reflect what they have heard through this listening. At the prior business session, Finance Committee spoke and you listened; at listening sessions you spoke and Finance Committee listened; now let us listen together.

The Finance Committee apologized for the oversight in not communicating with the clerks and NEYM committees office, FUM, and FWCC before making the decision to cut the donations to these wider Quaker organizations to which we belong.

The Finance Committee made specific changes to the FY2015 budget to reflect an anticipated increase in income from Sessions program fees and an anticipated decrease in Sessions costs as a result of our experience at Castleton this year. So we all need to come back next year! \$25,000 from the Legacy Gift Fund has been added to enable us to reinstate the gifts to FGC, FUM, and FWCC that were cut in the draft of the budget initially submitted to Sessions. The revised FY2015 budget shows a projected \$44,424 deficit to be drawn from operating reserves, rather than the \$59,554 shown on the draft budget initially submitted.

2014-59 The revised budget was approved, including the use of \$25,000 from the Legacy Gift fund.

2014-60 Friends shared the following reflections after approval of the budget: Money is power, but we need to spend it to build our ministries; it is not powerful if it sits in the bank. We are a church, not a non-profit organization. Just as we heard in Bible Half Hour, the Quaker meetings of the 17th century continued to meet when all the adults were imprisoned; surely we have enough faith that we are held by God and are doing God's work, to trust that we will not "die." It is good to acknowledge the fears that have been with us through this process, but also to recognize how our trust and the tempering of our trust are both real and rich aspects of our seeking in our corporate life together.

The decision to take \$25,000 from the Legacy Gift Fund in the drawing of this budget was of necessity done with no real time for discernment by the Legacy Gift Discernment Committee. This was difficult for some members of the committee who feel strongly their responsibility to think with care about the use of this gift. Dinah Starr, whose mother, Polly Starr, gave her home with a vision that this beautiful house could be a place of rest and care for the elderly, noted that wonderfully it has been sold in a way that maintains this purpose. She believes that her mother would be glad to see the proceeds from this sale used to help to strengthen the Yearly Meeting and its living visions now.

A Friend asked that in drawing up future budgets the Finance Committee consider increasing the percentage of our budget devoted to committee work. The clerk expressed the gathered body's deep appreciation for the Finance Committee, their faithful wrestling throughout this budget process, and the Grace and vision that have come to them and to us in this discernment.

2014-61 Suzanna Schell, clerk of the Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee, reported that the committee has undertaken a long, inclusive process to seek guidance guided by the query, "This money is a gift from the past to the future. How could this money help New England Friends answer God's call?" YAFs and others expressed a clear desire that this gift be an opportunity for

us to let the living waters flow through us in new and powerful ways. The Permanent Board has felt growing excitement as they followed the work of the committee. While some of us are thirsting for a clearer sense of vision, others are yearning for a clearer sense of the details of how we will move forward.

Friends were reminded that this is not our money. It is God's money. We have been given a legacy that is greater than any dollars, cents, pounds and shillings. How are we going to spread that legacy, the legacy of the Word of God that we have received? We were reminded that we are an incarnate body and hold this money in trust.

There was a sense of disappointment expressed that what had started as a quest to capture a bold new vision that would mobilize and energize us, had turned into what appeared to be the establishment of another grant-making body. Yet we need to provide some structure for the use of this gift to provide the channels through which the living waters can flow.

There were some Friends who, while not standing aside, were not fully clear.

2014-62 Holding all of this in our hearts, we approved the following for the Legacy Gift funds: the immediate release of \$100,000 to Friends Camp for the retirement of its mortgages and for its infrastructure improvements, and the use of \$25,000 as part of the operating funds in FY2015. We approved the remainder of the Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee recommendations (included below), directing the new Legacy Gift Committee to use the first year to develop guidelines and clarity of vision. This new committee will report to Sessions next year before any additional funds are disbursed.

Ad Hoc Legacy Gift Discernment Committee Recommendations

- i. The establishment of two designated funds: Legacy Designated Fund A with \$750,000, and Legacy Designated Fund B, with the remaining balance (approx. \$350,000). Both funds will be used for the specific purposes described below.
 - The Legacy Designated Fund A (\$750,000) will be temporarily designated for 10 years. An amount from this fund, managed to keep its endowed principal intact, will be released once annually, as a single grant or multiple grants.
 - The Legacy Designated Fund A will be reviewed in 10 years to discern whether this designation is still serving the Yearly Meeting or if the funds should be put to another use. Change in the designation requires approval at Annual Sessions.
 - The Legacy Designated Fund B will receive the remainder of the proceeds. Assets of Fund B, available in their entirety, will be used for grants and/or loans, and will be available on an ongoing basis, in whole or in part, to qualified recipients during the life of the fund.
 - Grants and/or loans from both funds will be awarded to support the ministries of NEYM, both within and beyond New England, and will be made to committees of NEYM, its constituent monthly or quarterly meetings; to bodies of NEYM (e.g., NEYM staff, Young Friends, Young Adult Friends); as well as to individual members of NEYM monthly meetings under the direct care and oversight of one of the aforementioned committees, meetings or bodies of NEYM (e.g., for the release of a Friend to carry out work in the ministries of NEYM).

2. That NEYM establish the Legacy Gift Committee (LGC) to develop guidelines and application procedures for both funds and, once the guidelines are established, to oversee details of the governance, policy, investment and distribution of assets related to both funds.
 - The Legacy Gift Committee will be made up of at least six members of constituent monthly meetings of NEYM, ideally with representation from each of the quarters of NEYM, each serving three-year renewable terms. Additionally, the LGC may include Quakers who are outside of NEYM Yearly Meeting.
 - The Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee will be responsible for discerning committee members as part of its annual nominating process.
 - Some members of the LGC should have grant-making or other philanthropic experience. Members of the LGC should not be vested in any specific use of the funds.
 - The LGC will report on its activities at NEYM Sessions each year. Additionally, the LGC will organize a minimum of one workshop per year, funded as necessary by one of the Funds, to educate NEYM on topics related to fiscal responsibility, stewardship, and accountability. Topics could be specific to, for example, accounting methods, creating a budget, reading financial statements, financing capital improvements, fundraising, etc., or of a more general, philosophical nature; for example, exploring what Quaker testimonies and values call to us as managers, employees and volunteers in service to NEYM, its constituent monthly and quarterly meetings, committees and, indeed, the wider world.

2014-63 This gathering approved delegating the approval of the Nominating Committee slate to Permanent Board. The slate will be posted at breakfast and outside this room, allowing Friends to speak with members of Nominating Committee if they have concerns.

2014-64 Out of worship we heard a memorial minute for Gordon Harris, Lewiston Friends Meeting.

Bible Half Hours

2014-65 Tom Gates lived among Friends in New England when he was led to work at the Lugulu Friends Hospital in Kenya. Since then he has lived and worked in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and has written a number of Pendle Hill pamphlets. He has returned to New England to give our Bible Half Hours this year.

On Sunday morning he asked us, “Is your God big enough?” He reminded us that we commit idolatry any time we worship a lesser god. The spiritual life is a successive smashing of images and idols that would limit God. God is transcendent. God is always More. The images of transcendence in the Bible, of a king in the sky who rules over the earth and the earthly kings, may not work for us anymore. But God’s transcendence can still be seen in and through and behind all of the created world. God is still transcendent and we are still called to be God’s witnesses.

On Monday, he asked us, “Is your God close enough?” The notion of a transcendent God became the dominant theme of Christianity at around the time of Augustine. Early Friends were trying to recapture Immanence. Transcendence and Immanence exist in creative tension. God is in us as a witness. Friends spoke of the witness of God in the heart. The Light is not one more

thing we see but it is the means by which we see everything. We all must discover this immanent God ourselves; we cannot simply inherit faith. God has no grandchildren.

On Tuesday he asked us “Is our God real enough?” Is God real enough to make a difference in our lives, real enough to transform us? We may not be genealogical descendants from early Friends but we can become their spiritual descendants by adopting their stories as our own. It is possible and necessary to have an immediate relationship with God. If our experience of God has no impact on our lives, it is not true. Early Friends spoke of their Testimony in the singular because the Truth was one. Their life was the testimony. Their whole lives bore witness to the power of the Light. If we are to understand the witness of Friends we must come to understand the terror and the power of the Light. What would Truth look like today? Can we find new ways to do Truth?

On Wednesday he asked us, “In today’s broken world how is love and truth leading us to be doers of the word? In the beginning days of the 21st century, what is love calling us to be witnesses to?” Starting from James 1:22, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,” he asked us what we are doing now. Testimony begins with our own spiritual practice, in our own listening. A renewed Quaker testimony might have the following characteristics: It is likely to start small, to be more like yeast than the whole loaf. It might be local in scope and still expressive of a larger truth. We are called to find our success in our faithfulness. It will be personal. It is what *we* are called to. It will be joyful. Testimony comes from the place where our joy meets the suffering of the world. If our spiritual Truth does not transform us, it is not truth but self-deception.

On Thursday Tom took us back to the days of ancient empires and how the claim that Jesus is Lord was a subversive political statement as well as a statement of spiritual truth. “By the rivers of Babylon, we wept.” It was out of the crucible of exile that the resilient Jewish community of Torah and Sabbath was created. This experience also gave rise to some of the most powerful ancient poetry. America admires itself as the something exceptional, a city on the hill. But we have also become a successor to Babylon. One of the powers of empire is to convince us that nothing can change. History tells us that empires continue until they fall. If we are to be God’s witness, what do we witness to? As peace was a primary focus of Friends’ work in the 20th century, work for a sustainable world will be our focus. We start from a place of gratitude for the world that God has given us. “God did not form the world to be chaos but as a form to be lived in.” Out of gratitude we gain an increased awareness of the world, both the good and the bad. The next step is to recognize our pain rather than to avoid and deny it. What we need to do is to hear within us the sound of the earth crying. We must notice and acknowledge. The third step is to see with new eyes. We must see the new things that God is working among us even now. When we see with new eyes, we will see that it is not a question of us saving the world, but of the world saving us. The final step is going forth. We need to go forth in clarity of vision. How are we called to be God’s witness? What is our testimony to today’s world?

Thursday Morning, August 7, 2014

2014-66 We heard the Epistle from the United Society of Friends Women (USFW), Uganda Yearly Meeting. 150 delegates from Friends’ churches from almost all regions of the country attended, as well as women from other African yearly meetings. Also attending was NEYM’s own Marian Baker, president of USFW–New England. The USFW Uganda Yearly Meeting gathered under the theme “Let us come and reason together.” The gathering was challenged to recognize the distance from God that we create by not tithing and by not giving ourselves fully to God’s work. They shared their experiences with ministries in sustainable agriculture, women’s education, and women’s involvement in evangelism and in income-generating activities. A small yearly meeting, they feel the need for more evangelism for the Gospel to spread more effectively to all people.

2014-67 Out of worship we heard a memorial minute for Andrew Towl, Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

2014-68 Friends accepted all of the memorial minutes heard at Sessions. We expressed gratitude for these minutes and for the luminous Spirit-filled lives they record. These lives have been and are continuing gifts to each of us and to our communal life together.

This year we felt regret that there was not time in our meetings to reflect on and respond to these memorial minutes. We ask Sessions committee to consider how we might schedule more time to reflect on memorial minutes next year.

2014-69 Margaret Cooley for Ministry & Counsel presented a revised version of the proposal to extend the FUM financial withholding policy.

One of the consistent things we have heard over this week is that we are tired of talking about this issue, yet the issue is still with us. Whenever there is space made to talk about our relationship with FUM, Friends come and talk and listen some more. Members of the working group on our relationship with FUM themselves carry many very different perspectives on this relationship. They know that over this year, and indeed over the many years before this one, Ministry and Counsel has striven to listen for the place of unity amongst our many strong feelings.

We are in pain as a body around issues of sexual ethics, both in our relationship with FUM and in the struggles with these issues within NEYM. Ministry and Counsel commended all of the work that is and has been done carrying a wide array of ministries to “sexual minorities” (the term used by the African Great Lakes Initiative). They also commend the work being done by our own working group on sexual ethics. Ministry and Counsel brought forward the following proposal:

We recommend that NEYM extend the FUM financial withholding policy for the next five years, to be re-assessed no later than NEYM Sessions in August of 2019 (and sooner if significant changes occur before then).

We understand that this work is ongoing, and we expect it to continue. Based on what we’ve heard over the past year, and in the past few days here at Sessions, we’re offering the following specific ways forward to provide more accountability for that work.

While the withholding policy is in place, we recommend the following actions:

1. FUM Committee report each year at Sessions on any developments within FUM related to the personnel policy.
2. M&C report each year at Sessions about developments and activities within the YM related to the personnel policy and to sexual minorities.
3. In order to raise awareness of the broader context of FUM and to regularly update Friends around the YM about FUM, we ask the FUM Committee to establish mechanisms for keeping monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings better informed about the activities and services of FUM.
4. There are those among us for whom the personnel policy and the continuing persecution of people because of their sexuality causes significant pain. We need to care for those in our midst and in the wider world who live with this pain. We ask M&C and the FUM Committee to provide space for continuing dialogue about the FUM personnel policy and about sexual ethics and include this work in their reports to Sessions.

5. We strongly encourage Friends at the individual, monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting levels to consider ways to actively support equal rights regardless of sexual orientation and/or gender identification. We ask M&C to identify and implement a mechanism to coordinate resources for monthly and quarterly meetings:
 - to learn about and respond to injustices within NEYM and in the wider world,
 - to support those affected, directly and indirectly, by those injustices, and
 - to provide financial, logistical and spiritual aid to organizations and movements working to promote equal rights and to protect those whose well-being is in danger because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Friends approved.

Friends spoke to our recognition that in our prayers over our relationship with FUM, we are engaging with the practices and wounds of racism, elitism, homophobia and xenophobia amongst us. It is the power of those wounds that keeps the struggle with this issue so alive among us, and Friends expressed gratitude for these “stumbling blocks.” We grieve that we continue to need a temporary financial accommodation because we still lack unity on this topic.

2014-70 We recognize that we have been exhorted to take personal action on many different issues during these Sessions. We are reminded that each of us needs to seek direction from our Inner Guide as to which of these actions we are personally led to live into; none of us can diligently witness to all of these ministries at once.

2014-71 Friends testified to the way in which the new “pay-as-led” policy for Sessions registration has wrought a real change toward inclusiveness, a true welcoming of all, whatever they can pay toward Sessions fees. A tax resister reported what an enormous lifting of spirit this new practice brought. Another Friend spoke of how she was able, in her registration, to share with others the abundance which she has received. What may seem a small alteration in our billing practices has proved, in truth, a social and economic justice initiative of real tenderness among us. It appears, moreover, not only to be a more just way to conduct our economic life together, but also has for the first time in many years resulted in session fees income actually exceeding budgeted expectations.

2014-72 We sang together as the children joined us.

2014-73 With a clown nose and borrowed “stubby” hands, Yearly Meeting Secretary Noah Baker Merrill and Treasurer Ben Guaraldi collaborated in reporting Session statistics.

Enthusiastic gratitude was expressed for the work of our Sessions Coordinator, Kathleen Wooten. This job is not a marathon but a relay, and she is very aware of all the many hands among whom the baton has been passed. There are 51 other weeks of the year; this union does not have to end here at Castleton. We still have the keys to the kingdom of God. Room keys, however, do need to be returned by 3 PM

709 Friends attended Sessions this year, more than we have had in the last four years. 805 was our attendance record just before 2008, so we are hopeful that we are rebounding. 64 Friends were attending Sessions for the first time. There are many children and YAFs at this gathering, but looking at our age breakdown we are aware that nearly half of those in attendance are over 60 years old.

In this first experiment with “pay-as-led,” 38% of Friends paid the recommended fee, 28% of Friends paid more than the recommended fee, and 34% of Friends paid less than the recommended fee, including some Friends who were able to be with us without any financial payment.

In sum, more people came. For the first time in many years we met our direct expenses for Sessions and substantially contributed to our indirect expenses and staff costs. We received

\$203,724 in direct Sessions fees, and in addition there were donations to equalization from both individuals and monthly meetings in excess of budgeted equalization expectations.

2014-74 We heard a draft of the NEYM General Epistle and made suggestions for final revisions to the Correspondence Committee.

2014-75 We heard and accepted the reports from our visitors to the other business meetings that are a part of NEYM.

We did not hear a report from the 0–4 age group because the appointed visitor left early because she became ill.

Anne Nash and Thomas Bigda-Payton visited the K–2nd grade. They were impressed that the program was informal but very intentional. Our children are indeed being nurtured and their spirits developed in this ministry of listening, caring and collaborating. God be praised.

Skip Schiel visited 3rd–4th grade. The resource people work to anticipate problems like fidgeting. The children also showed collaboration in making puppets together.

Reb MacKenzie and Mary Gilbert reported on the 5th–6th grade. One young seeker, aged 6, said, “What I’ve learned over time is, if you want to find God, you need to make your mind quiet.” They felt deep support for the staff and their work with these creative and sensitive youth. It is always a pleasure to see and hear young people doing Quaker process.

Bonnie Norton reported on her visit to Junior High YM. She felt nourished in their worship. Throughout her time with them she noticed that they seemed to be comfortable with themselves, each other and with the silence.

Carolyn Stone and Phil Veatch visited Young Friends. They found a caring, tightly bonded group. When a friend speaks, or when they are in waiting for words to come, there is an active silence that is full of engagement. They saw the Young Friends work on being aware that in all groups there are those in the mainstream and those in the margins. In their discussion, they acknowledged their own roles at times in each category. If these are the rising leaders of our Yearly Meeting, then Carolyn and Phil are feeling very good about our future.

Jan Hoffman and Regina MacCarthy visited the Young Adult Friends. One of them played “A Big Wind Blows” for the first time and she learned a number of things. They saw a group in which fun, Spirit-led activity, work for the Yearly Meeting, and worship form a loving community.

2014-76 We heard and accepted the Epistles from all the business meetings that comprise NEYM.

2014-77 We closed with worship. The clerk invited us to step forward in our love and witness, joyfully sharing our gifts and purposing to meet, God willing, in August 2015 at Castleton, Vermont.

Informational Documents Pertaining to the NEYM Budget

FY15 Approved Budget Summary

	FY15 Approved Budget	FY14 Budget (revised)	Δ FY14 to FY15	FY13 Actual
Income				
4010 Individual Contributions	125,000	110,000	15,000	126,753
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions	320,000	310,000	10,000	309,535
4030 Organizations Contributions	-	-	-	2,248
4050 Interest and Dividend Income	11,000	33,500	(22,500)	10,587
4070 Books and other Items	15,500	20,000	(4,500)	15,554
4080 Retreat Program Fees	50,000	53,370	(3,370)	48,995
4085 Sessions Program Fees	190,000	176,970	13,030	155,634
Funds from the Legacy Gift	25,000	-	25,000	-
Total Income	736,500	703,840	32,660	669,306
Expenses				
5000 Staff				
5010 Salaries & Wages	273,482	263,712	9,770	248,931
5020 Payroll Taxes	20,904	20,098	806	16,274
5030 Benefits	82,284	84,369	(2,085)	71,270
Total 5000 Staff	376,670	368,179	8,491	336,476
5110 Administration	35,450	39,550	(4,100)	24,867
5200 Office	18,915	17,515	1,400	16,664
5300 Travel & Conferences	33,200	28,800	4,400	28,298
6000 Programs				
6110 Sessions Room & Board	160,000	144,000	16,000	153,233
6112 Retreats Room & Board	30,000	30,000	-	33,372
6125 Program Expenses	26,400	25,900	500	24,553
6130 Committee Expenses	26,940	23,451	3,489	10,026
Total 6000 Programs	243,340	223,351	19,989	221,184
6140 Books and Other	15,000	17,200	(2,200)	13,293
6200 Benevolence				
6310 FGC	17,608	17,608	-	17,608
6320 FUM	16,635	16,635	-	16,496
6325 FWCC	7,206	7,206	-	7,206
6330 Friends' Organizations	2,250	2,250	-	2,250
6575 Other Organizations	650	650	-	-
6590 Ecumenical Organizations	4,400	4,400	-	4,319
6200 Benevolence	48,749	48,749	-	47,879
6600 Publications	9,600	9,500	100	10,240
Total Expenses	780,924	752,844	28,080	698,937
Net Operating Income	(44,424)	(49,004)	4,580	(29,631)

NEYM Committee Activities: FY15 Budget with Previous Years

	FY15 Budget	FY14 Budget	FY13 Actual	FY12 Actual	FY11 Actual
200 Development	15,000	13,086	4,148	3,000	3,150
305 Aging	100	50	800	0	0
308 Archives	0	0	87	139	0
310 Quaker Youth Education	950	1,950	2,045	1,795	1,881
315 Coordinating and Advisory	0	0	0	223	83
320 Faith and Practice Revision	1,960	1,675	998	1,318	908
325 FGC	200	400	0	0	0
328 Finance	200	500	91	27	0
330 FUM	200	40	0	500	0
335 FWCC	560	500	250	1,307	25
340 Ministry and Counsel	400	40	0	247	155
345 Peace and Social Concerns	1,500	300	0	39	31
347 Publications	300	600	0	0	0
350 Puente de Amigos	1,400	1,400	212	1,200	1,000
355 Racial, Social, and Economic Justice	1,500	1,500	1,147	1,218	1,690
360 Youth Programs	0	0	0	251	174
370 Q Earthcare Witness	350	250	250	85	22
Board of Managers	0				
Correspondence	0				
Nominating	100				
Equalization	0				
Friends Camp	2,220	2,220			
Personnel	0				
Total	26,940	24,511	10,028	11,349	9,119

FY15 Approved Budget Expanded, page 1 of 3

	FY15 Approved Budget	FY14 Budget (revised)	Δ FY14 to FY15	FY13 Actual
Income				
4010 Individual Contributions	125,000	110,000	15,000	126,718
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions	320,000	310,000	10,000	309,535
4030 Organizations Contributions	-	-	-	2,248
4050 Interest and Dividend Income	11,000	33,500	(22,500)	10,587
4055 Student Loan Interest	-	-	-	-
4070 Books and other Items	15,500	20,000	(4,500)	15,554
4077 Consulting Fee Contribution		-	-	35
4080 Retreat Program Fees	50,000	53,370	(3,370)	48,995
4085 Sessions Program Fees	190,000	176,970	13,030	155,634
Funds from the Legacy Gift	25,000	-	25,000	-
Total Income	736,500	703,840	32,660	669,306
Expenses				
4000 Reconciliation Discrepancies	-	-	-	36
5000 Staff				
5010 Salaries & Wages	273,482	263,712	9,770	240,931
5037 Housing Allowance	-	-	-	8,000
5010 Salaries & Wages	273,482	263,712	9,770	248,931
5020 Payroll Taxes	20,904	20,098	806	16,274
5030 Benefits				
5033 Health Benefits	52,855	53,385	(530)	46,997
5035 Retirements	24,429	23,984	445	21,986
5040 Disability	900	900	-	923
5045 Workers' Compensation	900	900	-	686
5060 Staff Development	2,000	4,000	(2,000)	60
5050 Spiritual Retreats	1,200	1,200	-	618
Total 5030 Benefits	82,284	84,369	(2,085)	71,270
Total 5000 Staff	376,670	368,179	8,491	336,476
5100 General & Administration				
5110 Administration				
5120 Bank Expense	5,100	5,000	100	5,070
5130 Contracted Services	6,000	8,200	(2,200)	6,000
5140 Legal Services	10,000	10,000	-	267
5150 Liability Insurance	3,000	4,000	(1,000)	2,554
5160 Payroll Service	2,000	2,500	(500)	1,585
5170 Recruiting Expense	-	500	(500)	-
5180 Rent	9,350	9,350	-	9,350
5190 Misc. Expense	-	-	-	40
Total 5110 Administration	35,450	39,550	(4,100)	24,867
5200 Office				
5220 Cleaning Services	265	265	-	220
5230 Maint - Equip & Hardware	1,250	1,250	-	823
5240 Postage	3,000	2,500	500	3,037
5250 Office Equipment	2,000	1,250	750	1,659

FY15 Approved Budget Expanded, page 2 of 3

	FY15 Approved Budget	FY14 Budget (revised)	Δ FY14 to FY15	FY13 Actual
5260 Office Supplies	2,500	2,250	250	2,340
5270 Printing & Copying	2,000	4,500	(2,500)	1,994
5280 Software & Updates	2,800	1,500	1,300	2,136
5290 Telephone	4,500	4,000	500	4,456
5295 Miscellaneous	600	-	600	-
Total 5200 Office	18,915	17,515	1,400	16,664
Total 5100 General & Administration	54,365	57,065	(2,700)	41,531
5300 Travel & Conferences				
5310 Travel - Committee	2,600	2,300	300	2,218
5320 Travel - Clerk	5,000	5,000	-	4,836
5330 Travel - Programs	4,600	3,000	1,600	2,663
5335 Travel - Representatives	7,000	4,500	2,500	4,407
5350 Travel - Staff	14,000	14,000	-	14,174
5360 Travel - Ministries	-	-	-	-
Total 5300 Travel & Conferences	33,200	28,800	4,400	28,298
6000 Programs				
6110 Sessions Room & Board	160,000	144,000	16,000	153,233
6112 Retreats - Room & Board			-	
6114 Room Rental	20,000	20,000	-	16,080
6150 Food Expense	10,000	10,000	-	17,292
Total 6112 Retreats Room & Board	30,000	30,000	-	33,372
6125 Program Expenses				
6105 Honoraria	11,300	11,100	200	13,360
6115 Equipment Rental	5,100	5,000	100	3,599
6121 Supplies, etc.	9,000	8,900	100	6,957
6165 Pre-Sessions Expense	1,000	900	100	637
Total 6125 Program Expenses	26,400	25,900	500	24,553
6130 Committee Expenses	26,940	23,451	3,489	10,026
Total 6000 Programs	243,340	223,351	19,989	221,184
6140 Books and Other				
6142 Books	7,200	7,000	200	4,885
6145 Other Items for Sale	600	700	(100)	1,793
6147 Consignment Sales	7,200	9,500	(2,300)	6,615
Total 6140 Books and Other	15,000	17,200	(2,200)	13,293
6200 Benevolence				
6310 FGC	17,608	17,608	-	17,608
6320 FUM	16,635	16,635	-	16,496
6325 FWCC	7,206	7,206	-	7,206
6328 Ramallah Friends School	100	100	-	100
6330 Friends' Organizations				
6335 AFSC	300	300	-	300
6340 FCNL	750	750	-	750
6345 QEW	300	300	-	300
6350 Friends Peace Teams	100	100	-	100
6355 FWCC 3rd World Travel	500	500	-	500
6360 QUNO	200	200	-	200
Total 6330 Friends' Organizations	2,150	2,150	-	2,150

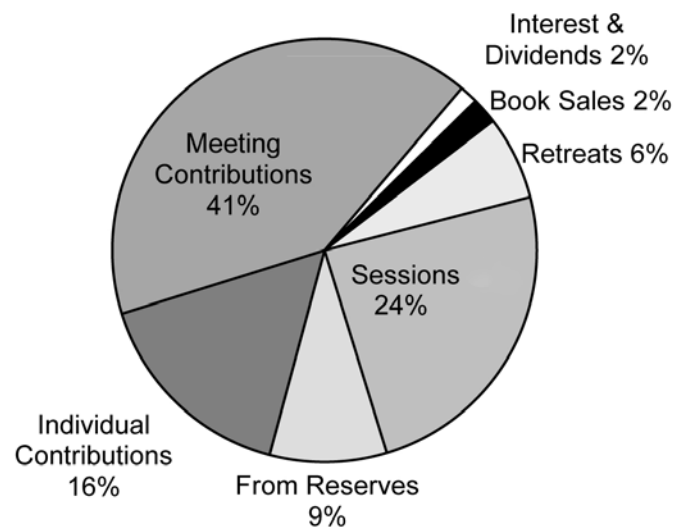
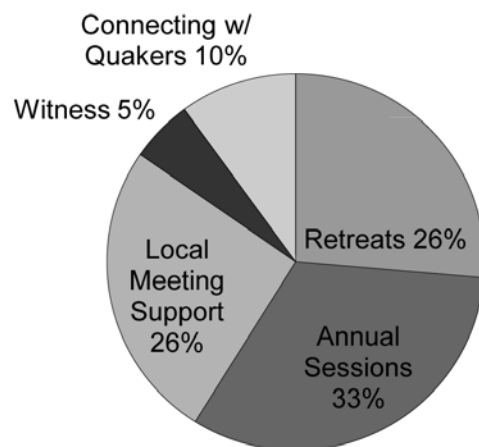
FY15 Approved Budget Expanded, page 3 of 3

	FY15 Approved Budget	FY14 Budget (revised)	Δ FY14 to FY15	FY13 Actual
6575 Other Organizations	650	650	-	-
6590 Ecumenical Organizations				
6592 State Council of Churches	4,000	4,000	-	3,919
6594 NE Council of Churches	150	150	-	150
6596 NECL	150	150	-	150
6598 World Council of Churches	100	100	-	100
Total 6590 Ecumenical Org.	4,400	4,400	-	4,319
6200 Benevolence	48,749	48,749	-	47,879
6600 Publications				
6610 Yearly Meeting Minute Book	4,000	4,000	-	3,755
6620 New England Friend	5,100	5,000	100	6,584
6630 Other newsletters	500	500	-	(99)
6600 Publications	9,600	9,500	100	10,240
Total Expenses	780,924	752,844	28,080	698,937
Net Operating Income	(44,424)	(49,004)	4,580	(29,631)

Note that revisions to the FY14 budget were recommended by Finance Committee on 2/8 and approved by Permanent Board on 2/15. They included:

- moving \$5,000 from 6160 Retreat Support to 5000 Staff to pay the Sessions Coordinator as a W2 employee
- an increase of \$6,000 in 5000 Staff to fund paternity leave for the Communications Director
- an increase of \$2,000 in 5060 Staff Development to fund Salesforce database training for the Communications Director
- an increase of \$3,000 in 5130 Contracted Services to potentially amortize the expense of the new Salesforce database
- an increase of \$1,500 to travel budgets
- increases of \$4,000 in various categories requested by Sessions Committee
- a decrease of \$22,260 in 6110 Sessions Room & Board requested by Sessions Committee to reflect the reduced cost of Sessions at Castleton

FY15 Approved Budget by Program

FY2015 Budget Income**FY2015 Budget Expenses**

Programs in the Approved FY15 Budget

	Income from Fees	Direct Expense	Indirect Expense ^a	Staff Cost ^b	Total Expense	Total Net Cost ^c
Workshops and Retreats						
JYM, JHYM, Young Friends (including pastoral care to youth and families)	38,600	34,400	17,265	106,370	158,035	119,435
YAF retreats	4,000	3,000	2,400	15,000	20,400	16,400
Adult retreats and workshops	2,400	2,000	1,900	12,000	15,900	13,500
YM Support for Friends Camp		2,220	600	4,000	6,820	6,820
Committee: Youth Programs		0	600	4,000	4,600	4,600
Total	45,000	41,620	22,765	141,370	205,755	160,755
Annual Sessions^{d,e}	190,000	192,800	8,600	53,000	254,400	64,400
Local Meeting Support						
Religious Education support (adults and youth)		1,400	4,900	30,000	36,300	36,300
Staff visits and field work		1,000	3,900	24,000	28,900	28,900
Outreach		0	2,900	18,000	20,900	20,900
Website and print publications		23,900	6,200	38,000	68,100	68,100
Archives of local meetings		0	1,000	6,000	7,000	7,000
Pastoral meetings retreats	5,000	2,400	500	3,000	5,900	900
Committees: Aging, F&P, QYE, M&C, PubCom		3,710	3,400	21,000	28,110	28,110
Contributions: Ecumenical		4,400	200	1,000	5,600	5,600
Total	5,000	36,810	23,000	141,000	200,810	195,810
Witness						
Committees: QEW, P&SC, RSEJ		3,350	1,300	8,000	12,650	12,650
Contributions: AFSC, FCNL, FPT, QEW, QUNO		1,650	500	3,000	5,150	5,150
Book and consignment sales	15,500	15,000	200	1,000	16,200	700
Other support of witness		650	1,000	6,000	7,650	7,650
Total	15,500	20,650	3,000	18,000	41,650	26,150
Connecting with the Quaker Movement						
Puente de Amigos		1,400	1,100	7,000	9,500	9,500
Committees: FGC, FUM, FWCC		960	600	4,000	5,560	5,560
Benevolences: Quaker Organizations		42,049	0	300	42,349	42,349
Other support of connections to the Quaker movement		7,000	1,900	12,000	20,900	20,900
Total	0	51,409	3,600	23,300	78,309	78,309
Grand Total	255,500	343,289	60,965	376,670	780,924	525,424

a. This is the estimated administrative overhead (not including staff cost) for running each program.

b. Estimated portion of staff expense for this program (as reported in Operating Expenses line 5000).

c. As these programs are ministries of the Yearly Meeting, any remainings costs are made up by unrestricted contributions to the Yearly Meeting.

d. Sessions includes all youth programs that occur at Yearly Meeting Sessions; Sessions expenses are not included in the JYM, JHYM, Young Friends or YAF lines.

e. Net cost for Sessions does not include \$14,600 expected to be contributed to Equalization in FY15.

Appendix 1: Unity Agenda

The items listed on the Unity Agenda were introduced in the Advance Documents and proposed for consideration on Monday evening. Prior to Monday evening, Friends were encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Unity Agenda, to read the written information pertaining to each item, and to consult with the Friends listed as resource people about any questions or concerns, in order to be ready to act on the items without discussion on Monday evening. This process helps free additional time for corporate worship and discernment. The following items were initially included on the Unity Agenda:

Decisions & Actions Concerning...	See page
Accepting Staff Reports	67–76
Accepting Board, Committee & Representative Reports	77–94
Approving Nominating Committee Recommendations (removed from Unity Agenda during Sessions)	32
Approving Continuing Employment of Friends Camp Director & YM Secretary	24
Approving Bank Resolutions	24
Approving Clerks' Authorization to Make Edits & Corrections	below

Minute to Authorize Edits & Corrections

Friends authorize the presiding, recording and reading clerks to make grammatical edits and corrections to the minutes of NEYM Sessions 2014.

Appendix 2: Financial Sustainability Progress Report

DEAR FRIENDS,

This has been a year of challenge and change. We have made significant progress in our efforts toward financial sustainability for the ministries and life of Friends in New England. We still have a long road ahead to travel together.

At Sessions 2013, Friends who carry the concern for our Yearly Meeting's financial sustainability were asked to report on accomplishments and developments in each successive year in order to help hold one another accountable, to review progress toward a sound financial footing for our ministries, and to make course corrections as needed.

This document provides part of that progress report for the year since August 2013 as context and background to the continuing work we will consider at this year's Sessions in August 2014. Please refer to the reports in the Advance Documents from the NEYM Treasurer, Permanent Board and Finance Committee for information on the income and expense numbers, adjustments to projections and steps taken to respond as needed during FY2014. An update and proposed next steps to meet our financial goals will be presented at Annual Sessions as further context for discernment of the FY2015 budget.

Background

Minute 2013-27 from Annual Sessions 2013 focuses on financial sustainability. [Note: the bold has been added here for emphasis, and the numerals for ease of reference later in the report]

The Long-Term Financial Planning Group proposes a plan to create capacity to increase our income to meet our expenses in, at most, five years. Over these five years reserves could be drawn down to as low as \$90,000 in the process of giving us time to build this capacity. We anticipate that our income will exceed our expenses in five years, and that we will then begin to replenish our reserves, including replenishing the interest they would have accrued if we had not drawn upon them. We have already started the process of creating capacity to increase our income.

Through the formation of this long-term financial planning initiative we are:

1. **Beginning to talk about our finances over a longer term** with the gathered Yearly Meeting and will continue to **evaluate them in the coming years**.
2. We have **shifted the Yearly Meeting Secretary's work** plan to spend more time on Development.
3. In FY2014 the budget recommendation **gives the Development Committee a real budget to work with** based on their estimate of the cost to raise the goal we have established.
4. We are taking concrete steps to **improve the technological and administrative support** to make Development work—and all other work—more possible.
5. Permanent Board has committed to **strengthening the relationship between monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting...**

Friends were asked to affirm that creating a capacity to increase our income is an important priority for our corporate life going forward. Friends approved. (*New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, Minute 2013-27*)

Report on Progress Toward Our Commitments

What follows is a summary of progress and actions taken during the last year in support of the commitments identified in NEYM Minute 2013-27, excerpted above. This includes some actions that have begun and will need to continue in FY2015.

(1) Beginning to talk about our finances over a longer term

The need for longer-term planning and consideration of our finances in a wider context is generating new conversations, collaborations and connections.

For several years the Priorities Process (under the care of the Yearly Meeting Secretary and Coordinating & Advisory Committee) has sought input to season priorities for adjusting our annual budget. This year the Priorities Process involved consultation with more bodies than ever before, including Friends without formal responsibilities at present but who have served in positions of financial stewardship for NEYM in the past. Care was taken to especially engage and listen to Friends with a variety of perspectives and values concerning financial stewardship, including some who have opposed the current course. In conversations with 15 different groups of Friends, input was given on an evolving set of options both for reducing expenses and considering increases to respond to the needs and hopes of Friends. The additional effort involved in widening the consultation this year was significant, and the input and energy these conversations generated has been very valuable.

The Finance Committee, Treasurer and YM Secretary have convened several other opportunities for Friends with financial responsibilities at the local level to share—both in person and by video conference—their perspectives, concerns and best practices with Friends engaged in the shared spiritual work of financial stewardship.

In March 2014, Coordinating & Advisory convened a “Budget Summit,” bringing together representatives of Finance, Personnel and Development Committees with the clerks of Ministry & Counsel and Permanent Board to receive the report on the Priorities Process and to give guidance to Finance Committee in preparing the FY2015 budget. This gathering built on the collaboration between these groups in preparing the initial long-term projections presented to Sessions in 2013. The budget being brought to Sessions reflects the sense of the meeting that emerged from that day-long gathering.

(2) Shifting the Yearly Meeting Secretary’s work plan to spend more time on Development

Prior to 2013, direct involvement in fundraising was not a major focus of the Secretary’s role. Since Sessions, the YM Secretary has invested a minimum of 10 percent of his time to strengthening relationships with donors and partnering with the Development Committee in their work. He has also prioritized improving the tools (database, web site, print materials) to facilitate a growing and more effective development program for NEYM. Just as important, however, has been his focus on conversations with Friends throughout our community on our visions, hopes and dreams for Quakers in New England, and how increasing our financial support of our shared ministries might help us live into those dreams.

In August and September 2013, individual giving increased significantly, resulting in a total increase of 61 percent over the previous year and exceeding our individual giving expectations for the year by 31 percent. We believe this was due in large part to both increased awareness of the financial need and increased confidence in the direction we are discerning. This work of education has been done in concert with the Development Committee (see #3).

While we don’t yet know whether this support will be sustained during the current fiscal year ending September 30, the data we have looks promising. As of July 1st, 2013, we were at \$42,236, and by July 1st, 2014, we were at \$53,094—25 percent ahead of where we were this time last year.

This doesn’t include a generous one-time “encouragement” gift of \$20,000 from an anonymous donor who does not regularly give at this level to our annual fund, but believes this is a pivotal time

for Friends to do all they can to help us bridge our fiscal gap as we move toward financial sustainability and a growing, thriving Quaker movement in New England.

In addition to supporting the production of our two fundraising appeals this year and improving our data, processes, and materials related to development (see below), our Secretary continues to visit and connect with Friends, some of whom already support our work through individual giving, some of whom do not, and some of whom do not have the means to do so. From all of these Friends, he seeks guidance on how we could more compellingly illustrate and meaningfully increase the value of the Yearly Meeting's work. His work has also included both cultivation and direct solicitation of major gifts.

As we consider how NEYM can strengthen our financial foundations, it may be helpful to learn from the following three themes that have emerged consistently in these conversations, and which are a significant result of a greater emphasis in the YM Secretary's work on development:

- A. The call for a clear articulation of both who we are and what we do that can help Friends see themselves and their meetings, youth programs, ministries and committees as an integral part of the Yearly Meeting, and see the clear connection between their financial support and a thriving Quaker community throughout New England.
- B. The desire to shift from a model that focuses on how little we can spend and still survive to a model that asks what resources are needed to support high-quality, effective and deeply nourishing work in support of our local meetings and Friends' faithfulness.
- C. The hope that as a Yearly Meeting we will prayerfully prepare, season and commit to clear priorities and plans for growth, with accountability to effectively implement and evaluate the work we commit to accomplish.

For the last several months, the Secretary has met regularly with an experienced Quaker fundraiser and leadership consultant. This work focuses on developing fundraising skills and exploring how NEYM can strengthen engagement by individuals, local meetings and others.

(3) In FY2014 the budget recommendation gives the Development Committee a real budget to work with based on their estimate of the cost to raise the goal we have established

The creation of simple, clear and compelling print material—in which the Development Committee has played an important role—represent significant steps forward in building this shared sense of connection and identity. This work has been supported by the launch of our dynamic new web site. The Development Committee arranged training on fundraising as ministry, and together attended a conference for Quaker fundraisers last fall. Plans for engaging Friends around Sessions to explore joyful financial support of our ministries are well underway. In fall 2014, the committee plans a retreat facilitated by Jennie Isbell, a Quaker fundraiser, to help us identify key objectives and tasks that will continue to build our skill set as we strive to meet our individual contribution goals.

Based on the increases in individual giving over the last year, it appears that Friends increase their support when we are able to more clearly communicate both the needs of NEYM and how we plan to meet them.

(4) We are taking concrete steps to improve the technological and administrative support to make Development work—and all other work—more possible

In FY2012, Coordinating & Advisory identified a widely perceived need to invest in improving the systems NEYM uses to manage our data. Thanks to a generous grant of \$10,000 from the Obadiah Brown and Sarah Swift Benevolent Fund, we initially planned for an incremental improvement and upgrade of our database toolset over multiple years. Following Sessions 2013, concerns emerged in a variety of areas including access and ease of use, integrity and accuracy of data, security of personal financial information, legal compliance, ongoing maintenance and software development costs, and personnel issues.

These matters together convinced the Yearly Meeting Secretary, relevant staff, Treasurer, clerks of Finance and Development Committees, Coordinating & Advisory, and Permanent Board of the need to implement a new comprehensive database as soon as practical. An ad hoc database working group¹ consisting of Friends with strong and diverse professional expertise in the design, development and use of databases and other software conducted wide-ranging interviews with major stakeholders, including staff of NEYM and other Friends' organizations, committees, and Friends with experience of our previous and current databases and systems.

On the recommendation of this working group and the YM Secretary and Treasurer, Permanent Board approved a \$20,000 capital expenditure to accomplish the transition to a new database platform in the current fiscal year. Friends took this decision recognizing that it was not feasible to wait for approval by Sessions, since significant elements of the new system needed to be ready in time to manage registration for Sessions 2014.

The full transition is slated for completion in October 2014. This new system—called Salesforce, an industry-standard cloud-based platform also used by Friends General Conference, and which offers major discounts to non-profits—will integrate with our other main software tools for the new *neym.org* web site, e-mail communication, and book-keeping, and will bring savings in staff time in addition to offering opportunities to dramatically improve the quality and clarity of our communications among Friends in New England. It will also support the needs of our growing Development efforts, the needs of Nominating Committee, and the emerging effort at strengthening connection and participation with monthly meetings (see #5).

Budget consultations this year have affirmed a need to restore administrative support cut due to budget challenges in recent years, so that we can more effectively respond to the needs of local meetings, committees and individuals. In light of this, this past year the Yearly Meeting Secretary used a portion of the approved contractual services budget to provide additional on-call administrative support at crucial times. As a result of further discernment and seasoning, the FY2015 budget being proposed at Sessions 2014 includes a recommendation to partially restore administrative support for the NEYM office in the amount of a half-time position (i.e., 0.5 FTE). While acknowledging our financial challenges, restoring this administrative support has emerged as a priority to help us achieve our longer-term goals.

(5) Strengthening the relationship between monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting:

Improving communication, relationship and participation by monthly meetings in the work and ministry of our wider Yearly Meeting is not a simple challenge. Still, a significant increase in travel by staff and active members of committees has made the ministry of the Yearly Meeting more visible and relevant in the past year. In particular, the Yearly Meeting Secretary, Religious Education & Outreach Coordinator², Sessions Coordinator, and members of Permanent Board, Structural Review & Development Committees, and Ministry & Counsel have travelled extensively, bringing news of fresh life and opening space for consultation and input from a widening spectrum of Friends. This will hopefully continue to enliven the connections among all of our constituent parts as one body. Overall, the intention of this work is to help us become more connected, transparent, responsive, effective and accountable at accomplishing the work we have discerned God leading us to do.

In 20+ visits to monthly meetings, our YM Secretary has invited Friends to reflect on where the Life is in our local meetings, what challenges and opportunities Friends are facing, and how the Yearly

¹ This working group consisted of Suzanna Schell (Beacon Hill), Jessica Hipp (Fresh Pond), Mark Barker (Concord) and Jeff Hipp (YM Communications Director). The group benefitted from the additional expertise of David Coletta (Cambridge), Ben Guaraldi (Beacon Hill), and Chris Pifer (Madison, Northern YM, consultant).

² This year we expanded the title of the current 0.8 FTE position in which Beth Collela (Wellesley) serves to "Religious Education and Outreach Coordinator" to acknowledge a shift in work to support outreach by local meetings.

Meeting could provide much-needed support, encouragement, resources and networking with Friends and meetings with experience of similar challenges. Often opportunities have arisen to match existing programs and services with the needs of local meetings in ways that were connecting, supportive and life giving—and deeply appreciated in places where the availability of those programs or services was often unknown.

Permanent Board has convened a working group—consisting of members of Permanent Board, Finance Committee, and Development³—to strengthen participation by monthly meetings in governance throughout the year, to increase transparency of how our financial contributions support our shared work, and to enhance the connection of local meetings to our wider ministries. With logistical support from staff, this group is piloting what is hoped will be an ongoing program of visiting in pairs, listening and information-sharing. Initial trial-run visits in pairs are being conducted this summer, with a plan for a more robust effort beginning this fall. Friends willing to travel will submit their names to the working group, and staff will provide support in tracking meetings in need of visits and matching travelers. Overall, the principal intention of this initiative is to help Friends throughout New England know each other and work together as a larger body.

The working group is preparing an initial set of materials to support Friends who visit as part of this initiative, including a how-to guide for those new to this work, materials presenting the YM's current financial priorities and needs, and clear articulations of who we are as NEYM and where our work is focused. Current versions of these materials will be accessible online soon on *neym.org*. Following their visits, traveling Friends will report back to the working group so that relevant people or bodies (such as Finance Committee, Ministry & Counsel, Permanent Board, the Committee on Aging, etc.) can follow up to address specific needs, strengthening connections and support our shared work and witness. Plans to develop a “visitor training” are in the works. E-mail neym@neym.org for more information or to sign up to travel, or to invite a group to visit your meeting.

Conclusion

In each of the ways described above, this year NEYM Friends have taken significant steps to fulfill the charge described in Minute 2013-27. Many have worked and are working to create a capacity to increase our income to support the life and ministry of Friends in New England.

We have met or exceeded our initial projections of income from individuals and monthly meetings, and are poised to continue our movement toward financial sustainability in the coming years. Our projections will continue to require adjustments and course corrections. These are both challenging and exciting times to share together in this important work on behalf of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends.

Please direct questions regarding the content of this report to the Yearly Meeting Secretary at ymsec@neym.org or 617-615-6396, or the presiding clerk at clerk@neym.org or 215-804-9086.

Respectfully Submitted,

—NEYM COORDINATING & ADVISORY COMMITTEE (C&A):

*Jacqueline Stillwell (Monadnock), presiding clerk of
New England Yearly Meeting and Coordinating & Advisory*

Holly Baldwin (Fresh Pond), clerk of Permanent Board

Margaret Cooley (Mt. Toby), clerk of Ministry & Counsel

Ben Guaraldi (Beacon Hill), NEYM Treasurer

Fritz Weiss (Hanover), Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary

Noah Baker Merrill (Putney), Yearly Meeting Secretary

³ Currently this group consists of Sara Smith (Concord), Bruce Neumann (Fresh Pond), Deana Chase (Westport), Dulany Bennett (Hanover) and Carol Savery-Frederick (Hartford).

Memorial Minutes

John A. Carey II 1920–2012

In 1920, John A. Carey II was born to John Arthur Carey and Neita Fleming in Saguache, Colorado. He was the grandson of Arthur Linn Carey, who had been clerk of Ohio Yearly Meeting for many years.

John attended Arizona State University, where he played football until the Second World War. After serving in the Air Force, he continued his education at San Jose State University (California) where he met his wife, Eve Nathanson Carey (who predeceased him in 2005). Their first child, Rachel Ann Carey, was born in 1950. In 1952 after the birth of their second child, John A. Carey III—“Trey” (who predeceased him in 2002)—the couple moved to Southborough, Massachusetts, where they taught at St. Mark's School for the next 35 years.

John taught design, shop and technical drawing, coached sports, headed the art department and played his beloved handball game, “fives.” The Careys were much-loved members of the school community. As head of school John Warren said, “John was one of the most caring, upbeat people I have ever had the pleasure to know. After a conversation with John, you inevitably felt better about yourself or whatever issue was on your mind. His students enjoyed the way he brought out the best in them.”

In 1964, John and Eve opened Eden Hand Arts on Route 6A in Dennis, Massachusetts. Their work, mostly jewelry and pottery, gained recognition and acclaim. John is best known as creator of the Cape Cod Screwball Bracelet. His attitude towards life is well described in his statement, “The search for a good life—the successful search for the subtleties of a pleasurable experience—is not easy, like trying to catch a falling leaf.”

Rachel describes her father as someone who “lived life his own way, fully and large, in more ways than his 6’6” frame.” The word “quirky” was often associated with him. He would draw, design and write on scraps of paper everywhere. One scrap of paper written shortly before he died said, “Faith in past, courage in present, faith in future, and do not sit out the dance.”

John was a devoted Quaker; his family's Quaker legacy, which influenced all his activities, dates back to the time of William Penn. In the 1950s John and his family attended Cambridge Meeting. He was a founding member of two meetings in New England: Framingham Friends Meeting in the 1960s, of which he was clerk for many years, and Barnstable Meeting from 2006. Fiercely independent, he often stated that Friends are the conscience of the world. Also, he expressed a concern about the lack of unity among Friends, a need to set aside differences and come together, particularly regarding reconciliation among all Cape Cod Friends.

John A. Carey passed away peacefully at his home in his sleep on May 4, 2012. He was 91. He is survived by his daughter Rachel Ann Carey-Harper, his son-in-law Edward Harper, both of Dennis, Massachusetts; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; a sister-in-law; two nieces; a nephew, and many special friends.

A memorial service in the manner of Friends was held on July 17, 2012, at Burgess House in Marstons Mills, Massachusetts, home of Barnstable Friends Meeting.

So let us remember him in the beauty of every day, in the smile of a friend, and follow his model in trying to catch a brightly colored autumn leaf as it falls from a tree. Let us laugh and embrace life.

...And don't sit out the dance.

—BARNSTABLE FRIENDS MEETING (PREPARATIVE)
SANDWICH QUARTERLY MEETING

Alanna Connors
1956–2013

Alanna Connors' life led her to trust her own compass. She was a mathematician and a scientist at places and times where women were seldom found. When once her high school math teacher flunked her, despite her answers being correct, another teacher told her: "You know he's giving good grades to boys and not to you, because you're a girl." Recounting the story Alanna said, "I didn't need that; I knew I could do the math." She held true to her course.

In later years, long before finding Quakers, Alanna lived the testimony of experiencing God in everyone. While most of us have tight circles of caring—our family, friends, coworkers—Alanna's circles were as unbounded as a wave expanding to all of space. It seems no accident that her profession became looking at objects distant in the universe. Across the many communities of her life's paths, she welcomed all beings. Living with her was a joy; her care for others was never an abstract thing, but a centered flame, close to her and everyone she touched.

Alanna was born September 25, 1956, in Hong Kong, to Richard and Sonia Mitchell Connors. Returning to the United States in 1963, Alanna's family settled in Greenwich, Connecticut. Living with four siblings in an environment not always centered on these children's welfare, Alanna developed an immense capacity to listen and extend empathy. Imagination shone through her grade school writings, her elaborate, award-winning gingerbread houses, and family-staged dramas.

At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she thrilled to the elegance of mathematics in describing and predicting physical behaviors. For her, mathematical physics was inseparable from the playfulness, color, artistry, and imagination by which she produced it. Her lab reports were crafted in a flourishing script, vivid with colored pencil illuminations. Her dorm room, with its handmade teapot and mismatched cups, provided hearth and convivial warmth at all hours for a wide swath of students.

She met fellow student Phillip Veatch while they were both organizing MIT's first on-campus food cooperative. After a year of courtship, they exchanged private vows of marriage in 1978 on a basketball court in East Cambridge. Alanna was opposed to the state-sanctioned institution of marriage because of its historical role in the oppression of women.

At graduate school at the University of Maryland, Alanna was drawn to the depth of worship that she found at Adelphi Friends Meeting. By 1982 she was a regular attender, dragging along her then-reluctant partner. A deep commitment to the Quaker principles of simplicity, peace, integrity, and justice soon enriched both of their lives. Alanna and Phil continued for ten years at Dover Monthly Meeting in New Hampshire, finally settling at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1998.

While charting the sky of X-ray objects, Alanna felt akin to the ancients who long ago gathered and counted the heavens' lights. During her work as a researcher at the University of New Hampshire and later as an independent contractor with NASA, she introduced the astrophysics community to Bayesian methods of statistics, providing a foundation for statistical methods previously unknown to astronomers in the early 1990s. She taught astrophysics at Wellesley College, created programs at the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium in Concord, New Hampshire, and helped create a flourishing cross-discipline statistics group at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Despite being an intense introvert, she harbored a lifelong belief in the importance of community-building. As a senior scientist, she was known for her support of young graduate students. After the birth of her son, she worked with other parents to reform special education in the Arlington public schools. She volunteered regularly at New England Yearly Meeting Annual

Sessions, working in both child care and the bookstore. She often attended Women's Group at Fresh Pond Meeting, where she spoke regularly about her concerns in raising her gifted son.

Alanna was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1995. She lived with it for 18 years. Characteristically, through its recurrences and treatment, she refused to be defined by the disease. She conceived her son, Roy, born in March 1999. When Roy was 4, her disease recurred, and she took him with her to treatments, where she encouraged his interest in the hospital's high-energy accelerator. Whatever life brought her, she lived with it; she saw illness as no excuse to build walls. When her disease returned for the last time, in an advanced form, Phil asked if she wanted to go on any special vacations. She did not, preferring to live through her callings.

In her years at Dover Meeting, Alanna rotated through nearly every committee. During the first Gulf War, Dover Friends called on her to write a compelling minute explaining the Meeting's opposition to the invasion of Iraq and Kuwait. Phil and Alanna were lifelong advocates of same-sex marriage. When they decided for Roy's sake to get legally married, they did not seek marriage under the care of Dover Meeting, as it had not yet completed its process for hosting marriages for same-gender persons (it has since done so).

During her time at Fresh Pond, her participation in committee work was limited by parenting and the treatments for breast cancer. She was, however, a quiet and regular presence at Meeting for Business and an infrequent but powerful minister during Meeting for Worship, where her ministry was often structured around song.

Just as she knew not to take to heart a teacher's censure, Alanna maintained integrity without ceding herself, her work, or others to diminishment. Mathematics was just one route by which she independently investigated, questioned, and confirmed the truth for herself without relying on the claims of teachers and other external authorities. She stood up for discovering and expressing the full potential of one's mind and heart, inspiring those around her to undertake aspirations and take risks of which they did not suppose themselves to be capable.

Alanna's spirit lives with us and continues to teach us. We remember her implacable but gentle striving to see the truth and to tell it. The women of Fresh Pond recall Alanna's intense, powerful mothering, against all odds. Throughout her life she resisted the limits and distortions that social norms can impose on our vision of others. A prism takes a beam of light and separates it into many separate parts. Alanna lived her life striving to bring the many separate parts of our world back together into one shining beam.

Her memorial service was held on March 2, 2013, in the Wellesley Friends meetinghouse, under the care of Fresh Pond Meeting. She was 56.

—FRESH POND MONTHLY MEETING
SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING

Gordon L. Harris
1938–2012

Our Friend Gordon L. Harris died the 13th of Ninth Month 2012 at his home in Auburn, Maine, at the age of 74. Born the 24th of Second Month 1938 in Charleston, South Carolina, to Philip L. and Flora Harris, Gordon was the middle of three brothers. He grew up in the area of Rochester, New York, where as a young man he became a member of Rochester Friends Meeting.

The Harris household was concerned with human rights: his mother Flora was an officer in the NAACP and Gordon was in the junior NAACP in high school. After graduation, Gordon worked on a tugboat on the Erie Canal before attending the University of Rochester. In 1961, at a

speech there by James Farmer, a leader in the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), he responded to the call for volunteers, to be known as Freedom Riders, to travel and work in the South demonstrating for racial equality.

Gordon was one of a group of 15 to 20 Freedom Riders assigned to ride the train from New Orleans, Louisiana, to Jackson, Mississippi. Upon arrival, they broke Mississippi's segregation laws, whites sitting in the "colored" section and blacks sitting in the "whites only" section at the station. Arrested and convicted for breach of the law, they were sentenced to six months in jail. "One jailer kept coming up to the window of the jail telling us how we had them all wrong," Gordon recalled in a 2011 interview in the Lewiston, Maine, *Sun Journal*. "They 'did not hate their niggers.' He said it a couple of times. We reached out to him non-violently."

As more Freedom Riders came to Jackson, they "filled up the jail," Gordon said. "They had us carted up to the penitentiary. More and more people were coming in behind us. They kept me there two months." After being released from prison, Gordon stayed in the South as a civil rights worker for CORE in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama and Louisiana, helping blacks to register to vote and gain access to other rights they had been denied. He took part in demonstrations, and "was arrested again and again." He also worked for the NAACP in Mississippi, and joined the Selma to Montgomery march with the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.

Returning north, Gordon joined his family, who had moved to Washington, D.C., where he worked in the mail department of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). He completed his undergraduate degree at Wilmington College, North Carolina, in 1967 and then moved to Cleveland to work for the American Friends Service Committee and a city civil rights commission. While there, he was briefly married to Christi G. Harris. All his experiences had led him to a desire to enter seminary and become a prison chaplain, and he pursued his plan at the Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Indiana.

While studying for his Master of Ministry degree, which he earned in 1974, Gordon remained active in peace work and Quaker affairs. He worked at the county jail in Richmond; he also served as pastor of the Central City, Nebraska, Friends Meeting from 1973 to 1977. During his time in Nebraska, Gordon worshipped with the Sioux Falls Area Friends group, and observed the trial of Native American activist Russell Means after Wounded Knee. He also spent time in Northern Ireland, working in the peace movement and worshipping at Belfast Meeting.

He later returned to Washington, rejoining his family to assist his father, who was suffering from Huntington's, a progressive disease which Gordon and one of his brothers also inherited. There he attended Florida Avenue Meeting, working in the Senior Center and helping maintain the building. Through a conversation with Peter Jonitis at William Penn House in Washington, Gordon learned of a Friends church in Maine which needed a pastor, and he filled the position at Winthrop Center Friends Church for five years. Following his service in Winthrop, he also spent time in the Portland (Maine) area, attending Portland Friends Meeting and making many friends there.

After returning to Washington, where he remained to take care of his parents in their last years, Gordon came to Lewiston in December 1995 and began attending Lewiston Monthly Meeting, becoming a member in 1996. A supporting letter from Florida Avenue Meeting noted that while he had never officially joined that meeting: "We commend to your care his quiet patience, his sense of commitment, and his all-around helpfulness as we recall his participation in committee work and the Senior Center. We gratefully reflect on his ability to 'be there' and pick up unnamed, unappreciated tasks at times when the Meeting had not seen what Gordon could."

During his remaining years in Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Gordon continued to receive treatment for his Huntington's Disease at hospitals in Boston and at The Johns Hopkins University, often as a volunteer in clinical trials. While the treatments kept his disease in remission far longer than medically predicted, Gordon's coordination steadily deteriorated. Recognizing the situation, he asked for the oversight of a committee of care, but cherishing his privacy and independence, he preferred that its activities and reports remain within the committee.

Gordon was a faithful attender at Lewiston meeting. As long as he was able, he also attended meetings of the Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy, a Quaker-centered and -guided lobby to the Maine Legislature, and programs relating to religious, philosophical and human rights issues. He received an award for his civic volunteerism, which included working in the cancer division of a local hospital, being a Big Brother and an adopter of needy pets, listening with his dog to elementary-age children reading at Longley School and the Lewiston Public Library, and being a quiet presence at vigils and demonstrations for peace and civil rights.

In the difficult last two years of his life, Gordon moved several times within the Twin Cities, and his attendance at Meeting became less regular. However, national recognition of his participation in the Civil Rights Movement—through reunions of Freedom Riders on Oprah Winfrey’s television show and in Mississippi at the invitation of the governor—brought him well-deserved joy and local acclaim. In his final months, Gordon and his last, loving canine companion, Skye, were faithful attenders at the First Unitarian Universalist Church in Auburn, whose members joyfully shouldered the responsibility of caring for his physical and spiritual needs. His memorial service was held at that church on 29 Ninth Month 2012, with several members of Lewiston Monthly Meeting and Falmouth Quarterly Meeting attending.

—LEWISTON MONTHLY MEETING
FALMOUTH QUARTERLY MEETING

Eleanor Plank
1926–2013

Eleanor Plank was a much-loved and cherished member of Storrs Friends Meeting, serving as clerk and on almost every committee at one time or another. She is remembered for her wisdom, her kind but direct manner, and her willingness to serve in whatever capacity she was needed. She particularly enjoyed working with the children on Bible study. She was often heard saying that on Sunday mornings, “There is nowhere else I would rather be than at Storrs Friends Meeting.”

Eleanor Bent Plank was born on December 11, 1926, in Berea, Kentucky, where her father managed the college store. She attended Oberlin College, receiving a degree in elementary education in 1948, and earned a Master’s Degree from Columbia University Teacher’s College and taught elementary school in the Chicago area. During the summer of 1951 she volunteered for an AFSC project outside of Mexico City. There she met John Plank, who, smitten, followed her back to Chicago. They married in August 1952 under the care of the Evanston Friends Meeting.

John and Eleanor led an AFSC project in El Salvador in 1953–54 and then settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where John began work on a Ph.D. in Latin American politics. The couple established special bonds with friends experiencing the same early phases of marriage, graduate school, and parenting. Many of those friendships started at the Cambridge Friends Meeting, of which they became members.

Between 1957 and 1970, Eleanor, John, and their three children lived in Peru, Argentina, Cambridge (Massachusetts), and Washington, D.C. While living in D.C., Eleanor rapidly engaged with school and community life in her Cleveland Park neighborhood. The family became early members of Bethesda Friends Meeting. With that community, Eleanor participated in civil rights and anti-war demonstrations throughout the 1960s.

John accepted a position at the University of Connecticut in 1970, and the family moved to Storrs. Eleanor again became active in the schools, in the library, and in local politics. Elected to the Mansfield School Board, she served as its president for six crucial years during which own-

ership and management of the local high school transferred from the University of Connecticut to the town of Mansfield. Her experience as a Friend served her and the community well in this challenging position. In the weeks following the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, Eleanor joined a small group of pacifists in Mansfield protesting the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. On that occasion she knew she was part of a tiny minority, but she insisted that voices be raised in the cause of peace even when there was little immediate hope of changing public opinion or redirecting policy.

A good listener, Eleanor had a knack for asking just the right questions and saying the right thing at the right time. She exuded a graciousness that originated in her southern upbringing and was always evident in her warm welcome at the many Christmas and Easter potlucks that she and John hosted in their home. She played an instrumental role in planning a new meetinghouse for Storrs Friends Meeting. Eleanor was a true grounding presence in worship and during business meetings. Committed to social justice, she was a constant and committed participant in many anti-war vigils over the years.

Eleanor was a faithful attender at NEYM sessions for many years, working in the child-care room and later in the bookstore. She enjoyed attending workshops and business meetings and seeing old friends.

In her later years, she was the voice of our collective history and our future vision. And by her continued quiet, steady presence she taught the lesson of graceful aging.

In 2011, she moved to Maryland at her children's behest. Once again, although she was reluctant to leave behind the life she built and came to love, she made her transition without looking back, bringing as much energy and enthusiasm to her new community as she could summon. Her new neighbors and her "old" Bethesda Friends Meeting quickly responded to her grace and dignity.

Eleanor died after a brief illness on May 26, 2013, with her children by her side.

—STORRS FRIENDS MEETING
CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING

Mary Ann Snieckus
1956–2012

Mary Ann was born on February 5, 1956, into a family of nine children in Woodbury, Connecticut. She died in their family home on October 23, 2012, surrounded by Leo, her trusted lab, and loving family and friends.

Mary Ann Snieckus loved the dance. She loved to teach, parent, paint, hike, and pray—all the while singing down wisdom from the ages. Mary Ann loved the dance. She listened, deeper than most, to that inward space, where life calls our attention, where creativity is born, where courage and faith are constantly renewed. Throughout her 56 years, Mary Ann listened, with the force of her being, to life's deepest call, following inner and outward journeys of dizzying magnitudes. As a sister, mother, teacher and friend, Mary Ann shared insights, curiosity and knowing about the dance of life.

In the mid-1990s, Hartford Friends came to know Mary Ann and her two beautiful, then-young daughters, Rishona and Shani Hines. Mary Ann was a biology teacher in Bloomfield at the time, an avid environmentalist, and a newly convinced Friend. She loved the mysticism of meeting, sharing from silence her deep meditations on Native American wisdom, experiential visions and, sometimes, interpretive song or dance. Mary Ann shared with us her evolving discernments on life, healing, earth, God and family. She won her first battle with breast cancer, and she raised

her wonderful and talented Rishona and Shani to young adulthood. Notably, both young women went on to attend Quaker colleges, Rishona at Guilford and Shani at Earlham.

Throughout her very active years with Hartford Quaker meeting, Mary Ann was the heart and soul of hospitality. She created the space and capacity for a multitude of meeting luncheons, sharing with all her gifts as a cook and spiritual gatherer. Many remember her leading collective prayers of gratitude and joy before each meal, including those organized for Young Friends retreats, New England Yearly Meeting Committee Days, and national gatherings of Friends visiting Hartford Meeting. Mary Ann also regularly opened our hearts with song and dance at New England Yearly Meeting coffee houses, Hartford Meeting Christmas Eve services, and Hartford Meeting retreats. Wherever she was on her journey, Mary Ann brought people alongside her, sharing discoveries of science, poetry, and soulful art with her loving and expressive free spirit. We shared her questions, and discoveries of inner human rhythms, and outward life miracles.

Mary Ann also traveled widely, while teaching for 12 years as a photography and video teacher at Newtown High School. During these years Mary Ann formed a special relationship with the people of Liberia, initially through project Eye to Eye, providing cameras to refugee children living at the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana. Subsequently, Mary Ann helped to found the Carolyn A. Miller School and New Sight Eye Center in Paynesville, Liberia, which gives repatriated refugees of all ages the opportunity of an education and quality eye care. The continuing relationship between the Carolyn A. Miller School and the Newtown, Connecticut, public schools is an important part of Mary Ann's legacy, reflecting her integrity and remarkable commitment to community.

Like the four elementals of life, Mary Ann was fire—lighting the world with curiosity, joy and laughter; Mary Ann was water—moving powerfully through obstacles, learning when to flow in quiet, when to rush like white water over risks and rocks; Mary Ann was air—seeking and discovering the truth and essence of life; and Mary Ann was earth—grounding herself in the foundation of love, that which sustains all.

With immense courage and grace, Mary Ann took on her final dance with cancer. In the last few months of her life, she led a workshop called “Living and Being OK with Dying” at the Middlebury Public Library, sharing the healing power of photography and art. When asked about her own daughters' feelings about impending death, she responded: “my spirit is soaring ... my belief in the spirit lasts forever ... I will, therefore, always be with them”; just as we, who've shared in countless journeys and “Mary Ann miracles,” will be with her, throughout the dance.

—HARTFORD FRIENDS MEETING
CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING

Andrew Renwick Towl
1910–2012

We remember with gratitude the long, good life of Andrew Renwick Towl. As a Friend said at his memorial, “If some Friends show us who God is, Andy showed us the gentleness, reticence, and courtesy of God.”

Andy grew up on a farm in Nebraska, where his father, a surveyor who became mayor of Omaha, designed a farm to demonstrate how to preserve topsoil during Missouri River flooding. Andy never lost his connection to the fields; he plowed with horse teams as a child, and fondly recalled lying in the fields at night, listening to the corn grow. Though life took him to many decades of work as Harvard Business School's first Director of Case Development, to training professors from around the world in the case method he helped to develop, and to visiting some

37 countries in the process, he carried from this childhood a simple dignity, courtly kindness and quiet wisdom that touched everyone who met him.

Andy graduated in 1928 with a bachelor's degree from Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, which awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1952. He taught college in Nebraska for a couple of years before going to Columbia University in New York, from which he graduated in 1932 with a master's degree. Recruited by Harvard Business School as a research assistant, he graduated with a master's in business administration in 1936. He worked in banking for eight years in Philadelphia, and then returned to work until his retirement at the Harvard Business School where, in addition to his role as Director of Case Development, he created and ran the Intercollegiate Case Clearing House, which became an important publisher and was honored by regional, national and international case-writing associations as well as a Harvard endowment in his name.

While in Philadelphia, Andy discovered Friends. Joining a group for young adult Quakers, he met and courted Merrilie McAfee. Merrilie, who had grown up in Boulder, Colorado, on the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, wrote in a card that her children later prized, "Finally, I've met a man to match my mountains." Merrilie and Andy married in 1938, moved to the Boston area for Andy's new job at HBS, became active in Friends Meeting at Cambridge, and settled in Lexington, Massachusetts, where they raised their four sons, Bruce, Ralph, Roy and Ken.

Except when work took him out of the country, Andy spent as much time as possible with his family. "He was an immensely patient person," said his son Ken. "He spent Saturdays with us doing chores around the house or making toys from nuts and bolts and hardware down in the basement." Neighbors remember that the Towls' door was always open and that the household was full of love, good energy, hospitality and grace. In his neighborhood, as at his workplace and at FMC, Andy showed great interest in and care for young people, generously taking many under his wing. Many remember him as "like a father to me" or "like a second father to all three of us."

Andy and Merrilie's devotion to each other was legendary. When Merrilie died after 51 years of marriage, Andy put her wedding ring on his baby finger and wore it, along with his own, until his death. Friends often noticed a beautiful photograph that he, a skilled photographer, had taken of Merrilie in their Lexington kitchen, with a beam of light coming through the window and lighting up her features in a way reminiscent of the Dutch masters. When asked about the photo, Andy would respond, "She was the light." As one Friend said of Andy and Merrilie, "Light, gentleness, kindness suffused their lives."

Andy and Merrilie were faithful, creative and generous members of Friends Meeting at Cambridge and New England Yearly Meeting. Andy once said of his work at HBS that his primary task was to facilitate the work of others, and this was true of his presence in the Meeting and Yearly Meeting. At FMC, he served as presiding clerk, and later supported Merrilie in her work as presiding clerk. He and Merrilie were known for their hospitality to new attenders, with many a warm invitation home to Sunday lunch. Andy's last of many committees at FMC, in his 90s, was Personnel, where he helped to see the meeting through some very difficult times. And one of his last support groups was a loving circle around Kenyan Friend Elphas Wambani, in which Andy expressed consistent concern for Elphas's wellbeing once he returned from Episcopal Divinity School to his ministries among Kenyan Friends. In the Yearly Meeting, he served for more than 25 years on the Board of Managers of Investment Funds. In addition, Andy served as clerk of Permanent Board.

Andy and Merrilie were instrumental in the founding of the Cambridge Friends School, and Andy was active on the CFS board and at CFS events into his late 90s. As the school wrote at the time of his death, "he inspired the Quaker vision of this school for all of its 50 years."

One of Andy's consistent concerns at FMC was the size of the meeting; he worried when he felt that we had grown too large to be an effective meeting community, and was one of the big encouragers of the group that split off to form the now-thriving Fresh Pond Meeting. He also carried a concern for us each to contribute our fair share, whatever that might be, and for us to

nurture the next generations of Friends. He was a dependable visitor to Friends in hospitals and nursing homes, and he frequently was the person chosen to introduce FMC memorial meetings to those unfamiliar with Quaker worship and ways.

Andy lived a life consistent with the Quaker Testimonies without drawing attention to himself. Perhaps the most moving of the many examples of this was when a member of our community sexually abused a Meeting child. Andy was one of the faithful friends who visited this Friend regularly in prison and, when he was released, helped him find welcome at the Brookhaven worship group, where there are no children. Andy, along with other members of FMC, drove him to Sunday worship there for many years, and stayed in touch when the Friend moved away. Thus Andy practiced the Friends' commitment to honoring that of God in every person, and taught us how to be faithful to our Testimonies as Friends.

With his interest in what we were doing, thinking, learning and attempting, Andy was a mentor to many. We prized his "most gentle and non-controlling mentorship." At HBS, he mentored many a new dean. In a Quaker context, "Andy was the only person who ever elderd me, and it couldn't have been a better person." He was judicious without being judgmental. "When you are in an argument," he was known to say, "remember that you could always be wrong."

Andy often offered his mentorship in writing, and how grateful we are for Andy's ministry of notes! If you had a family event, a new challenge at meeting or at work, or, for Quakers, a message you had given in worship, you would receive a (usually handwritten) note from Andy engaging you, encouraging you, guiding you, and bidding you "Onward." Sometimes he even included one of his poems, for his creative work included poetry as well as photography. So many of us treasure the notes that Andy wrote to us over the years! As a man Andy befriended while in India said: "I used to wait for those letters ... it took me days to reflect on what he wrote. So rich. I saved them all."

When Andy finally moved out of the home he and Merrilie had shared, he chose Cadbury Commons because it was within walking distance of the Meeting and around the corner from the Friends School. He became known at Cadbury Commons for moving from table to table in the dining room, checking in on people, seeing how they were doing: "He had everyone in that building under his wing." When tension arose between two residents, Andy might help out: "Let's wait and see how it all goes," he would say. A woman whose husband went to Cadbury Commons with Parkinson's remembers that "having Andy down the hall made it all right." Perhaps what helped Andy keep this grounding and compassionate presence was more than half a century of worship and Quaker life.

In his last decade, Andy was preparing for the next transition. He described his experience during that epoch as "moving beyond words." For those who visited, there were long and comfortable periods of silence. He seemed to be living in a state of worship, spiraling into infinity. As part of his year-end message to family and friends in 2010, Andy wrote, "I sense more and more the infinity of BEING—and how that essence goes on beyond what words can define."

We feel the blessing of Andy's many decades among us.

—FRIENDS MEETING AT CAMBRIDGE
SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING

Epistles

General Epistle of New England Yearly Meeting

To Friends everywhere:

Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only... —James 1:22

New England Yearly Meeting gathered August 2–7, 2014, in beautiful Castleton, Vermont, for our 354th annual session, around the theme, “You are my witnesses.” In many activities throughout the week, we considered various aspects of the word “witness.”

Among early Friends, “witness” was often used to express the active presence of the Divine. Before we can be witnesses to the world, we need to submit ourselves to the unsettling and transforming Witness within.

That same Witness speaks to us through others, opening us to new and more compassionate understandings. Listening heals the brokenness that comes when our words and our actions don’t match. Then we can begin to teach by being ourselves teachable and by first listening to that Witness which is closer to us than we are to ourselves. We were moved by the words of a four-year-old Friend: “When you hear the Voice, you have to follow it.” When asked whether he had heard the Voice, he said, “No, but my brother has.”

We are blessed by the faithful labor of many Friends in our youth programs, which have produced a harvest of gifted and Spirit-led young adults who have matured into leaders. We are engaged in re-visioning and updating our Yearly Meeting structures. We are grateful for a new interim *Faith and Practice* as we continue to discern which of our practices, while familiar and comfortable, no longer have life in them. We struggle with corporate decisions over the best use of our resources to do God’s work. Change and new energy are both welcome and unsettling. We hope for renewal and for energetic spreading of the Good News. We must discern a new way of doing Truth.

We live with tension. We want to discern and do the will of God. We grieve over the destruction of the environment, violence, racism, and injustice. We want to live with equality and respect for all. We need to free ourselves from the belief that our differences do not exist. Instead, we need to embrace and respect those differences. We praise God for the burden and joy of our struggle to deepen our work on issues of sexuality and ethics in the context of our membership in Friends United Meeting and our inability to unite with its current personnel policy.

We are challenged to consider how we will use the proceeds of a recent sale of Yearly Meeting property. We are struggling with the implications of our repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. We long for transformation. If we are to be God’s witnesses in the world, what is our testimony?

Mystery God, help us remember that in your arms we can give ourselves freely to mourning, yearning, rejoicing, needing. Help us remember, in heights and depths, to call on whichever of your sweet names pierces our heart.

On Behalf of New England Friends,

JACQUELINE STILLWELL

PRESIDING CLERK

Young Adult Friends Epistle

To all Friends everywhere:

A time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. (Ecclesiastes 3:5)

New England Yearly Meeting Young Adult Friends have gathered from August 2–7 in Castleton, Vermont, for our Annual Sessions. We write to you with hope in our hearts.

There is so much life in our community. We see so much love for each other and so many wonderful gifts. Despite this, we are struggling. There is a heaviness to our gatherings because we are unclear of our way forward. We are burdened by our difficulty with the collective work our community is responsible for.

We are supported by a part-time coordinator but we are largely responsible for organizing our own gatherings and providing spiritual care for ourselves. For many years YAFs have had a Planning Committee and a Nurturing Committee. In January, we had to lay them down. There was no life to support these committees.

Nonetheless, there has been an outpouring of love and desire for our community to continue. We have such an ability to hold deep worship and to hold each other up. We love the times when we sing and when we laugh. Rich friendships are the basis of our fellowship. Joy is the reason we have come together.

The life in the YAF community is directed outwardly. We are accomplishing great things in so many different areas, in the ways we are individually led. Our Climate Working Group and our Wholeness Working Group are following their powerful ministries, effecting lasting change here with us and in the wider world.

YAFs can be found taking an active role in all levels of the leadership of NEYM. We are serving on and clerking many committees, holding offices, and working as paid staff. We are an integral part of the work our Yearly Meeting is doing. There are so many of us who are dedicated to NEYM's youth programs, and the energy and love they give us is tangible.

YAFs are bringing our voice to the international Friends community through their work with Quaker Voluntary Service, Friends World Committee for Consultation and the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, and many other gatherings. We are sharing our vision to influence the world. So many of us have work and ministries beyond what we do here. We effect change everywhere, with Friends and in the rest of our lives. YAFs are giving over their lives to explore new ways of giving and serving the Light in order to challenge all of us.

Our energies may be focused outwardly but having the YAF community is vital to supporting our work and ministry. The burdens of our everyday lives are difficult; we struggle to take on more burdens in organizing ourselves. We are grappling with questions of how to honor our ministries and leadings, as well as keep our community vibrant and cohesive. We are wrestling with how to build our individual faiths and how to build our faith in each other.

As the New England Yearly Meeting body has been struggling with dysfunction in its structure, this process has reminded us that we in the YAF community are the same body, we are the Yearly Meeting. We see the wider struggles around organization and over business and we see how they also exist within our own, smaller community. We have great difficulty in coming to unity. Our labored business drives away people who are younger and who are new to us. In our struggles, we do not know what our community will look like in the future.

Even in this uncertainty, we lift up our gifts. We celebrate the love we hold for each other. Our community's abundance is clear in what we share with the wider Yearly Meeting, in worship together, and in the time we share with each other.

We so greatly appreciate the work and gifts of our coordinator. Her work has been incredible, without which our community would have faded away. However, our needs are beyond what

our coordinator can do within the time she has for us. We are grateful for the support we receive from our Yearly Meeting and the resources that they provide us, financial and otherwise. Yet we are concerned that we are overburdening our coordinator and under-serving ourselves.

We need spiritual guidance. While our gifts are vibrant and our community is full of love, we are unsure of the way forward. We do not yet know how to rebuild our internal structures to best support our life and gifts as a community. We long for times of cohesion when we can take action together. We ask you to pray with us as we live into our transformation. Please hold us in the Light.

In faith,

YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

Where there is no guidance, a nation shall fall, but there
is safety in an abundance of counsel. (Proverbs 11:14)

Young Friends Epistle

Dear Friends everywhere:

This year 56 Young Friends met from Saturday, August 2nd to Thursday, August 7th at New England Yearly Meeting at Castleton College in Western Vermont. This year the theme of Sessions was “You are my witnesses.” Some Young Friends struggled with the change to Castleton from Bryant University, the previous location of NEYM. But by the end of the week we realized that, overall, what mattered most was the people and the community, not where we are on the map, and we look forward to returning to NEYM next year, wherever we may be.

Our first morning program dealt with healthy and unhealthy decisions that a community can make in the face of disruptions. We also talked about how in communities there are generally two groups: the mainstream, who are the most visible of the group, and the margins, the people who identify less with the mainstream. Through discussion and funny skits, which included knitting and pizza, we explored the way the two groups can work together.

We looked upon the theme of sessions through three programs led by guest speakers. The first was Niyonu Spann who ran a program which helped us think about issues in our community, such as transitions and difficulties with leadership, that we have been working through together. Using group discussion, song and video, all of which spoke to what Anna Deavere Smith calls “taking the broad jump to the other,” we explored the Sessions theme and being witnesses to others’ stories.

The next speaker was Jon Watts, a Philadelphia-based poet and songwriter, who came to talk to us about his spiritual journey with Quakerism. He started out of worship by performing a piece about his own spiritual journey. He then spoke to us at length about the feeling of trust and respect he felt at Quaker gatherings, that was lacking in his school environment. He talked about his struggle with Quakerism in college and made us consider the value of our tight-knit community versus living Quaker practice outside of Young Friends. That night Jon shared his gifts with the entire Yearly Meeting during an all-ages concert.

Our third and final guest was Peterson Toscano, an actor, playwright, comedian, and one-man show. Peterson introduced himself, took questions and proceeded to perform excerpts from his work which included pieces from *Doing Time in the Homo No Mo Halfway House* and *Transfigurations—Transgressing Gender in the Bible*. At the end of his funny and deeply moving performance, Young Friends were grateful for the opportunity to witness his ministry, as well as

the ministries of Jon and Niyonu. These programs taught us to understand one another by simply witnessing each others' vulnerabilities and light.

A midweek trip to Bomoseen lake allowed Young Friends to enjoy rest, relaxation, frisbee, swimming and other games. Some Young Friends met with rising 9th graders who will join our group in the fall. This gathering discussed the transition into Young Friends from Junior High Yearly Meeting and what it is like to be a Young Friend.

Yearly Meeting provides us the opportunity to gather in worship with a concern for business. This year, although we all approved the members on the Ministry and Counsel slate, some Friends struggled with the introduction of the concept of co-clerks. Even though our discussions were difficult, we affirmed the important work of the Nominating Committee and our community.

As is traditional, Young Friends hosted the NEYM coffee house on Wednesday. Coffee house is an intergenerational variety show that was originally the finals for the Bible memorization contest. There were numerous acts including singing, comedy, music, disruption and various kinds of performative art. Afterwards, we enjoyed a loud and lively dance that ended early the next morning.

As always, Sessions was amazing and enlightening. We are incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to come together these past five days, and look forward to seeing each other in the upcoming retreats over the year.

In the light,

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING YOUNG FRIENDS, 2014

Junior High Yearly Meeting Epistle

Dear Friends:

Our group of 26 junior highers gathered for New England Yearly Meeting at Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont, from Saturday, August 2nd to Thursday, August 7th, 2014. After being at Bryant University for 15 years, everyone had to make their own adjustments to Castleton. Our group shared many laughs as the hallways surrounding our "Grotto" (the affectionate name for our space) flooded like the Nile river, as we heard the voices from up on high discussing budgetary allowances, and saw the presence of a bat in one of our rooms and some very nice people who we now know were Quakers showering and brushing their teeth in the bathrooms adjacent to our beloved "Grotto."

The theme for Junior High Yearly Meeting (JHYM) this year was "You Are My Witnesses." The theme was explored in a variety of ways, but most memorably in an artistic project where each one of us made a plaster model of one of our hands. We talked about how bearing witness to what our hands can do is also a reflection on our own potential and what we will do with our hands throughout our life. We were all very happy with how they turned out and are excited to show them to friends, family, and other Quakers at NEYM.

We also explored the theme by having a panel of adults from the wider meeting come and speak about their experiences with witnessing. The experiences of each of the speakers were very different and included things such as doing peacemaker work in prisons, using a lobster boat to block a huge shipment of coal to a coal plant, working for transgender rights, and living on the streets of New York City. Even though every panelist had different personal experiences, they all expressed in their own way how being led by their inner light led to the greatest challenges, but also the greatest rewards.

A very important experience for the community was to have care of the intergenerational worship on Sunday morning. We had no predetermined messages because we felt that we were able to trust in our past experience with worship within the community. We had two people share very touching messages and felt very connected to the entire Yearly Meeting in the silence. One

important thing, among many, that we took away from the experience was that the silence in meeting for worship is just as precious as the vocal messages.

We were blessed as a community to be in the presence of wonderful music that allowed us to witness ourselves and others amidst tremendous love and light. Kara Price, an elder and longtime staffer for JHYM in the past, came to our morning program and shared her music ministry with us. She began by saying that the “G-g-g-g-God” word is sometimes difficult for people to relate to. Kara reminded us that whatever language we use to describe that which is at the deepest part of us, whether it be God, Jesus, Light, Buddha, or anything, we are all “having the same conversation.” Kara’s music and her message represented one of the truest and most important parts of JHYM: That we can all be in a safe place, and we all have the ability to reach inside and embrace the light within ourselves and others.

We were also blessed by the presence of Jon Watts, a Quaker singer and songwriter, who performed for all of New England Yearly Meeting on Tuesday night. We felt that we could identify with him because he was younger than other performers in the past and is pursuing his Quaker ministry in a way that is unique to him. His music was met with mixed reviews, which we saw as an affirmation that he stands by his art no matter what other people think about it.

We had a lot of really fun activities that balanced out the more serious parts of Yearly. We spent a beautiful day at Bomoseen State Park where we went swimming, played volleyball, Frisbee, did body art, and had a traditional game of “Apples to Apples.” Back on campus, we made our own version of 4-square called “Tower of Power.” We also had a great time in the JHYM “Grotto” during lounge. We had free pizza, dance-dance revolution, and music.

All in all, it was a very thought-provoking, fun, and challenging week for JHYM, and we are excited to meet again next year.

All the best.

Junior Yearly Meeting (5–6) Epistle

To Friends Everywhere,

Greetings from the 5th and 6th graders of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. We did a lot of goofing around, so with all the seriousness of a group of 10 and 11-year-olds, we have decided to write our epistle after the manner of the Jedi Master, Yoda.

United, we were, at Castleton State College in Vermont, from August 2–7, 2014. Struggled, we did, with a new location. Displeased, many were with changes in campus and security. Able to enter our dorms without assistance, we were NOT. Leave activities without a sponsor, we could not.

Played, we did, with parachutes, balls, Beanie Babies, and hula hoops. Yoga, we practiced. Talked and listened, we did, in large and small groups. Meditate, we did, with clay and our lovely Friend, Gretchen Baker Smith. Created, we did, a mandala of seeds, and intentionally ugly art from paper, color, glue and scissors. Ice cream, we made.

Learned from Cuban Friends, we did. Singing we did, at morn and eve.

Played for us, did Jon Watts. Disturbing, some ideas we found.

Endeavored we did, to live our faith, by acting on the golden rule, and kindness giving. Community, we built. Fun, we had.

Thanks we give, to Gretchen Baker Smith, Joseph Kevin Michael Patrick Lee, Betty Ann Lee, our staffers, and many others.

May the Force of Love be with you.

EPISTLE COMMITTEE: ARI, JOLI, RAVEN, ZIKA, EPISTLE COMMITTEE, AND LEON, SOPHIE, JONAH, SERAFINA, ADDISON, LILY, AND LUCY AND STAFF FROM NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING’S 5th AND 6th GRADE GROUP.

Junior Yearly Meeting (3–4) Epistle

Dear Friends around the world,

We are Living Our Faith.

What does it mean to be Quaker?

Simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, acceptance, and a sense of connection

Greeter, care of meeting, and worship

Talking circles and silence

God can speak through anyone

Joys, sorrows, concerns, roses and thorns

First Day School, fellowship, and potluck

Committees, committees, committees for clearness, oversight and marriage

No swearing because the truth is more holy

JYM retreats and New England Yearly Meeting

This week we have lived our faith through JYM ball, walks in the woods, making Quaker puppets, creating a bean mandala, making ice cream, singing, dancing, talking, coffee house, having fun and being together. Some of us went to the Jon Watts performance.

We will leave you where we started. ...What makes you happy about being a Quaker? How do you live your faith?

BRENNON, AINSLEY, SAGE, MARY ALICE, ROBERT, CHLOE, CARRIGAN, SEBASTIAN, JULIAN, MADDIE, OWEN, EMMA, CLARE, ALEX, SONIA, RUBY AND LEAH.

LOVE FROM THE 3rd AND 4th GRADERS OF NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE, CASTLETON, VERMONT, AUGUST 2–7, 2014

Junior Yearly Meeting (K–2) Epistle

How do we live our faith? We started out by getting to know each other. We made puzzle people that looked like each one of us and all fit together. We each made a tree and put fruit on it that told what we want to grow inside us.

We did other art projects like making houses out of boxes, making sock puppets, and decorating pizza boxes to use in a relay race. We had fun making bubbles, painting shells, playing games, having picnics and singing songs.

Two friends visited from Cuba. We sang songs for them and learned songs that kids in Cuba sing. Kevin Lee visited us, too, and played a lot of fun parachute games.

We have had a great week at Yearly Meeting. We have had fun playing and learning together, seeing old friends and making new ones.

7 EIGHTH MONTH 2014

Childcare Epistle

To all Friends everywhere,

As the youngest members of the New England Yearly Meeting, a community of Friends all under the age of five years, we bore witness to the infinite and loving spirit from which we all spring. We showered the adults in our midst with toothless smiles, abundant trust, and the blessings of a peaceful, playful, inclusive community. We were generous with our peers, curious about the world and creative in our play and expression.

Our favorite activities included cooking in the kitchen, loading and unloading piles of beans with front loaders and dump trucks, stacking and crashing blocks, splashing in the water table, shaking rattles, exploring moving parts of toys, smiling at everyone we met, hearing lots of stories, painting and making sticker pictures and playing modified ping-pong with paddles and a big, soft ball.

One of our adult Friends observed that we are one of the happiest groups of Friends in which they have had the pleasure of being. Another adult Friend who came through our play space to get to his room, said that we help him to feel better when the day is hard. We were so pleased that our witness to the blessedness of life made so many adults happy to be with us, because we love them all so!

Witnessing Love, we are your youngest Friends in

CHILD CARE

Epístola de Los Amigos Cuáqueros en Cuba

Epístola de la 87 Asamblea General de la Junta Anual de Los Amigos Cuáqueros en Cuba.

Gibara 22 de Febrero del 2014

Queridos Hermanos(as):

Todas las Juntas Mensuales confluimos desde diferentes regiones a este pueblo de tejas y espumas marina, llamado Gibara, con nuestros espíritus lleno de gozo, risas y abrazos abrimos el camino para así comenzar “La 87 Asamblea de la Junta Anual de la Iglesia de los Amigos Cuáqueros en Cuba”, confirmando y respondiendo al llamado de “Ser el cuerpo viviente de Cristo”, convicción que nos ha guiado durante todos los espacios celebrativos.

Es una oportunidad de estar juntos, reafirmar quienes somos, que estamos haciendo y hacia dónde vamos como Iglesia Cuáquera Cubana, con nuestras raíces afianzadas en una historia llena de testimonios, que fortalecen un crecimiento espiritual y nos indica la senda a tomar, para trazar pautas en medio de la sociedad donde vivimos. Esparcir las semillas, que proporcionarán en el presente y futuro, los frutos del acompañamiento, sostenimiento, y construcción de una iglesia comprometida y contextualizada.

Damos gracias a Dios por la continuidad del programa del Instituto Cuáquero Cubano de Paz (ICCP), por ser este quien auspició un taller internacional del Programa de Diálogo e Intercambio (DEP), sobre cultura de paz y violencia urbana; por estar contribuyendo en su preparación a los líderes de nuestra iglesia, y de otras denominaciones en el tema de cuaquerismo, transformación de conflicto y la construcción de una cultura de paz, así como por su incidencia en las diferentes comunidades.

Nace: “La Junta Mensual de Pueblo Nuevo”, a quien la Junta Anual, como madre que da luz a una nueva hija, la acoge, y se siente responsable.

Recibimos con gran afecto a las hermanos(as) del Puente de Nueva Inglaterra, provenientes de la Junta Mensual de Monadnock y Hanover, con quienes hemos intercambiado, cultos permeados de la luz, y experiencias de amor y fe.

Centrados en la misión a la que nos convoca el Espíritu del Señor, de servir, sanar, anunciar, y romper las cadenas, que nos atan e impiden acudir al clamor de Cristo que se dibuja en cada rostro humano y una naturaleza que gime, nos unimos a los Cuáqueros(as) del mundo en la construcción de una realidad sin sufrimiento, basada en la paz, la justicia y el amor.

En la Verdad y la luz

ODALIS HERNÁNDEZ CRUZ

PRESIDENTA DE LA JUNTA ANUAL DE CUBA

Cuba Yearly Meeting Epistle

*Epistle of the 87th General Assembly of the Yearly Meeting of
Friends, Quakers, in Cuba
Gibara, February 22, 2014*

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

All Monthly Meetings from different regions gathered together in this town of roof tiles and sea foam, called Gibara. With our spirits full of joy and laughter and embraces we began on the path to the 87th Assembly of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Quakers, in Cuba. We affirmed and answered the call to “Be the living body of Christ,” a conviction which has guided us during all these moments of celebration.

This is an opportunity to be together, to reaffirm who we are, what we are doing, and where we are going as the Cuban Quaker Church, with our roots deep in a history full of testimonies which strengthen spiritual growth and show us the path to take to make a mark in the society where we live: to scatter seeds which will bring forth in the present and the future the fruits of upholding and accompanying each other, and to build a church which is present and committed to its condition.

We thank God for the continuation of the program of the Cuban Quaker Peace Institute, which sponsored an international workshop of the Dialogue and Exchange Program on urban violence and the culture of peace. We thank God that we are contributing to the preparation of leaders of our church and other denominations in the themes of Quakerism, conflict transformation, and the building of a culture of peace; we are also grateful that it is taking place in different communities.

The Monthly Meeting of Pueblo Nuevo is born, which the Yearly Meeting embraces and feels responsible for, like a mother who gives birth to a new daughter.

We received with much affection brothers and sisters of the Bridge with New England, coming from Monadnock and Hanover monthly meetings, with whom we have shared worship saturated with light, and experiences of love and faith.

We are centered on the mission to which the Spirit of the Lord calls us: to serve and heal, to proclaim, to break the chains which bind us and prevent us from responding to the cry of Christ, which is visible in every human face and in the groans of suffering nature. We unite with the Quakers of the world in building a reality without suffering, based in peace, justice, and love.

In Truth and Light,

ODALIS HERNÁNDEZ CRUZ

PRESIDING CLERK OF CUBA YEARLY MEETING

Staff Reports

Yearly Meeting Secretary

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the clear water, I may):
I shan't be gone long—You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's too young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I shan't be gone long—You come too.

—FROM "THE PASTURE," BY ROBERT FROST

As I complete my first full year of service as Yearly Meeting Secretary, we continue in a season of challenge and transformation. In this written report I will focus on sharing key elements of the work I have prioritized since we last gathered. I look forward to reflecting together on our spiritual condition during Sessions in Vermont.

Building and Energizing Relationships in Faithful Community

A primary focus of my work in the past year has been on growing and energizing relationships. I made more than twenty visits to local meetings this year, and have participated in dozens of quarterly gatherings, committee meetings, and other events. I've counselled and accompanied Friends in leadership roles, whether in Yearly Meeting committees or in our local meetings. Through all of this, I hope to lift up and encourage the ways the Spirit is moving among us throughout the six New England states. I have sought to understand and connect with the many ways we are New England Yearly Meeting. We are growing into a shared understanding of being one yearly meeting, and of the ministry that together we bring forth. I have worked to connect Friends carrying similar concerns, to encourage and support and deepen those connections. As examples of shapes this work has taken, I've shared in the ministry of our youth retreat staff, facilitated programming on Sabbath and the spirituality of our time for our young adults, brought messages at our pastoral meetings, led a weekend workshop and facilitated conversations with monthly meetings discerning their present and future witness and ministry, helped envision new collaborations with Friends' organizations in support of the life of NEYM, participated

in our "Friends & the Internet Day" and "New Meetings Day" events, and convened video conferences of Friends with financial stewardship responsibilities in their local meetings to share challenges and best practices.

Staff Supervision and Team Building

Last fall, with support from my supervisor, Fritz Weiss, as well as the other members of Coordinating & Advisory Committee and Personnel Committee, the staff completed our first cycle of a comprehensive performance appraisal and work planning process. As part of the annual staff performance appraisals, we reviewed, standardized and revised every staff job description, made recommendations to adjust workload or refocus priorities to better meet the needs of the Yearly Meeting, and incorporated that learning into a new and more integrated staff work plan for FY2014. It was especially wonderful to welcome the presence of Gretchen Baker-Smith as a full-time part of the staff community this year, and to more fully include Sara Hubner and Kathleen Wooten when possible.

In the coming year, I look forward to seeing the fruits of this investment of attention to redesigning a more streamlined and coordinated evaluation and work planning process to help staff meet the needs and nourish the growth of the Yearly Meeting. I also look forward to communicating those plans widely so that more and more of us can be involved and aware of the many ways our shared resources—especially our investment in staff time—support the life and ministry of Friends in New England.

Strengthening Our Toolkit in Support of Ministry

Our long-awaited new web site (neym.org) was launched in early 2014. While this was a

major step, we have only begun to engage the potential of what this set of tools can do to help us communicate, share and reach out, both across the Quaker community and beyond. Helping our committees and many other constituencies throughout NEYM more fully move into our new online home will be a major focus in the coming year.

We are on track to complete the implementation of our new integrated database by the end of September 2014. Built using Salesforce, a cloud-based industry-standard constituent relationship management (CRM) resource, the new database will help us to collect, maintain, and ensure the security and usefulness of the vital information that connects us. We are linking the major technological tools we use to administer the programs and data of NEYM: our web site (built using Drupal), our accounting software (QuickBooks Online), our e-mail newsletter solution (Vertical Response) and a single database that will be used to administer the work of NEYM year-round, including managing registration for Annual Sessions and other events. This will save staff time and offer new ways to connect, communicate, consult and share. A further explanation of the database process can be found in C&A's Financial Sustainability Progress Report (*See 45 for the Report*).

The leadership, skill, passion and resourcefulness of our Communications Director Jeff Hipp made both of these major projects possible. Jeff's devotion to connecting and equipping the ministry of our faith community deserves our deep thanks.

Transition and Newness for Annual Sessions

This year has brought great changes to our work supporting Annual Sessions. As we transition from Rhode Island to Vermont, we also welcomed a new Sessions Clerk, John Humphries, more fully supported the planning and logistics work through Kathleen Wooten's service as a year-round part-time Sessions Coordinator, created a new online registration process, and took a leap of faith together in financing Sessions using the new "Pay-As-Led" approach. Working with Kathleen, John, and the whole Sessions Committee has been a joy this year, as together we rise to the challenge

of organizing what is consistently among the largest and most complex yearly meeting gatherings in the world. John and Kathleen have given more than could ever have been expected, and I trust we will all experience many fruits of their labors as we gather at Castleton State College this year.

Building Capacity for Development & Fundraising

In keeping with plans shared at Sessions last year, this year we invested time to build our capacity in development and fundraising. This work consisted primarily of supporting the work of the Development Committee, improving our data management and administrative processes, and strengthening relationships with and learning from donors. I partnered with the Development Committee in the creation of fundraising appeals and the first draft of a new basic publication describing who we are and what we do as NEYM in our many facets—something the committee is excited to share with you and your meeting beginning at Sessions. We are also building our capacity in terms of training to do this work well. I am grateful in this work for the expert perspective and mentoring of Jennie Isbell (Mt. Toby), who will bring her expertise in Quaker leadership and development to lead the Development retreat & training this October. As you can read elsewhere in the Advance Documents, our development work is making progress.

A Future for Our Archives

While progress has been slower than initially hoped, the Archives Committee is doing great work on our behalf. Supported by Carol Forsythe (Putney), a professional project manager specializing in the digitization of historical documents, the Archives Committee is preparing a Request for Proposals to help meet the needs of the NEYM Archives for the future. In the near future, the committee plans to solicit input from local meetings, to ensure that the RFP benefits from the seasoning of many Friends as we deepen relationship with this treasure in our care—a part of our living history. The Committee is also preparing recommendations on a refocused future role for the currently vacant NEYM Archivist position,

monitoring the current needs of the Archives while they are in transition, and assessing options for possible sale or auction of a valuable and recently discovered non-Quaker book in our collection. Expect to hear more soon from the Archives Committee.

Closing the New England Friends Home

As of this writing, all remaining outstanding matters relating to the closing of the New England Friends Home have been resolved, save one: The continuing claim against NEYM by the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (MA DUA) based on the alleged liability of the Home for unpaid unemployment contributions prior to its closure in 2011. At the direction of Permanent Board, I engaged legal counsel with relevant expertise to assist us in resolving this matter. The amount of the outstanding claim has now been reduced from more than \$500,000 to just over \$29,000. While the details remain to be confirmed, I expect to present a possible option for resolution to the Permanent Board on August 2, with the expectation that we could subsequently share a further update to inform our discernment at Sessions.

Toward Financial Sustainability

Under the guidance of Coordinating & Advisory Committee, working closely with our Treasurer Ben Guaraldi and Accounts Manager Frederick Martin, I have supported the Finance, Personnel and Development Committees in carrying forward Permanent Board's charge to help the Yearly Meeting grow toward financial sustainability for the life and ministries of NEYM. A more in-depth report on steps taken this year and progress to date can be found in the Financial Sustainability Progress Report submitted by Coordinating & Advisory (*See page 45*).

Gratitude for Faithful Service

In closing, I want to recognize the enormous

contributions made by our skilled, passionate and devoted staff, and to thank each of them for their patience and willingness to accompany me as I continue to learn how I can understand, nourish and help draw out the ministry of our beloved Yearly Meeting. The challenges of this year have been in many ways extraordinary, and the flexibility, stamina, and willingness to sacrifice to help our Yearly Meeting grow and thrive are an example. While we are making progress, we have more to do to make the workload of staff sustainable, and to build a culture that affirms the uniqueness of the role paid staff serve while affirming the Friends who serve in these roles as full participating members of our faith community with gifts and perspectives to be shared and valued beyond simply doing what they are paid to do. Observing them in action in countless ways, I can affirm that their work in our midst is ministry. We are blessed.

I also want to extend my deep appreciation and gratitude to the members of Coordinating & Advisory Committee this year: Jackie Stillwell, presiding clerk; Holly Baldwin, clerk of Permanent Board; Margaret Cooley, clerk of NEYM Ministry & Counsel; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; and Fritz Weiss, Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary. All of these Friends have devoted countless hours of care, discernment and hard work responding to the diverse and constantly changing needs of our wider Yearly Meeting. They share their gifts generously, modelling a love for Love's continuing work among us. They have been invaluable mentors, partners, and co-laborers with me as I seek to be useful.

Thank you, Friends, for the opportunity to serve alongside you in this work of the Spirit. Thank you—each of you—for sharing your gifts.

In the spring,

—NOAH BAKER MERRILL

Accounts Manager

Truth may be the primary spiritual goal of the accounts manager, as I have said in past

reports, but handling money truthfully as it flows in and out is really about communication

and relationship. In our human world, we must be careful about claiming to have the absolute truth in isolation; Friends quickly learned that a group provided better discernment of truth over time than potentially mistaken individual leadings. Likewise, our financial accounts must be supervised and verified, reviewed, and published, by our Treasurer, Secretary, and finance committee. Living truth, then, involves relationship, as financial transactions consist ultimately in trust between people; money is fluid, flowing between people and groups like streams of water.

To enact this trust and nourish this life, our accounts must have the right combination of reservoirs and channels, receiving and holding enough money for later, letting enough flow in and out, directing it where it should go, and all responding to the needs and decisions of the Yearly Meeting as a body, and the individuals

who contribute to and carry out the work. Our longer-term work in the finance office this year related to improving these channels of communication. Our hard-working Treasurer and Finance Committee have been preparing meaningful new types of financial reports. Some technical improvements in the works will simplify work flow for other staff. As information technology changes in the world around us, we need to maintain our tools that interface with that world, and the new web site and database are providing the opportunity to update some of our money-handling tools, especially around accepting credit cards and online donations, to ensure both security and responsive ease-of-use. I am glad to help monitor and facilitate this flow, part of the life-giving relationships we nourish—and the truths we discern—in our community of faith.

—FREDERICK MARTIN

Communications Director

In the past year, I have accomplished a great deal in service to our community. I am proud of the work I have been able to do, and have become aware of the need to seek greater balance in my life and work.

A New Web Site

In February, we launched the new *neym.org*, a multi-year labor of love, leading, and learning for me. While I have designed perhaps a half-dozen web sites before, I had never been involved in building a site of this size (1,500 pages and counting), nor one that required this degree of organizational “enterprise” architecture—in other words, a site that needed a scalable and manageable means of offering each of our many (30+) committees and programs a set of web pages and tools to support their ministries.

The construction of *neym.org* was mostly done internally—my site building, fellow staff and volunteers migrating existing content after the architecture was created, plus some support from a handful of talented, generous, and Quaker-friendly web professionals. One of these professionals, who has significant experience building complex sites for nonprofit

organizations, estimated that an organization should expect to pay \$70–\$80,000 for a web consultant to build a site with the features of *neym.org*. We contracted out less than \$2,500 worth of support and achieved the rest through internal resources. This major progress has been made possible through my working with the Yearly Meeting Secretary to refocus some of my responsibilities, recognizing that this position is more than a full-time job as currently structured.

In the coming year, we will continue to build upon the solid foundation of the new web site, integrating more of our programs, committees and users into full access and use of our new online home. We understand the frustration resulting from the pace of this change while recognizing that with our limited resources we have needed to prioritize other important needs over this work for the last few months. I thank those Friends who have expressed both eagerness to use the web site *and* patience with the less-than-ideal situation. Please know that providing access to the web site for your important ministry is in my heart. I look forward to working with you on this as the new fiscal year begins.

A New Database

At the Yearly Meeting Secretary's direction, since the launch of the new web site I have had primary responsibility for managing the development of our new database. The first phase of this project—facilitating registration and logistics for these Annual Sessions—is nearly complete at the time I write this report. We currently expect the transition to the new system as a whole to be completed by October 1, the beginning of our new fiscal year. The platform we are building upon, called *Salesforce*, provides improvements in speed, flexibility, security and ease of integration with the other systems that we use to manage the operations of NEYM, including the new web site. The Salesforce community is also strongly supportive of non-profit organizations. Through a series of grants, we have received free licenses for industry-standard software that would otherwise cost the Yearly Meeting more than \$35,000 annually.

So What?

We have built a more engaging, informative and functional web site and provided what we have heard is an improved Sessions registration experience. While the benefits of these projects may not be immediately apparent to all, we believe that creating these new systems now will help our Yearly Meeting to do our work

more effectively and amplify our witness in the months and years to come. We are building the foundation to improve communication, access to information, connection and participation throughout New England—things Friends have long wished for the Yearly Meeting to be able to provide.

A New Life

There is one other complex and exciting responsibility I have taken on this past year. On December 15, Elias was born to Jessica and me. I enjoyed a wonderful near six weeks of paternity leave. Since then, I've returned to working an average of 55 hours a week, at times approaching 80 hours in this extraordinary time of transition. I love serving this community. Given my new responsibilities as a parent, however, in the coming months the Yearly Meeting Secretary and I will be continuing to work together to discern how to meet both the needs of the Yearly Meeting and the needs of my family. Already we have taken steps to shift some of my administrative and logistical responsibilities to other staff. The proposed restoration of half-time administrative support being presented in the proposed FY2015 budget would represent a significant step in this direction. I ask for your prayers as we all carry forward our work and hopes for our faith community.

—JEFFREY HIPPE

Friends Camp Director

It has been a good year at Friends Camp. Over last the year we have had many important milestones and satisfying completions.

On the practical side, our new web site was completed in January. The web site now has a simpler design, a section for current new or events, and the pages are adjustable so that they can be seen on different-size screens. In June, we completed a new Cook's Cabin. This seasonal two-room cabin, with a bathroom and large screened-in porch, is a much-needed improvement to the Friends Camp campus. Other 2014 improvements include the following: two new wood sheds, major alterations to the grade of the waterfront path for erosion control, a new energy-saving on-demand water heater

for three bathrooms, many important upgrades in the electrical system, and reconfigurations to the health hut to conform to state regulations.

The Friends Camp ad hoc committee on governance has completed a report on ways to improve the nominating system for the Camp Committee, defining responsibilities of the Permanent Board/Yearly Meeting, setting up the internal governance structure of the Camp Committee, and the role and supervision of Camp Director. It is hoped that this report will be approved and that the implementation of the new governance plan will start in the fall of this year.

As a way of continually improving our commitment to safety and to the best practices

in the youth camp profession, we have made hundreds of very important changes in policies, rules, trainings, maintenance procedures, and risk management to conform to the over 300 standards that are part of the accreditation process for the America Camp Association. The accreditation visit will be in July, and notice of accreditation will be given in October of this year.

We have also expanded the camp's ability to serve youth from a wider range of incomes and backgrounds. This year we will have even more youth from our collaborations with the Keller Family Fund, the Maine Children's Home, and the Codman Academy Charter Public School.

In 2013, we began a new program called One Child at a Time. This summer, the fund will offer camperships to 10 children with an incarcerated parent.

The enrollment for the 2014 summer are about the same as 2013, with the middle school and high school age sessions being full or almost full and the elementary school age Jones session having room for several more campers.

As I start my eleventh summer at Friends Camp, I continue to be thankful and very blessed to provide leadership and stewardship to Friends Camp.

—NAT SHED

Information Management Assistant

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve the Yearly Meeting in a new way. It is a joy to put my office skills to work for my Quaker family.

On one hand, I can't believe it's been more than a year since I started this job; on the other, it seems ages since I was struggling to understand the database and use Google Drive.

How do I spend my 8 hours a week?

- Responding to requests from staff and other Friends around the Yearly Meeting for mailing lists and other information
- E-mailing messages to monthly and quarterly meetings, committees, and other groups
- Updating the Yearly Meeting calendar and adding new content to the NEYM web site
- Proofreading articles for the web site and for the New England Friend, Advance Documents for Sessions, and the Minute Book
- Compiling meeting statistics

My primary focus is the database. This is where we keep track of monthly meeting information, Yearly Meeting committee membership, quarterly and monthly meeting leadership, and all of the individuals who make up

New England Yearly Meeting. It's also where we generate e-mails requesting information updates and statistical reports and sharing news about upcoming events and it's the source of our mailing lists.

I'm very much looking forward to learning our new database software and being better able to keep our information up to date and to extract the information when it's requested.

I enjoy the variety of tasks this job entails, and also find it challenging. I'm constantly "changing gears"—organizing my to-do list and my office; keeping track of the bits and pieces of information that come to me for the database, e-mail lists, and calendar; and tracking the amount of time I spend on various tasks. And I only have 8 hours.

Probably the most challenging aspect of the job is that I work only 8 hours a week. It's difficult for me to maintain some kind of continuity in the work, to put down a task and then pick it up again where I left off the following week. At times I feel as though I'm handling thousands of jigsaw puzzle pieces and they aren't all part of the same puzzle! And some things just don't get done.

Three things I will say about this work.

One, I can get totally absorbed in repetitive tasks such as updating the calendar. This may simply mean that I'm easily amused.

Two, you *can* teach an old dog new tricks. I've learned several new Google "apps" in

addition to using the database and helping Jeff Hipp get content ready on the new Yearly Meeting web site.

Three, I truly enjoy being in touch with all of you and responding to your requests for vari-

ous kinds of help. And I especially enjoy being able to put faces with names, and names with faces, as I get to know New England Friends in new ways.

—SARA HUBNER

Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator

This was my first year serving as the full time JYM-JHYM Coordinator for NEYM. We successfully held 11 retreats in 9 months including a first-ever 8th Grade Retreat.

The children and parents were incredibly kind and supportive to me as the new Coordinator of JYM. Over half of the JYM attenders were in 2nd and 3rd grade—both a blessing and a healthy challenge—meaning that a *lot* of JYM felt new! We made Super-Quaker capes at the first retreat and tenderly processed how we were all making a Leap of Faith. Each retreat brought us a more comfortable and joy-filled rhythm; I trust that our relationship will continue to grow in the year ahead. Registrations for the last 2 JYM Retreats were over 40, resulting in waiting lists (both a delight and a concern). At the same time, having sufficient staffing numbers was a constant struggle in JYM; I came within days of cancelling the May Retreat due to a lack of staff.

While it was my 1st year coordinating JYM, it was my 10th leading JHYM. Our rock-solid group of 30 or so JH'ers and 10 adult staffers continued to build a truly intergenerational community that is *bigger than all of us*. In an effort to keep 8th graders engaged, we launched an experiment to give the JH'ers more responsibility and leadership. At each retreat, working groups of JH'ers wrote small group questions, paired people to sit together for meals, created discussion topics for meal-times, led grace, and discerned program flow. They shared messages in worship that were deep, honest and centered. Throughout the year they mindfully considered how to be ever

more inclusive as a community. I feel a deep sense of gratitude and love for the JHYM parents who have sometimes eldred me (in the best sense of Friends) and been particularly supportive.

I hold enormous love and awe for my staffers in both JYM and JHYM. They are some of the most dedicated, gifted, and skilled youth workers to be found anywhere. Not only do they share their time and energy with our children and teens—they arrive open to the grace and wisdom within the young people themselves. I often look at them all and think of the phrase describing the early Christians: “See how they love one another.”

It was a challenging year for me, transitioning from the partnership in ministry with Kevin Lee, melding the JYM and JHYM supplies and databases, learning to drive the retreat trailer, doing the administrative and communication work for both programs, creating fresh content, and keeping up with the retreat schedule pace, all while trying to remain centered for a significant amount of pastoral care between retreats. The circle of fellowship and love within the NEYM staff was a huge support and source of inspiration, and I am deeply grateful. I can't judge yet whether this one full-time position is sustainable for me over the long haul. I know that this year was really like first-year teaching. I trust this coming year will be easier.

Thank you, dear Friends, for the support and love surrounding these communities. Onward we sail.

—GRETCHEN BAKER-SMITH

 Religious Education & Outreach Coordinator

A new vitality is taking hold in New England Yearly Meeting. Barton Glover, Orono, and Plainfield meetings have children again. Providence, Wellesley, and Vassalboro meetings are experiencing the joy of new families, increasing their established First Day Schools.

A mantra for my work this year has been “Meet people where they are, but don’t leave them where you found them.” Once Friends would have waited for newcomers to find their meetings and greeted them warmly, but left them to figure out how to take the first steps on their Quaker journey. We are coming into a time of much more active, intentional ministry. I am living into this new mode of heightened engagement by making more connections through visits, offering more concrete assistance, and creating space for fresh conversations that open the way for further growth. My goal is to make local meeting visits twice each month. This year, I made 66% more visits than the year before.

NEYM is at the forefront of Quaker outreach and revitalization. I have engaged actively with Brent Bill, Friends General Conference’s New Meetings Project Coordinator. Beginning last October, we facilitated three conversations called “Friends in a Time of Spiritual Awakening” at Wellesley, Portland, and Hartford Meetings. Jumping off from Diana Butler Bass’ book, *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*, Friends imagined what meetings would look like if they became Guilds for Spiritual Practice. Inspired by these conversations, I am creating a series of Spiritual Practice Cards. These cards offer simple, straightforward ways to take up a spiritual practice which in turn sets the stage for Friends having their own experience of the Light within. Brent Bill and I, along with other staff and members of NEYM Ministry & Counsel, organized the New Meetings Day in January and Friends & the Internet in May.

The Quaker Outreach Pilot Project that will begin in August 2014 will explore new ways to support local meetings. With funding from the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund, I am

going to partner intensively with two meetings encouraging their outreach and welcoming efforts over the course of 18 months. The funding will allow me to provide a menu of outreach supports, some for free and some on a cost-sharing basis, from which a local meeting may customize their outreach strategy. I will walk along with the process to encourage and undergird their efforts to make their presence known and acquaint newcomers to the Quaker way.

I partnered with the NEYM FWCC and Puente de Amigos Committees and Susan Furry and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler to produce a Spanish translation of the First Day School curriculum *Faith & Play*. This met an expressed need of our Latin American Friends and drew us into rich working relationships. As Friends came together to accomplish this task, a rising sense of our Community of Practice as Quaker religious educators took hold. I am helping to found the Quaker RE Collaborative to give shape and support to this community. Its reach and welcome will be international and enfold Friends from every branch of the Quaker world. Our first meeting is at Pendle Hill in August.

The Quaker Youth Education Committee partnered with Wellesley Meeting to offer an FGC Playing in the Light training in March. Ten Friends from within and beyond NEYM attended. The Committee offered a training on Finding Families in October and offered oversight on the material I posted on the new NEYM web site.

I contributed to the wider Quaker conversation this year. I was invited to speak on “Friends in a Time of Spiritual Awakening” at FGC’s Spiritual Deepening Consultation in March and on “Curriculum Development Now: Towards a Contemporary Stewardship of the Quaker Message” at the Quakers Uniting in Publications Conference in May.

It has been heartening and exciting to be part of the new vitality in NEYM and in the wider Quaker world.

—BETH COLLEA

Sessions Coordinator

I thought
it was a marathon,
the work
that must be done.
I learned
it was a relay.
That changed everything.
—JUDY BROWN

This is my third year as Sessions Coordinator, but my first as year-round part-time staff in that role. As we have made this great shift, moving to Vermont for our Annual Sessions, it has been a blessing to have that work spread out over a year's time. There has been much discernment, and much good and challenging work of fitting old practices and new structures into very new spaces. I am deeply grateful for the work and support of John Humphries, Sessions clerk, and Noah Baker Merrill, YM Secretary, as well as so many other staff and Friends in this team effort of preparing prayerfully and intentionally this space to gather in beloved community.

Despite my part-time status, the work has involved hours of phone calls, tracking information in pages of spreadsheets, many visits to Castleton, a constant running list of questions and concerns about vendors and contracts, and a growing list of needs from our YM members and community. The creation of this part-time staff position in this particular year seems very prudent. The many hours spent in this role have easily surpassed what we expected for the hourly commitment. Staying in the same place for Sessions for more than one year will, I hope, reduce the staff time needed. I suspect this pace is not sustainable in the long-term.

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to engage in this particular service among Friends in New England. Through my role as Sessions Coordinator, I have been taught time and again the lessons of how we gather intentionally, how we engage in the difficult work of faithful dis-

cernment, and also how in even the smallest of ways we are allowed to model the Life of the Spirit. I have been given hundreds of ways to connect with Friends in my faith community. I have learned much about who we are, what we need and value, and where I fit into this family of Friends. I sincerely appreciate this particular aspect of the work—to be in service in this very tangible, concrete, and yet deeply spiritual shared work of our Yearly Meeting as we gather in this way.

I am also deeply sorrowful for the times when we fall short of the beloved community to which we aspire, the times when we seem to have forgotten that we are a People in this Holy Experiment together, when conflicting interests put us at odds with one another. In those times I have seen us clutch our own individual needs and views fiercely, seemingly without remembering that we are one faith community and that our actions affect each other. This has been clear this year, when we have had to balance the whole of our needs as we journey to new places of stretching and growth. Change, while deeply necessary, can be hard. With concern, in my work I have seen some of the ways that—often without thinking—we can make it harder for one another.

Still, I have also seen us answer the invitation to do this work of change and growth in another way—from a place of Love and with great joy amidst the struggle.

This work is a ministry of presence in community that feels joyful, challenging, exhausting, and very right. I give thanks to God for this opportunity of service, and for those Friends who have given me unwavering support and guidance in this time of much learning and transition.

In faith and service,
—KATHLEEN WOOTEN

**Young Friends/Young Adult Friends
Coordinator**

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

— PHILIPPIANS 3:12–14, THE MESSAGE

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. Here's what the Young Friends and Young Adult Friends communities have been struggling with this year: A confused sense of authority. The inability to articulate our purpose with unity and clarity. Reluctant leadership. A simultaneous longing for and fear of going deeper. Growing pains. A need for healing. Exhaustion. Time scarcity. Trouble showing up. A desire to learn how to love one another more fully. And I strive to know: What is the role of one person in the face of two communities holding all these challenges?

YAFs have abandoned their committee structure, unsure what will come next or how the work of planning retreats and nurturing individuals will get done. Young Friends have seen examples of the commitments (our community agreements) not working to prevent individuals from feeling excluded from the group. Although the YF and YAF communities are dear to the hearts of many, the demands of “the real world” often get in the way—this has been the year of many last-minute cancellations due to school and work demands. At our retreats, we've found many places where the brokenness of the world has harmed indi-

viduals in our group. We've seen places where the power dynamics of our mainstream culture play out at our retreats in ways that indicate a lack of wholeness and a need for change. For both groups, it's been frustrating to realize the stitches we've dropped along the way, to have to go back a few rows and start over.

But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. In the face all our challenges, we've had retreats with numbers bigger than previous years, a wave of new YAFs seeking faithful community to be a part of, gathered periods of worship, and a palpable push towards inner growth. The Resource People who volunteer to serve the YFs at this time are grounded and dedicated as they walk alongside our youth. Our cooks are loving and capable. Our participants show a willingness to grapple with hard questions, to be vulnerable with one another and before God.

Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

— NIADWYNWEN THOMAS

Committee & Board Annual Reports

Permanent Board

Permanent Board meets to conduct the necessary business of the Yearly Meeting between Annual Sessions. As part of our regular business we receive reports from the Yearly Meeting Secretary, the Coordinating & Advisory Committee, the presiding clerk, the Treasurer, the Finance Committee, the Development Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Personnel Committee and our own Internal Nominating Committee, plus the Clerks Nominating Committee.

In hearing those reports we add our own discernment on the work of the Yearly Meeting Secretary, the Priorities Budget, the Yearly Meeting budget and planning for Sessions, and we approve nominations of committee members and Yearly Meeting clerks. We also hear and approve travel minutes and memorial minutes.

The Yearly Meeting Secretary keeps us apprised of staff work and other happenings in the Yearly Meeting and the wider Quaker world.

This year, as an experiment, we held two meetings concurrently with Ministry & Counsel. We found that this made both meetings more aware of each other's work and increased carpooling opportunities for fellowship. We plan to continue this tradition with our September meeting.

In addition to the regular business, Permanent Board considers other issues as they arise.

One of our focuses this year has been on strengthening the relationship between local meetings and Yearly Meeting governance and finances. Having heard from meetings that some of us don't feel connected to the work of our Yearly Meeting and, feeling the financial impact of the lack of a vital connection in our shared ministries and local meetings, Permanent Board is working on strengthening these relationships as one piece of the relational work with our constituent meetings, alongside the work that Ministry & Counsel and others do with intervisitation. We are listening to what monthly meetings ask for and

about, creating resources to better communicate who we are, as well as to help visitors to local meetings start conversations about our joint work and invite Friends into more meaningful participation in this ministry of the whole. (*See also the Financial Sustainability Progress Report from Coordinating & Advisory, page 45.*)

Another of our responsibilities is to tend to questions of administration and structure of the Yearly Meeting. One way that we are doing that is through our Structural Review Committee, whose report follows this. Another way we do that is revising the Purposes & Procedures (P&P) of committees every three years. This year we did that, and those revisions may be found beginning on page 75. There are some committees which need change beyond a slight revision to the P&P and more urgently than the Structural Review process would allow. There are three such committees whose charges we have been working on this year.

As reported in previous years, the Student Loan Committee has had no members appointed, and we have been asked to discern a way forward. At the present time, we are not accepting new loan requests. The SLC is in the process of being laid down. In the interim, there is an ad hoc committee of PB charged with maintaining communications with borrowers with an outstanding loan balance, and another committee charged with bringing a proposal for a new use of those funds. After conversations with YAFs and YFs, as well as at Permanent Board, the committee is working on a proposal for using those funds as educational grants, to bring to 2015 Sessions.

The Youth Programs Committee was similarly understaffed. At the request of staff who work with our youth, we appointed a small working group to help re-envision the work of this committee. In addition to changing the name from Youth Programs to Youth Ministries to more accurately describe the broader scope of concern, the new charge of the committee is to think and act as trustees, considering less the details of specific events, and more the overall character and direction

of NEYM's spiritual work with youth. You will find the new Purposes & Procedures of the Youth Ministries Committee on page 23.

For the last two years, in response to the governance concerns that arose around the Friends Home closure, a group from Permanent Board has been working with Nat Shed, Friends Camp Director, to restructure the governance of the Friends Camp. They have worked extensively on getting the camp accredited, recommending changes to the nominating process for committee members, and examining, clarifying and integrating the relationship to the Yearly Meeting in employment, finances and insurance. The proposed revised Purposes & Procedures for Friends Camp Committee include more detail about the changes (*See page 22*).

Financial Stewardship

Through the course of the year, we hear reports on our financial state and occasionally take steps to ensure that our finances are serving the discerned interests of the Yearly Meeting. Upon the recommendation from the Treasurer, Yearly Meeting Secretary and the Finance Committee, we approved midyear budget revisions for increasing the travel budget due to greater need by staff and volunteers, paternity leave for the Communications Director, and changes to the Sessions budget. We also approved expenditures for our database, seeing it as a capital expense, an investment in our infrastructure for years to come. Meanwhile, we asked the Finance Committee to review policies which determine how adjustments are made and how overages are handled, with the goal of giving the Treasurer and the Yearly Meeting Secretary some flexibility to make adjustments between lines while staying in budget.

Requests

From time to time, Permanent Board receives requests from bodies within and beyond the Yearly Meeting asking NEYM to take action on pressing items during the course of the year.

We received a letter from the Young Adult Friends Climate Working Group (YAFCWG)

asking whether we are divested from fossil fuels, whether our investment policies clearly prohibit investments in fossil fuels and, if so, whether we can state this boldly and publicly. We heard from the Managers of the Pooled Funds that our policies and holdings do meet a certain threshold of avoiding direct investment in fossil-fuel producing industries. Recognizing that there is rising interest in developing further awareness of the policies and principles that guide our investments on behalf of Friends, we hope that YAFCWG and the Board of Managers will continue to work with each other and with other Friends in New England so that our witness on these vital matters might speak more clearly among Quakers and to the wider world.

The Friends School of Portland requested that we make a bridge loan of \$300,000 to help them finance the building of a permanent school building on their property in Falmouth, Maine. We united with the spirit of their request, but found we did not have the funds available at this time to lend. We forwarded their request to the Pooled Funds to consider shifting some of their investments temporarily to the FSP.

The last request was to affiliate with Friends Association for Higher Education. We approved this opportunity for increased communication, with the understanding that there is no financial commitment involved and that NEYM Friend Donn Weinholtz is already in leadership role there and can represent us.

Finally, the Legacy Gift Discernment Committee presented a recommendation for the use of the proceeds of the recent sale of the New England Friends Home. It is included in a subsequent report (*see pp. 18–19 of the Advance Documents*).

As you can see, we have been carrying many vital aspects of our work as a Yearly Meeting. It is exciting to be guiding this work as we strengthen our ministries and bring forth new ones. It is a labor of love. If you would like to learn more about our work, our minutes and Advance Documents for each meeting may be found on the Permanent Board web page at neym.org/permanent-board.

—HOLLY BALDWIN, CLERK

ad hoc Structural Review Committee of Permanent Board

This past year, the Structural Review committee has reached out to individuals, meetings, committees, and groups within NEYM, seeking to learn how these Friends perceive and interact with various other parts of the Yearly Meeting structure. Members of the committee met with Young Friends, Young Adult Friends, and older Friends at last year's Sessions, as well as at retreats and other gatherings during the year. We met with NEYM committees at the April Committee Day. We visited a few monthly meetings, and engaged in numerous conversations with individuals. More than 240 people responded to our online survey. We are in the process of sifting through, summarizing, and compiling the results of the survey and our various visits and conversations. We will present some of the threads, themes, and suggestions at Sessions this August.

In the coming year, building on this input, we expect to begin formulating a revised structure, testing our thoughts widely among committees, staff, and monthly and quarterly meetings of NEYM. We will continue to engage Friends in conversation about the purpose of the YM, the needs of the YM, and how our structures can serve both. We hope to hold regional opportunities for discernment about structures that might better enable Friends in NEYM to do the work that we are called to in the 21st century. Our goal is to bring some seasoned recommendations to Sessions 2015.

—JANET HOUGH, CLERK

Committee on Aging

The Committee on Aging offered an introduction to the Aging Resources Consultation and Help (ARCH) Outreach Program at NEYM 2013. This program uses trained Quaker volunteers to assist the elderly and disabled in the Quaker community. ARCH visitors are provided with information relevant to their location regarding community programs and assistance.

One of our members attended a first training session and reported back to the committee. We believe there is a need that we could meet

in NEYM for supporting our aging and disabled members in a way that is consistent with our Quaker faith and practice. It is our goal to see if there is enough energy within Yearly Meeting to put this program into effect. A great amount of help and guidance will come from Friends Foundation for the Aging and the collaborative project of New York and Philadelphia Yearly meetings.

—ELEANOR CAPPA, CO-CLERK

Coordinating & Advisory

The Coordinating & Advisory (C&A) committee met monthly throughout the year. The addition of a dedicated supervisor of the Yearly Meeting (YM) Secretary this year has been very beneficial to the committee and to the supervision of the YM Secretary.

We supported clerks of YM committees and quarterly meetings both individually and collectively. In March we held a clerking workshop attended by 23 people. We note the need for childcare so that parents would be able to more actively participate in YM committees, and we are in the process of drafting a proposal. We consulted with *Faith and Practice* Revision and with Structural Review committees to clarify what work is whose responsibility, and to keep things coordinated. We supported transitions in the Sessions Committee.

Several questions surfaced throughout the year with regard to boundaries and authority, and to "what is the mission/purpose of NEYM?" We have invited others (Permanent Board, committees, individuals) to look at these questions, and anticipate continued discussion. We are excited about the intervisitation led by many committees and look forward to increased coordination. We note the many efforts to increase communication and transparency. As Coordinating and Advisory committee, we have walked tenderly to provide leadership without overstepping our boundaries.

We advised, supervised, and evaluated the work of the YM Secretary which included the development and implementation of an annual work plan and the priorities budget for FY2015. We made suggestions to Personnel committee for revisions to the YM Secretary's job descrip-

tion. We recognized the magnitude of our individual volunteer job descriptions and our work as a committee; we plan to look at this more closely in the coming year.

We continued to support the long-term financial planning process and held a consultation in March with the Finance, Development, and Personnel committees to consider the 2015 budget in this context. We are excited about this collaboration and look forward to sharing this perspective with everyone at Annual Sessions.

We recognize that as a yearly meeting we need a priorities process, distinct from the budget process, that would prayerfully prepare, season and commit to priorities to guide a 3- to 5-year plan. We also recognize a desire to hold ourselves accountable to effectively implement and evaluate the work we commit to accomplish.

In our work we earnestly seek to witness to the power of God in our lives, and to be Spirit-led to faithful action.

In God's abundant love,
—JACQUELINE STILLWELL, PRESIDING CLERK

Development Committee

Every gift counts!

Friends on the Development Committee are excited about the future of New England Yearly Meeting and we invite you to join us in supporting and sustaining NEYM's vision.

For the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2013, we exceeded the budgeted goal for individual giving, thanks to the generosity of many New England Friends. We are grateful to the Friends who have stepped up and given stretch donations and the many who contributed as they could. And thank you to the many Friends who now give monthly, more than twice as many participate as last year—your consistent contributions help ensure adequate cash flow and sound financial planning.

The Development Committee works to raise awareness of our financial needs at Sessions, sends out two annual mailings, promotes a strong Give Monthly program, and works with the Finance Committee to set realistic, achievable budgets.

All of the work of the Yearly Meeting is done by a very small staff and many, many volunteers. Financial support from each of our members, no matter how small, is important to the health of the Yearly Meeting. If everyone donated as they were able, we would close the budget gap. Just think! If 350 Friends gave just \$1 per day, we would have enough money to meet our needs and extend our ministry in exciting ways.

We urge you to donate to Yearly Meeting—please send a check to the Treasurer, hand a donation to a Development Committee member at Sessions, make a gift of appreciated stock, name NEYM as a beneficiary in your will or life insurance policy, or set up a Give Monthly account of \$5.00 or more per month. If you already give, we ask you to consider increasing your contribution—even just a little bit. Please help NEYM stay strong. Together, we can do it!

Thank you,
—NANCY HAINES, CLERK

Earthcare Ministry Committee

The Earthcare Ministry Committee (ECM) calls on Friends to live in Right Relationship with all Creation and supports those following leadings to be in that life and power that takes away the occasion of damage to Earth's fragile community of life. In addition to taking particular actions as a committee, ECM also supports acts of witness for an Earth restored taken by many Friends and Friends meetings.

We are heartened by NEYM Friends who have taken action since last Sessions to mitigate the effects of climate change. For example:

Mount Toby Friends Meeting approved a voluntary carbon tax; individuals contribute to a special fund to offset their carbon emissions and the proceeds are donated to causes that work to mitigate the effects of climate change.

- 12 members of Hartford Friends Meeting have joined their Meeting's voluntary carbon-tax initiative.
- A climate minute approved by Mount Toby Friends on January 12, 2014, concluded with the following: "We believe that,

although the problems we face are large, complex, and may feel overwhelming, following our faith can lead us to unity and hope." Actions mentioned in the minute included lifestyle changes, paying a voluntary carbon tax, joining with other faith congregations, divesting from fossil fuel companies, bearing witness, building local economies and strengthening community.

- At Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting in October 2013, a group of Friends from six meetings in the Quarter met and agreed to coordinate and share information. They also approved a minute on climate change based on a minute approved by Storrs Monthly Meeting.
- Young Adult Friends of NEYM meeting at Westport on May 17, 2014, approved a minute on divestment from fossil fuel companies that was forwarded to New England Friends, and ECM has endorsed it. This minute has been forwarded to the Board of Managers and will come before NEYM Sessions this August.
- ECM has supported Tom Jackson of Dover Monthly Meeting in his ministry of encouraging Friends and Friends meetings to divest from fossil fuel companies. We continue to collaborate with the YAF Climate Working Group, and ECM members helped organize and attended a YAF climate workshop held at Woolman Hill earlier this year.

We are preparing to support Jay O'Hara during his trial for valiant civil disobedience, witnessing against the continued operation of coal-fired power plants.

ECM has planned workshops and interest groups at the 2014 NEYM Sessions with special emphasis on climate change, recognizing that it is the major threat of our age, requiring a sustained response that is grounded in moral values.

In spring 2014, ECM held its annual retreat at West Falmouth Friends Meeting on Cape Cod, where we divided our time equally among deepening our spirituality, nurturing communi-

ty, and conducting business. We were inspired by the beauty and miracle of nature along the Cape Cod seashore, including the ecologically significant Sippewissett wetlands near the West Falmouth Meeting House. We were reminded that we have a responsibility to address, from a spiritual perspective, the ecological issues where we live.

—RUAH SWENNERFELT, CLERK

Ecumenical Relations

This past year, the names of the people who represent Friends at the various Councils of Churches got listed in the minute book.

We hope to meet together for the first time at NEYM sessions this year.

Betsy Morse of Hanover and Marian Baker of Weare, the representatives to the New Hampshire Council of Churches, report that they have a new director of the Council, Clare Chapman, who has previously worked for the National Council of Churches. The N. H. Council has been working hard on the issues of casino gambling and repeal of the death penalty. They support a hardworking woman chaplain at the women's state prison.

Leslie Manning of Durham has stepped down as chair of the Maine Council of Churches, but is still active on public policy issues. We are looking for another Maine Friend to join the Council.

Next year we hope to have a more complete report from the other representatives: Christopher McCandless (Burlington), Vermont Ecumenical Council; Dorothy Carlsten (Providence), Rhode Island Council of Churches; and Kathleen Kelly (Cambridge), Massachusetts Council of Churches.

—MARIAN BAKER

Faith and Practice Revision Committee

The *Faith and Practice* Revision Committee began the autumn of 2013 with the happy task of welcoming three new members to the committee, bringing our total number to 15. Throughout the fall we began compiling an

Interim Faith and Practice, which would include the Appendices Working Paper, expanded to include additional material requested by Friends. This revised Appendices Working Paper was mailed to monthly meetings in December, with the request that Friends live with and use these guidelines on Friends practices as occasions arise in the life of their meetings.

At these 2014 Sessions we joyfully offer this publication to the Yearly Meeting. We also acknowledge with gratitude the 15 Friends who have served on the Committee in the past whose work is also contained in this volume. The *Interim Faith and Practice* assembles, in one bound, “bedside table” volume, all of the chapters that have received preliminary approval and the current Appendices Working Paper. It also includes a new section that re-visits our “guiding work” as articulated in our 2003 document “A Peculiar People” and expresses our current vision for approaching the remaining chapters of the book.

With a focus on bringing the book to completion, we have engaged with several foundational questions:

- How do we express throughout the rest of the book, that our “testimony” must manifest itself in how we live out every aspect of our lives, as individuals and as spiritual communities? Our “practice” and our “testimony” are inseparable, and are guided by attention to the Spirit of Truth, as inwardly known and recognized.
- How do we offer practical and accurate information about monthly meeting, quarterly meeting and Yearly Meeting organizational structures in a way that emphasizes being attentive to the Source that is the spiritual well-spring of all Life-giving structures?
- How do we write *Faith and Practice* in such a way that we don’t commit the Yearly Meeting to forms that don’t have life and can’t evolve?

To ensure that our task of writing the chapter on NEYM organization is coordinated with other initiatives underway in the Yearly Meeting, the clerk and assistant clerk of the

Faith and Practice Revision Committee have met with the NEYM Coordinating and Advisory Committee and clerks of the Structural Review Committee. As always, we invite you to accompany us on this journey by using the *Faith and Practice* material that has been released, by communicating your hopes, joys and concerns about what you see there, and by bringing it all into your life of reflection, prayer and practice.

—JAN HOFFMAN, CLERK

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee members discerned several directives as we approached the work of bringing a budget to Sessions:

- Concern for fiscal responsibility
- Faith in the vision supported at Sessions 2013 and sustained in broad consultation to improve communication, restore necessary administrative support, expand support for local meetings, and continue vital ministries
- Support for our dedicated and often over-worked Yearly Meeting staff and Secretary
- Trust in the financial support of monthly meetings and Yearly Meeting members

As in previous years, the Finance Committee has focused on reviewing requests for appropriations and preparing a budget for FY2015. We did this in the understanding that NEYM is in the midst of a multi-year plan, outlined at last year’s Sessions. This plan requires drawing on reserves in the short term, but leads to financial sustainability in the long term. In this process, we have been encouraged by messages from rising spirit and increases in financial support.

The proposed budget represents what the Finance Committee feels is prudent, in sustaining vital programs and adequately supporting needs while balancing the long-range perspective that we began to explore in 2013 and concern for the restraints of projected donations and limited reserves. After careful consideration, the committee reduced the amount requested by approximately \$40,000, nearly

\$25,000 of this from benevolences. These cuts were painful. It is our hope that as NEYM gains a stronger financial base, these reductions can be reversed.

The Finance Committee believes that the budget we propose will supply what is needed this year for Yearly Meeting to move forward. Consistent with the concepts presented in the long-term financial perspective presented at Sessions 2013, the proposed budget does require an increase in the amount the Yearly Meeting needs to raise in individual and monthly meeting contributions to move forward responsibly. The increased income projections are realistic, in the judgment of both Finance and Development Committees. The Finance Committee was in unity on bringing this budget to Sessions for discernment (two of our fifteen members stood aside). The concern raised goes beyond the magnitude of the deficit, to a deeper question as to whether the necessary changes in process or culture throughout our Yearly Meeting are possible. Changes made since Sessions 2013 are explained in the Coordinating and Advisory report.

Throughout the year, the Finance Committee reviews the current budget as funds are expended. If necessary, the Yearly Meeting Secretary and Treasurer present needed changes mid-year. With the seasoning and approval of the Permanent Board, adjustments were made for the fiscal year 2014 budget for database development.

Two sessions were held, one at Wellesley Meeting in the fall and one at Hartford Meeting in the spring, for NEYM members and monthly meetings to gather and discuss topics related to finances and faith. The use of our NEYM video-conferencing tools has also increased to engage with Friends carrying finance responsibilities and to connect and share best practices, joys, and concerns of this important spiritual work.

To more effectively address some of the long-term needs of NEYM, this year the Finance Committee organized itself into three sub-committees: budget process; education & support; and policies, structure & systems. Although there is much to do, we are seeing some results of this work in the functional or programmatic budget included as part of the Advance Documents and in a review of the books, which

found that our accounts are in good order. These are further steps in the ongoing process of increasing clarity and transparency in Yearly Meeting finances.

We appreciate the tremendous effort of the NEYM Treasurer, Ben Guaraldi; Yearly Meeting Secretary, Noah Baker Merrill; and Accounts Manager, Frederick Martin, in providing clear and comprehensive financial information and support for the Finance Committee. There is concern that, without additional help, the needs of the Yearly Meeting may overtax our staff and our volunteer Treasurer. The Finance Committee feels there is an urgent and immediate need for an Assistant Treasurer and seeks help in locating candidates.

Additionally, the Finance Committee recommends adding the clerk of Permanent Board as a check-signer so there are four possible signers. The vacancy of an Assistant Treasurer this past year was felt when two of the three signers were out of the country for several weeks this summer.

With regret, we accepted the resignation of co-clerk Maria Lamberto. We thank Maria Lamberto for her faithful service and look forward to her continuing as a valued member of the committee.

This report is respectfully submitted with deep appreciation for members of Finance, Development, Ministry & Council, and Permanent Board.

—MURIEL FARRAR, CLERK

Friends General Conference Committee

The committee itself has been quiet this year, but the members have been very active serving on numerous committees and working groups of Central Committee (a.k.a. the Board of Friends General Conference [FGC]). David Haines is the rising clerk of Long Range Conference Planning, which has the annual Gathering under its care. Elise Person also serves on Long Range Conference Planning as one of our key evaluation people. Nancy Haines served in a consultative capacity for Quaker Books of FGC as we seek to re-organize and upgrade that service. Mark Edginton (Keene)

and Jess Hipp serve on the Communications Policy and Infrastructure Committee, a new committee that guides the policies and structure of the new communication endeavors. Don Mick serves on the Committee for Discernment, Planning and Priorities, which is instrumental in guiding the organizational directions. Although he needed to resign during the year, David Rush (Cambridge) was FGC's representative to Friends Committee on National Legislation. Penny Wright serves on FGC's Nominating Committee and the Blue Book Committee, the latter being the organization policies and procedures manual. Last but hardly least, Jackie Stillwell as Yearly Meeting clerk serves an ex-officio capacity and brings her grounded and discerning presence to our annual meeting.

We hope to become more visible and known within the Yearly Meeting in the next year.

—PENNY WRIGHT, CLERK

Friends World Committee for Consultation— New England (FWCCNE)

FWCCNE is involved in cooperative and consultative activities, dedicated to letting the "Living Waters" flow through us to serve God's purposes in North and South America.

In the fall the FWCCNE, Puente de Amigos and Quaker Youth Education Committees collaborated to apply for grants to fund the Spanish translation of a children's religious education curriculum, *Faith & Play—Quaker Stories for Friends Trained in the Godly Play Method*, a Friends General Conference (FGC) publication. This was in response to Latin American Friends' expressed desire for materials in Spanish for teaching Quaker youth. *Faith & Play* includes stories about Friends' faith and testimonies and the lives of early Friends. Training for using the *Faith & Play* and *Godly Play* materials was offered in February in Massachusetts; Benigno Sánchez-Eppler and Bolivian Friend Emma Condori attended. We are very grateful to the Obadiah Brown–Sarah Swift Benevolent Fund and Mosher Book and Tract for funding this project. Benigno Sánchez-Eppler and Susan Furry translated the materials in consultation with Beth Collela, Melinda Wenner

Bradley, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith & Play* Working Group and FGC. Print copies of *Jugar llenos de fe (Faith & Play)* will be available this summer for Spanish-speaking Friends congregations in Latin America and North America.

The FWCC Quaker Youth Pilgrimage will for the first time be hosted in Peru and Bolivia, from mid-July to mid-August. Committee members Benigno Sánchez-Eppler and Nataly Moran have been helping to plan the pilgrimage. Benigno, in his role as a leader, will show the pilgrims how to present *Jugar llenos de fe* stories when they visit meetings and churches. We are seeking ways to link dissemination of the curriculum to training and evaluation, with a commitment to listen to and be guided by the voices of Latin American Friends.

In the spring, the FWCC Section of the Americas experimented with regional consultations in El Salvador, Bolivia, California, and North Carolina as a way to extend the reach of the FWCC message of making connections, crossing cultures and changing lives. Close to 400 Friends participated, with opportunities to learn new skills, affirm our mutual Quaker identity, and consider the future of Friends over the next century. Dorothy Grannell was the co-clerk for consultation planning with Karen Gregorio de Calderon (Guatemala Holiness YM) and Daniel Limachi Mendoza (National Evangelical Friends Church of Bolivia). The theme of the consultations was "Let the Living Water Flow!"

Each consultation included a workshop on Quaker Leadership in the 21st Century. In North America, additional workshops were offered on conflict transformation, cross-cultural communications and the Kabarak Call. In Latin America workshops included bi-vocational ministry, history of friends, and biblical studies. In North Carolina, NEYM Friends Debbie Humphries and Lisa Graustein presented a workshop about cross-cultural communication, and NEYM YAF Merritt Bussiere-Nichols was a leader of the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice and Service workshop. We continue to grow in our realization that we are all Friends who seek that of God in each other.

Representatives' reflections:

Mary Hopkins: The Consult in El Salvador was oversubscribed, energetic, deeply appreciated. Its high point was two sessions of open

worship, a new experience for most participants. The room and the time were very full, and Spirit moved powerfully. Afterward I travelled to southwestern Honduras, bringing some texts from Barclay on the Inner Light. Friends received me with great kindness. One group, inspired by another Consult participant, was led to try a first experiment with open worship. Honduran Friends face many challenges: opening a long-closed seminary, holding the church together amid political divisions, sacrificing soda and cell-phone calls to support mission work in Nicaragua. I'll remember the deep conversations, and Friends' loving care—and I suspect I'll be back!

Cynthia Ganung: We were lovingly cared for by an Evangelical Friends congregation. I experienced honest sharing of different beliefs and surprising discoveries of common concerns. Nancy Thomas (Northwest YM) invited us to see Friends as a flowing river of people, with some core beliefs, but not the same rivers: we can learn from each other if we hear each other's stories. I felt challenged during the "Cross Cultural Communication" workshop led by Evangelical Friend, Alan Amavisca, to explore what it means to "Be like Christ," living in the spirit of love, as a learner, a servant and a friend. Being with this diverse group of Friends called us to offer loving hospitality not just to outsiders but also to Friends of different traditions.

Nataly Moran: The Saturday morning workshop was led by Ruth Bueso and Manuel Coronado from Embajadores, Guatemala. They talked about how our Quaker ancestors understood the word of God in a different way. They listened to the Spirit within by letting the Holy Spirit interpret the word. Ruth talked to the women and gave examples of Margaret Fell writing words in her letters that God put in her heart. She encouraged women not to be afraid of taking leadership in the churches and to use their talents and skills, not only in the churches but out in their communities. I was happy to hear her talk to the women because of the male dominance still going on in Bolivia and the churches.

Jonathan Vogel-Borne: One of the differences in U. S. regional cultures became quite

evident on my drive south. I saw more and more Christian billboards with sayings like "Hell is Real." Our keynote speaker, Ashley Wilcox, spoke to Friends out of Jeremiah 2:13.

"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

My Quaker culture rarely uses the narrative of sin and evil. Ashley, an evangelical Quaker, challenged me to be at least conversant in this narrative. We live in a world full of broken cisterns—systems and institutions of violence and oppression—we easily "miss the mark," becoming deadened to God's constant and abundant flow of living water.

—DOROTHY GRANNELL, CLERK

Ministry & Counsel

This past year, Ministry & Counsel gatherings were hosted by Mount Toby, Cambridge and Weare monthly meetings, and our annual retreat was held at Camp Mechuwana (Winthrop, Maine). Among the many topics M&C considered, we gave particular attention to spiritual formation and religious education, NEYM's relationship to FUM, increasing our connection to quarterly and monthly meetings, care of worship at Sessions, opportunities for worship and sharing of spiritual journeys, and the spiritual condition of the Yearly Meeting.

In the fall, the Pastoral Care working group sent a letter to monthly and quarterly meetings offering M&C's availability—for listening, holding in the Light, care and counsel. Several meetings have since requested aid with a variety of issues.

The Intervisitation working group has held several gatherings around New England open to all who currently travel to meetings in inter-visitation, with a concern or in ministry, and to those who would like to learn more about doing these. The working group also developed the idea of Quaker passports, based on the National Parks model, and hopes to have passports available at Sessions.

The Resources working group has been collecting resources on a variety of topics, which are available through the NEYM web site.

It also offered a day-long “Friends and the Internet” workshop of practical exploration on ways the Internet can help Friends both within and beyond their meetings.

The Working Party on Spirituality & Sexual Ethics is continuing its efforts to produce a statement on Faithful Sexuality, which they hope will catalyze an ongoing discernment process among Friends concerning a part of our lives that is central to our spiritual journey.

An additional ad hoc working group was created to shepherd the dialogue and learning period related to NEYM’s financial withholding policy for FUM. A separate report from that group describes its extensive work making resources available and holding listening sessions throughout the Yearly Meeting.

M&C is continuing for the third year a process of holding the spiritual condition of the Yearly Meeting in preparation for Sessions, with a few designated individuals speaking out of worship at Sessions rather than presenting a written NEYM state of society report. This coming year, we anticipate reviewing whether to continue or alter the current process and we welcome your feedback as part of our discernment.

In the second year of the Cracked Open series, jointly sponsored by M&C, the Quaker Studies Program and Woolman Hill, there were two weekend workshops and two online courses focusing on the topic of discernment.

M&C met concurrently with Permanent Board in September and February, beginning the day in joint worship. This allowed for greater fellowship and awareness of each other’s work, and in September the two groups were able to consider together the Yearly Meeting’s relationship with monthly meetings.

At our M&C meetings, we allow time during our opening worship to let names rise of those meetings, individuals and situations we especially want to hold in God’s tender light. We hope that many of you feel the ripples of our care and love reaching you. You are in our hearts.

—MARGARET COOLEY, CLERK

Publications and Communications

In the process of revising our Purposes & Procedures, the Publications and Communications committee affirmed our commitment to caring for the way the Yearly Meeting presents itself to the wider world and to serving as a resource for staff and committees in New England Yearly Meeting.

This year, our work supporting the Communications Director, Jeff Hipp, overlapped significantly with our responsibility to develop policy related to electronic communication and use of Yearly Meeting data. The launch of the new *neym.org* site required us to formalize a Creative Commons license to govern the use and re-use of material published on the site, to establish a set of copyright guidelines for people who wish to create or use content, and to adopt a photo policy that allows us to share images from gatherings while also respecting participants’ privacy. On this last issue, we were greatly helped by the fact that we took as our starting point the photo policy that the Jr. High program approved for their retreats. The Jr. Highers had already done much of the heavy lifting, and we drafted a policy largely based on their careful discernment. This process was a welcome reminder that even though our committee is meant to serve as a resource for other committees, that relationship can work both ways.

As the steward for the Mosher Book and Tract fund, Publications and Communications approved a grant to support the printing of a Spanish translation of the *Faith & Play* curriculum for distribution to Friends in Cuba and Bolivia. This project was a collaborative effort between Friends World Committee on Consultation, Quaker Youth Education and Puente de Amigos and we felt blessed to be able to contribute. We are also in the midst of working with the *Faith and Practice* Revision Committee and Noah Baker Merrill to publish an interim document containing all of the revisions that have been granted preliminary approval so far. This document will be distributed to all meetings and made available to any interested individuals. While there have been many details to organize (and there are more yet to come!) our shared work has been energizing. We also look forward to a collaboration with Racial,

Social, and Economic Justice Committee on a project inspired by last year's distribution of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* to each meeting in NEYM.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we plan to create a new set of guidelines for electronic meetings (featuring queries and advices for best practices as well as an overview of the wealth of technical resources available). We are also beginning a long-term research project that we hope will eventually be of use to meetinghouses deciding which communications technology and infrastructure to use.

We have accomplished a lot this year and are grateful for the ways in which God has moved through and with us. We are excited to continue our journey.

—EMILY TABER, CLERK

Puente de Amigos

This has been a busy year for the Committee as our work continues to find new channels while sustaining and strengthening existing ones. This committee provides a significant way for Yearly Meeting's Friends to grow spiritually while providing outreach beyond our borders.

The committee expresses its gratitude to the scores of individuals who make the work possible. Some have been involved since its inception 23 years ago; others have just a few months of engagement. Throughout the inter-visitation "cycle" our work has been buttressed by collaboration with Cuban American Quakers living in South Florida. Without their help our work would be much more challenging.

Change is in the air if for no other reason than the face of communication is different through Internet and cell-phone contact.

A significant structural change is the Cuban Quaker Peace Institute (ICCP). Based in Gibara, this program convenes three times a year and aspires to be accredited to supplement the Matanzas Seminary's curriculum. Two New England Friends, Susan Furry and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler, have served on the faculty.

Intervisitation strengthens and deepens our respect, regard and love for one another. We welcomed visitors to 2013 Sessions—Lázaro García, pastor of Velasco, and Marlene Aguilera,

life-long member of Gibara—and prepared for two more visitors to 2014 Sessions. The Cubans have suggested we increase the visitors to three annually, as the queue of Cubans eager to worship with us is long.

In addition to Sessions guests, CYM's presiding clerk, Odalys Hernández, and Banés Monthly Meeting's pastor, Cándido Fernández, visited in the spring.

Our committee sent a delegation in February to inaugurate a sister meeting relationship (Hanover, N.H., with Havana) and attend CYM Sessions in Gibara. The committee also sent a ministerial visit in June.

We are told by our Cuban sisters and brothers that our relationship is life-giving and replenishing. It is not to be taken lightly and needs nourishment throughout the months and years. Beyond that, there are two new Cuban monthly meetings that are eager to bond with their New England cousins. Cuban Friends have spawned several mission churches, some of which expect to grow to monthly meeting status. As this happens there will be even more petitions for affiliation with New England monthly meetings.

We reach out to other Quaker groups that have connections to Cuba. We joyfully collaborated with FWCC Section of the Americas and other NEYM committees to create a Spanish language edition of *Faith & Play*. Friends United Meeting easily shares its many connections and contacts with Cuban Friends. George School has an active intervisitation program.

Our financial support has remained stable, sufficient to fulfill our work when generously buttressed by untold hours of volunteer service given selflessly and, often, anonymously. We continue to need more funds.

As the committee clerkship transitions, it is wise to pause to give prayerful thanks to Cynthia Ganung for her advice, counsel and service. Cynthia's light has illuminated the value of our international inter-relationship as none other has.

—LEN & MARY ANN CADWALLADER, CO-CLERKS

Quaker Youth Education

Committee Day worship brings to me the words of Caroline Stephen: "Friends' meetings have

indeed been to me the greatest of outward helps to a fuller and fuller entrance into the spirit from which they have sprung; the place of the most soul subduing, faith-restoring, strengthening, and peaceful communion, in feeding upon the bread of life, that I have ever known.” For the Quaker Youth Education Committee this year, Committee Days were indeed days of strengthening and peaceful communion. At each, the non-QYE-committee-member Friends who attended raised our horizons.

In October, the morning was spent reviewing the practicum presented at 2013 Yearly Meeting, “Finding Families and Helping Families Find Your Meeting.” A concern bubbled up for the education of families where one parent is a non-Quaker. In the afternoon, three committees—QYE, FWCC and Puente de Amigos—met together and formalized our first translation project, *Faith & Play—Quaker Stories for Friends Trained in the Godly Play Method*, into Spanish.

In February we celebrated the QYE section on the new NEYM web site and heard about Beth Collea’s ministry as the NEYM contact with FGC’s New Meetings Project and their staffer, Brent Bill. Marian Baker’s membership on this committee opens the way for future cross-collaboration with the USFW, as well as for a possible multicultural project with Friends who speak Swahili. We began to explore ideas about expanding Inward Spiritual practice and Outward Service practice, based on Diana Butler Bass’ 2013 book *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*. A concern arose for potential outreach at the Bolton Friends Meetinghouse at Old Sturbridge Village.

March brought yet another collaboration—between Quaker Youth Education and Wellesley Meeting’s All Ages RE Committee. In anticipation of the publication of the Spanish translation of *Faith & Play*, we jointly hosted FGC “Playing in the Light” training.

At Dover Friends Meeting at April Committee Day, we had a time of enthusiastic sharing with Dover Friends about their outreach strategy at the city’s summer festival. We reviewed highlights of Quaker Heritage Day held by the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and New Bedford Friends Meeting in 2012. It is difficult to imagine a greater joy than we had

rising to present the published first draft of the Spanish version of *Faith & Play* at the close of worship. With the cooperation of so many, the project has been completed within one year.

This summer we continue to encourage Meeting outreach projects—especially where Friends work with summer festivals. For example, New Bedford Friends Meeting welcomed visitors during the week that the Charles W. Morgan, the last remaining wooden-hulled whaling ship in the world, was docked in New Bedford. Dartmouth Monthly Meeting has taken an active role in the year-long events for the Town of Dartmouth’s 350th anniversary. For Dartmouth’s anniversary parade, the first two floats will be the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe and Dartmouth Monthly Meeting, reflecting the earliest residents of the area. Meetings are invited to share your own innovative programming and emerging ministries at Signs of Light poster fair here at Sessions.

—PAM COLE, CLERK

Committee on Racial, Social & Economic Justice

Over the years RSEJ has brought to NEYM the Healing Racism Toolkit, the Freedom and Justice Crier, and various actions designed to encourage Friends to consider white privilege. We have creatively tried to convey the spiritual ramifications of being part of and colluding with a system of oppression. The 2013–2014 year was no exception. With the passage of a strong and beautiful minute on the Doctrine of Discovery at Sessions, we feel the Yearly Meeting going deeper into this work, setting the stage for transformation.

To bring this work forward, we formed the Minute 52 Working Party on a Journey of Healing, continuing to collaborate with leadership from the Wampanoag, Passamaquoddy and Abenaki people. Their commitment continues to be a great blessing. This working party journeyed to many meetings with a five-phase approach: acknowledging a wrong, making an apology, acceptance of the apology, making amends, and moving forward together. Dover Monthly Meeting has been particularly receptive. After completing two workshops, a sub-

stantial group were ready and willing to take the next step of being introduced and starting to listen to a group of native people; in their case, people from the Cowasuck nation. The goal is that this will eventually lead into an apology directed not to the air, but to flesh-and-blood people who are willing, with adjustments as needed, to accept the apology.

We continue work toward not just passing a minute but building to a place where our actions match our words. Imagine all our meetings in relationship with their indigenous neighbors to the point of walking forward together. Imagine what that would mean to the spiritual depth and power of our work on environmental issues, right sharing of resources, and our connection to all that is. As Minute 52 was being passed, a concern came forward about whether NEYM could really do this with integrity. This is an excellent query.

One key thing that came out of this past year was that intention was/is often quite different from outcome. This was clear not only in the Doctrine of Discovery work but in other interactions as well. We observe that when a person of color tells another Friend that they have offended or hurt them, Friends frequently respond defensively, with denial, not hearing and not respecting the other's point of view. In the coming year RSEJ hopes to encourage Friends to stop, understand that we cannot tell someone else how to feel, and consider the outcome of our words and actions.

Meanwhile, other committee work included awarding five Freedmen's Fund scholarships of \$2,000 each; supporting committee members' initiatives, including ministry with formerly incarcerated women; considering the NYYM Apology to Afro-Descendants; and holding a vigil for victims of hate crimes, a powerful moment.

"The pure righteous do not complain of the dark, but increase the light; they do not complain of evil, but increase justice; they do not complain of heresy, but increase faith; they do not complain of ignorance, but increase wisdom." (Rav [Abraham Isaac] Kook)

—RACHEL CAREY-HARPER, CLERK

Sessions Committee

As I sat down to write this report, I opened an e-mail sent to my Sessions Clerk box. A marketing agent inquired: "How many people attend the Annual Session? The Embassy Suites Boston would love to host an Annual Session or retreat in the upcoming year." My immediate thought: "Oooh...that would have been a lot easier!"

Our first Sessions Committee gathering last September was on the campus of Castleton State College. In preparing to discern our theme for 2014, I shared a reflection from Lloyd Lee Wilson's book *Wrestling with our Faith Tradition*: "change is the only condition under which spiritual growth occurs." Little did we know, then, just how much opportunity for spiritual growth we would have this year!

Exploring a new campus in a new state was just the beginning: a new web site; a new database; a new approach to Sessions fees and Equalization; a new approach to afternoon scheduling, leading to new names ("Afternoon Opportunities" and "5-day Anchor Groups"); and all this work to be shepherded by a new Sessions Committee clerk.

Fortunately, the committee members have been very engaged and eager to collaborate to pull it all together. Averaging more than 20 people at our four face-to-face meetings, we sustained the focus and continuity across multiple meetings to do the creative—and sometimes difficult—work of discerning these significant changes.

In November, we finalized the theme and list of presenters to invite; we heard the initial proposal for a new approach to fees and encouraged our staff and Treasurer to continue exploring and refining the idea; and we established a working group to consider a new approach to afternoon programming and to return with recommendations about the overall schedule for the week.

In January, we arrived at the Concord Meetinghouse in the midst of a "wintry mix" and discovered that ice skates should have been included on the list of things to bring. A lunchtime hockey game in the parking lot (with multiple, overlapping teams and goals!) could have served as an exhilarating alternative decision-

making approach, but instead we settled in for some lengthy discernment about a variety of questions related to the Sessions schedule.

In April, we were able to get a preview of the new web site and online registration process, view an interactive campus map showing proposed locations for key activities, and finalize most of the schedule details.

We also met twice using GoToMeeting video/telephone conferencing. An early September conversation allowed us to reflect on the 2013 Sessions experience and identify key aspects of the work for the coming year. A June conversation allowed us to share updates on various preparations for August. We anticipate a similar mix of day-long gatherings and shorter conference calls in the coming year.

Despite all this good and persistent effort, we approach these final weeks with a wish list of things we would like to have incorporated into our plans for this inaugural year at Castleton. But we have had to accept the limits of our capacity with a small and talented staff supported by busy volunteers. I have learned much and benefited greatly from working with this large committee of Friends who are passionate in their commitment to making Sessions a gathering that will build the spiritual life of the Yearly Meeting, who are patient with each other, share a deep faith in the Spirit's guidance, and approach this work from a place of joy and abundance.

We are excited to welcome you all to Castleton (it's gonna be so much better than a hotel in Boston!), and we look forward to the next phase of our journey, listening together for all the ways we are called to be witnesses to the movement of the Spirit among us.

—JOHN HUMPHRIES, CLERK

USFW New England

We met twice this year. In September we gathered at Durham, Maine, and heard from four New England women who had been our representatives to the USFW International Triennial in July 2013 (Leslie Manning, Ann Armstrong, Dorothy Hinshaw, and Marian Baker). We raised some funds to help Eden Grace, our sister from Beacon Hill Meeting who had

been serving as field staff of the FUM Africa Ministries Office in Kisumu, Kenya.

In April we met at Smithfield, Rhode Island, and had a sharing on "Have courage, Do everything in love," where we each shared about our current ministries. We are trying to help with the quilt project for China Camp campers whose parents are incarcerated.

Two newsletters were produced and sent out to all meetings in New England.

We now send half of the newsletters via e-mail and half via postal mail. If you are receiving it by postal mail, please stop by our display and give us an e-mail address.

At 2014 sessions, we are offering a panel of three New England women to share on the NEYM theme, "You are my witnesses." Panelists include: Annie Patterson (Mt. Toby), Ministry in Music; Rachel Guaraldi (Beacon Hill), Ministry with Christian Peacemakers; and Sara Walton (Vassalboro), ministry dealing with racial discrimination. Come join us on Monday afternoon at 3:00!

We will be raising funds to help with girls education scholarships in Turkana and Samburu this fall. (Girls are often forced to get married at age 10 or 11, even before they finish elementary school!)

Sign up at our display table if you want to receive our newsletters, or contact us through our committee page on neym.org.

—MARIAN BAKER, CLERK

Young Adult Friends

The Young Adult Friends community continues to meet four times a year. Our theme for the Midwinter Gathering was "Where is the Life?" We met at Woolman Hill, a special location for us, and we appreciated its rustic charms, especially its woodstoves around which we huddled during one of the coldest weekends of the winter. During this gathering, we struggled with finding direction and leadership. A new clerk was approved. An acting recording clerk assisted. Our dedicated YAF Coordinator supported us with her wisdom and experience. A working group to plan our spring retreat was formed from volunteers. The committees for Planning, Nurturing, and Nominations remained unfilled.

The retreat planning working group met many times and YAFs reconvened in May at Westport Meeting. Our theme was “Seizing the Abundance: reclaiming our time.” The theme chosen in response to the time-management stresses and burn-out in our young community. Fellow YAF and NEYM Secretary, Noah Baker Merrill brought home a lesson about saying “no” to some work that is offered in order that we may say “yes” to the work we are meant to do. Ironically, in the limited time available, we struggled to find time for business meetings and to balance this with needed rest, socializing, and rejuvenation. YAFs come from many locations inside and outside of New England. Many are in college. The proportions of 20-somethings to 30-somethings varies from one retreat to another. Some YAFs are not close to either their home meetings or their college-town meeting. For YAFs new to Quakerism, sometimes the YAF community is the strongest anchor for them and it can be a struggle to find spiritual community between retreats.

During our May retreat, Ross Hennessey of Quaker Voluntary Service spoke with us about QVS and its mission. Several NEYM YAFs will be residents and members of QVS houses in Atlanta and Philadelphia this fall. We heard also about possible QVS expansion into New England, and approved a minute of support.

Our Climate Change Working Group brought a minute calling for a Yearly Meeting fossil fuel divestment policy, which was endorsed and approved by our community. YAFCCWG members were integral to planning and holding the Climate Spring retreat and workshop at Woolman Hill in March.

YAFs have long used name-tags to help us get to know each other at our retreats. This spring we also began asking each individual to add to their preferred pronoun to their name tag at retreats. In doing so we acknowledge the vital role that gender identity, which may be fluid or changing, plays in our lives. A new Wholeness Working Group was formed by YAF volunteers at our May retreats to promote an inclusive community understanding of differences and how they strengthen us, and to promote a welcoming community.

YAFs continue to foster ties between Cuban and NEYM via Puente de Amigos. Several NEYM

YAFs attended YAFCON 2014 at Pendle Hill this June. Our YAF community remains a strong voice within our Yearly Meeting (YM). Several of us serve on YM committees and as staff. We have worked closely throughout the year with members of the Structural Review Committee to help discern how NEYM can better serve the Spirit and the vital work of Quakers.

Though we struggle through a time of deep reflection and seek to re-define our purpose and our responsibilities, we look forward to growing as a community, participating at Sessions in August, and continuing to support each others' ministries.

—JONAH MCKENNA MOSS, YAF CLERK

Young Friends

The spirit of Young Friends is contagious. Whether you are old or new to NEYM, the moment you walk into a retreat you are swept up by loving, nurturing, positive arms. What makes our community so spectacular is the emphasis on making sure every person feels safe, comfortable, and supported. The Young Friends have grown together and worshiped together, and the integrity of our community has continued to show its strength through the way we have faced challenges.

This year YFs had many conversations and discussions about gender, gender norms, and the importance of using the correct pronouns. Ministry & Council made an addition to the speech about commitments, asking everyone to specify their preferred pronoun when they introduced themselves. This change has raised awareness about making sure everyone is comfortable and feels they can be themselves in the YF community. As a community, our understanding of gender is evolving. We are becoming more educated on how gender can mean different things to different people, which has led YFs to reflect on the annual gender retreat and how best to structure it for upcoming years.

We've had many exciting opportunities this year, including visits from the Beehive Collective and Boston Mobilization. The Beehive Collective is a group of artists/activists who teach about peace, justice and sustainability through art and story-telling. In October we

learned about fracking, its awful impact on our world, and the history of the people in West Virginia who deal with the consequences of fracking in their everyday lives. In May, Boston Mobilization visited us and YFs were encouraged to be vulnerable and honest in hopes of starting to understand and undo racism. The organization develops youth leadership to support teen-led social justice work.

At Midwinter, YFs cozied up together for a long weekend and discussed leadings and the Divine. We had two panels, one of YFs and one of RPs. Each person put their self out there and shared spiritual experiences with lead-

ings, difficult times in their lives when they turned to the Divine for guidance, and/or their ever-growing understanding and relationship with the spirit. As the community listened and reflected on each person's experience, love and appreciation filled the room. Hugs, tears, and smiles were shared.

As Sessions approach, YFs are excited to all be in each other's company again and to keep our loving, amazing community thriving. The lights inside each of us seem to shine the brightest when we come together, learn together and appreciate together.

—ZOE YOUNG, CLERK

Reports of Appointed Representatives to Other Quaker Organizations

Friends Committee on National Legislation

This year's NEYM representatives to Friends Committee on National Legislation were: Scot Drysdale, Katherine Fisher, Kaj Telenar, Susanna Thomas, Donn Weinholtz, and Rod Zwirner. NEYM appointed these six people as individual representatives to the FCNL General Committee, and there is no formal mechanism for them to meet to discern and represent NEYM's views to FCNL. Instead, each presents his or her individual view. New England Yearly Meeting may want to consider changing this practice, perhaps by creating a formal NEYM Committee for Friends Committee on National Legislation, if a more coordinated NEYM presence on the FCNL General Committee is desired.

However, NEYM's presence at FCNL remains strong, especially because of Diane Randall's (Hartford) role as executive Secretary. Diane's assistant, Katherine Zager, is also a member of Hartford, and Barbara Monahan (New Haven) serves as executive associate Secretary for development. NEYM representatives serving on standing FCNL committees were: Scot Drysdale (Finance Committee), Kaj Telenar (Policy Committee), and Donn Weinholtz (Development Committee). Kaj's contribution was particularly important this year, as

the Policy Committee facilitated the General Committee's 10-year revision of the FCNL Policy Statement.

FCNL remains a vital, Spirit-driven Quaker force on the national scene, addressing a full array of issues related to promoting peace, advocating justice, strengthening communities and restoring our environment. Specific issues tackled by FCNL range from drones, endless war, and Pentagon spending, to immigration reform, Native American rights, campaign finance, gun violence, mass incarceration and torture; to the Federal budget, poverty and taxes; to climate change and sustainable energy. A combination of seasoned policy experts working with bright, energetic younger staff and program associates provide a tangible enthusiasm and admirable focus of resources and efforts. Friends can visit the detailed and carefully maintained FCNL web site at fcnl.org to follow FCNL's efforts, sign up for updates on issues of personal interest, and receive alerts regarding actions that they can take with regard to these issues.

FCNL remains fiscally strong and is currently engaged in a capital campaign designed to further strengthen the financial underpinnings of several of its core initiatives. In particular, the campaign will enable FCNL to expand and enhance its array of young adult programs, including its spring lobby

days, summer internships and year-long, policy-focused program associates appointments. Funds will also support development of a residential Friends in Washington program, especially well-suited for retirees. Furthermore, FCNL has increasingly been working in concert with other Friends' organizations, for example with American Friends Service Committee and Quaker Earthcare Witness to promote common goals such as Shared Security. This type of collaboration is strategically sound and very important to Friends' overall efforts.

It is an honor to represent NEYM on the FCNL General Committee, by serving an organization where Friends testimonies are so alive.

—DONN WEINHOLTZ, REPRESENTATIVE

Friends Peace Teams

This year Friends Peace Teams celebrated its 20th Anniversary at PeaceQuest 2014 in Baltimore in June. Over 120 participants from 12 countries deepened understanding and techniques for peace-building. Activities focused on personal, local and international peacemaking (See www.peacequest2014.org). Three African Peacebuilders and four from Latin America enriched the celebration and spoke at many meetings on the East Coast.

The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) was involved in violence prevention for the elections in Kenya, training 1200 citizen reporters and 500 election observers. The Kenyan program had successfully dealt with community violence and lynching. In Rwanda the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) program has purchased a building. There are now five Children's Peace Libraries, work on nutrition and peace-building with women, and workshops for the handicapped. The secondary school scholarship program has 30 students. In Burundi, a work camp built a hostel for a women's group, and a program on trauma resiliency in schools with the teachers, students, and parents is continuing. HROC workshops were conducted for "Peace Villages" where ex-combatants, returning refugees, and displaced people come together. HROC-Burundi provided a relief program for 70 families after the flooding in Bujumbura.

The Kamenge Clinic in Burundi has received authority to dispense anti-retroviral drugs and is starting a program for women survivors of rape and gender violence. The HROC program was suspended due to the rebel invasion of the Goma area. AGLI has extended the HROC program to northern Uganda, South Kivu in the Congo and immigrant communities in the U.S., and started Alternatives to Violence (AVP) in the Kakauma refugee camp, northeast Kenya.

Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) continues to expand work in Colombia, providing AVP and Community Based Trauma Healing work with victims and some perpetrators of the ongoing civil war, and with internally displaced communities. In Honduras the focus is on poor women and youth, with outreach to indigenous groups struggling to protect their lands from mining companies. In Guatemala, the absence (due to illness) of the international volunteer has meant a decrease of workshops, but an increase in efforts to develop more independent, local leadership. Possible collaboration with the AFSC Latin America office in Guatemala is expected to widen the work. In El Salvador, there was considerable outreach to Evangelical Friends churches and schools in the last year. Work in rural areas around Suchitoto and with campesinas (rural women) in cooperation with the Co-Madres (Families of the Disappeared) also increased.

This year Asia West-Pacific (AWP) welcomed many Friends from Australia and Aotearoa (NZ) yearly meetings. We are working with First Nations leaders in Australia to see if FPT visitations might be useful. Peace building in Indonesia thrives with regular visits, AVP workshops, ongoing preschools, and scholarships for teachers. Peace Place Pati regularly welcomes Friends and other peace workers. Though an Islamic community, they base decisions on group discernment in the manner of Friends, a huge step. The innovative ceramic water filters, now produced locally, are working better and are on track to meet W.H.O. standards. We returned this spring to Nepal with AVP workshops supporting local facilitators. Peace-building gets stronger daily throughout Asia West Pacific, thanks to hard-working FPTers.

—NANCY SHIPPEN, REPRESENTATIVE

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Amidst signs of dysfunctional governance at every level, QEW continues to search for patterns of spiritual resilience that can bring peace and healing. A new trifold, *Contemplative Action*, provides guidelines and hope for fulfilling the various challenging statements, such as Kabarak Call, Doctrine of Discovery repudiation, and Shared Security. Other sources of hope have been found in our various collaborations (e.g., FCNL, Quaker Institute for the Future [QIF]) and meditation on Colossians 1:26.

We have found it necessary to reestablish our founding 5 principles in order to find more balanced pathways to unity in earthcare action. Here they are:

1. To search and help others to search for that life which affirms the unity of all creation.
2. To apply and help others to apply Friends' practice to live in deep communion with all life spirit.
3. To be guided by and help others be guided by the light within us to participate in the healing of the earth.
4. To provide resources, networking, and support to yearly and monthly meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, and to others of whatever persuasion, to help them in their search for effective ways to achieve the above objectives.
5. To provide a reflective and energetic forum that will strength and deepen that

spiritual unity with nature which values the integrity, diversity, and continuity of life on earth.

We do not feel close to our goal of being laid down because Friends' testimonies and organizations are not yet fully imbued with right relationship to creation. Meanwhile, we continue to do many things with a very limited budget:

- Publications brings out our bimonthly newsletter *BeFriending Creation*, bimonthly *Friends Ecoaction Resources*, *Ecobulletins* (in collaboration with QIF, and occasional trifolds (www.quakerearthcare.org)).
- Matching mini-grants expanded to projects in Vietnam and Uganda.
- UN accreditation allows us to participate in crafting Sustainable Development Goals that begin in 2015.
- Our offices have been successfully transferred from Vermont to California under our new General Secretary, Shelley Tannenbaum.

All are cordially invited to our Annual Meeting this year at Pendle Hill in October and in California a year later. As we meet, our challenge is to work for nothing less than a spiritual transformation within the Society of Friends, so that ecojustice and environmental integrity help guide us.

—ROD ZWIRNER, REPRESENTATIVE

Committee and Board Rosters

Officers and Staff

Junior YM/Junior High YM Coordinator	Gretchen Baker-Smith
Sessions Recording Clerk	Rachel Walker Cogbill
Religious Education Coordinator	Beth Collea
YM Sessions Reading Clerk	Susan Davies
Sessions Reading Clerk	Andy Grannell
NEYM Treasurer	Ben Guaraldi
Communications Director	Jeffrey Hipp
Information Management Assistant	Sara Hubner
Sessions Recording Clerk	Rebecca Leuchak
Accounts Manager	Frederick Martin
Yearly Meeting Secretary	Noah Baker Merrill
Friends Camp Director	Nat Shed
Presiding Clerk	Jacqueline Stillwell
Sessions Recording Clerk	Will Taber
Young Friends/Young Adult Friends Coordinator .	NiaDwynwen Thomas
Sessions Coordinator	Kathleen Wooten
Archivist	(VACANT)

Committees & Boards

Committee members are appointed to standing or ad hoc committees by NEYM in Sessions or by the Permanent Board. Ex officio persons serve on a committee by virtue of office or position. Co-opted persons serve on a committee at the request of its existing members. The Purposes & Procedures of the committees are printed in the Minute Book every three years.

No general appeals by any committee of the YM or by organizations of which we are a constituent part should be made directly to the members of the YM without prior approval of the Finance Committee, except those committees that have been previously authorized to do so: Equalization Fund, Racial Social & Economic Justice, Puente de Amigos, Friends Camp, Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Student Loan, Peace & Social Concerns (for the Fund for Sufferings), United Society of Friends Women-NEYM, and the Young Friends Committees. The cost of general solicitation by a committee will be charged against the proceeds of the solicitation when the proceeds do not benefit the YM operating budget.

— MINUTE 1999-39 (7), amended by Permanent Board November 20, 2004.

Permanent Board and Its Subcommittees

- 2015: Aimee Belanger, Ben Guaraldi, Galen Hamann, Jan Hoffman, Rebecca Leuchak, Patricia Shotwell, Rosemary Zimmermann
 2016: Virginia Bainbridge, Sarah B. Gant, Nancy Isaacs, Sanford Isaacs, Bruce Neumann (recording clerk), Elias Sánchez-Eppler, Frederick Weiss
 2017: Holly Baldwin (clerk), Travis Belcher, Karen Sánchez-Eppler, Suzanna Schell, Sara Smith, Elizabeth Szatkowski, Hannah Zwirner
 2018: Susan Davies, Jeremiah Dickinson, Justice Erikson, Leanna Page Kantt, Rocky Malin, Jean McCandless, Becky Steele, Donn Weinholtz
 2019: Jacqui Clark, Deana Chase, Christopher Gant, Ian Harrington, Allan Kohrman, Carolyn Stone, Phil Stone, William Walkauskas

Ex Officio: Shearman Taber, Finance Committee clerk; Edward Baker, YM Secretary Supervisor; Robert Murray, Personnel Committee clerk; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary

personnel subcommittee

- 2015: Carolyn Stone
 2016: Jan Hoffman, Rebecca Leuchak, Robert Murray (clerk)
 2017: Christopher Gant, Karen Sánchez-Eppler
Ex Officio: Edward Baker, YM Secretary Supervisor; Holly Baldwin, Permanent Board clerk; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary

internal nominating subcommittee

- 2015: Donn Weinholtz (clerk), Sara Sue Pennell
 2016: Patsy Shotwell, Carolyn Stone
 2017: Susan Davies

clerks nominating subcommittee

- 2015: Christopher McCandless, Rosemary Zimmermann
 2016: Allan Kohrman, Ben Guaraldi
 2017: Frances Brokaw, Benigno Sánchez-Eppler

Committee on Aging

- 2015: Virginia Barker, Donald Campbell, Martha Penzer (clerk)
 2016: Alison Hersey, Anita Mendes, Mary Zwirner
 2017: Frances Brokaw

Archives & Historical Records

- 2015: Mary Frances Angelini (clerk), Marilyn Manzella, Donna McDaniel
 2016: Nancy Slator
 2017: Eileen Crosby, Carol Forsythe, Brian Quirk

Board of Managers

2015: Jeanne McKnight, Rowan Spivey
 2016: Matthew Hackman (clerk), Robb Spivey
 2017: Elizabeth Edgerly, Kathleen Malin
 2018: Brian Clark, Edward Gerrish Mair
 2019: Andrew Pang (recording clerk), Joseph Tierney
Ex Officio: Shearman Taber, Finance Committee clerk; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer

Coordinating & Advisory

All Members Ex Officio: Shearman Taber, Finance Committee clerk; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; Holly Baldwin, Permanent Board clerk; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Edward Baker, YM Secretary Supervisor; Debbie Humphries, NEYM Ministry & Counsel clerk

Correspondence

2015: Lisa Appleton (clerk), Bonnie Norton
 2016: Susan Furry, Anita Mendes
 2017: Louis Cox, Lynne Weiss

Development

2015: Jonah McKenna Moss, Delia Windwalker
 2016: Rocky Malin, Martha Schwope, Sara Smith (clerk)
 2017: Kristna Evans, Lucy Meadows
Ex Officio: Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary

Earthcare Ministry

2015: Louis Cox, Rebecca MacKenzie, Ruah Swennerfelt (clerk), Rodman Zwirner
 2016: Christopher Haines, Phyllis Killam-Abell, David Legg, Ben Warner
 2017: William Holcombe, David Millar, Kimberly Stoner

Ecumenical Relations

Ex Officio: Marian Baker (committee contact) and Betsy Morse, New Hampshire Council of Churches; Christopher McCandless, Vermont Council of Churches; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk; Kathleen Kelly, Massachusetts Council of Churches; Leslie Manning, Maine Council of Churches; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Dorothy Carlsten, Rhode Island Council of Churches; Diane Dicranian, Maine Council of Churches

Faith and Practice Revision

Douglas Armstrong
 Marion Athearn
 Clarence Burley
 Daphne Clement
 Susan Davies
 Margaret Edmondson
 Eric Edwards
 Kristna Evans
 Eleanor Godway
 Kenneth Haase
 David Haines
 Jan Hoffman (clerk)
 Sara Hubner
 Phebe McCosker (committee contact)
 Susan Reilly
 Greg Williams

Finance

2015: Muriel Farrar, Kathryn Olsen, Carol Savery-Frederick
 2016: Kimberly Allen, Dulany Bennett, Christine Connaire, Gerald Sazama, Sherman Taber (clerk)
 2017: Jeremiah Dickinson, Ralph Gentile, Sanford Isaacs, Elizabeth Kantt, Elias Sánchez-Eppler (recording clerk), Roland Stern
Ex Officio: Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; Frederick Martin, Accounts Manager; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary

Friends Camp

2015: Alicia Ruth Atkinson, Tricia Erikson, David Marstaller (clerk)
 2016: Michael Rogers
 2017: Travis Belcher
Ex Officio: Nat Shed, Friends Camp Director

Friends General Conference

2015: Penelope Wright (clerk), David Haines, Donald Mick
 2016: Elise Person
 2017: David Anick, Peter Nutting, Clark Reddy, Michelle Riendeau
Ex Officio: Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Holly Baldwin, Permanent Board clerk; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk

Friends United Meeting

- 2017: Leslie Manning*, Ann Dodd-Collins*†, Jacqueline Stillwell*†, Rosemary Zimmermann†, Kenneth Haase*†, Abigail Matchette†, Marian Baker†
Ex Officio: Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk (Representative to the FUM General Board)
 * NEYM Representative to the FUM General Board
 † NEYM Representative to the 2017 FUM Triennial

Friends World Committee for Consultation–New England

- 2015: Debbie Humphries*, Judith Goldberger
 2016: Dorothy Grannell (clerk) *, Nataly Moran**, Cynthia Ganung**
 2017: Jonathan Vogel-Borne***, Mary Hopkins***
Ex Officio: Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary
 * Section of the Americas Representative 2015
 ** Section of the Americas Representative 2016
 *** Section of the Americas Representative 2017

Ministry & Counsel at-Large

- 2015: Margaret Cooley, Beth Gorton, Allison Randall, Gerald Sazama
 2016: Katherine Fisher, Will Jennings-Hess, Heidi Nortonsmith, Carl Williams
 2017: Minga Claggett-Borne, Anna Dulin, Debbie Humphries (clerk), Honor Woodrow
Ex Officio: Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk; Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary

Yearly Meeting Nominating

- Christopher McCandless, clerk
 2015: Constance Kincaid-Brown (recording clerk), Nancy Isaacs
 2016: Virginia Bainbridge, Rhoda Mowry
 2017: Sara Sue Pennell, Leslie Umans

Moses Brown School Board

- 2015: Don McNemar, Willis Monroe, Martha Schwope, NiaDwynwen Thomas
 2016: David Holdt, Lee Jaspers, Mary Lee Morrison, Elsie Morse
 2017: Frederick Martin, Michael McGuigan, Liesa Stamm

Committee for Nurturing Friends Education at Moses Brown School

- 2015: Jeanne McKnight, NiaDwynwen Thomas
2016: Willis Monroe (clerk), Mary Lee Morrison
Ex Officio: Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk

Peace & Social Concerns

- 2015: Ian Harrington, Stephen McKnight, John Redman, Eric Wasileski (co-clerk), Lillie Wilson
2016: Barbara Dakota (co-clerk), Jim Elliott, Shawn Donovan

Publications and Communications

- 2015: Kerry Cullinan, Sanford Isaacs, Neil Blanchard
2016: Mark Barker, Emily Taber (clerk), Steve Whinfield
2017: Regina McCarthy
Ex Officio: Jeffrey Hipp, Communications Technology Coordinator; Sara Hubner, Office Manager

Puente de Amigos

- 2015: Samuel Baily, Nancy Beiter, Margaret Hawthorn (recording clerk)
2016: Mary Ann Cadwallader (assistant clerk), Leonard Cadwallader (clerk), Margaret Fogarty
2017: Roland Stern (treasurer)

Quaker Youth Education

- 2015: Avery Johnson, Jana Noyes-Dakota
2016: Marian Baker, Pam Cole (clerk), Gina Nortonsmith
Ex Officio: Beth Collea, Religious Education & Outreach Coordinator

Racial Social & Economic Justice

- 2015: Nur Shoop (co-clerk)
2016: Sheila Garrett (co-clerk), Sarah Walton
2017: Michelle Brimage, LouAnne McDonald

Sessions Committee

2016: John Humphries (clerk), Rebecca Leuchak (recording clerk), Laura Hoskins (arrangements), James Varner (equalization), Diane Weinholtz (at-large)
Ex Officio: Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Secretary; Gretchen Baker-Smith, Junior YM/Junior High YM Coordinator; Dulany Bennett, General Bookstore manager and Finance Committee representative; Neil Blanchard, AV coordinator; Mary Chenaille, volunteer coordinator; Rachel Walker Cogbill, YM Sessions recording clerk; Barb Dakota, shuttle coordinator; Susan Davies, YM Sessions reading clerk; Christopher Haines, Earthcare Ministry Committee; Andy Grannell, YM Sessions reading clerk; Ben Guaraldi, NEYM Treasurer; Jeffrey Hipp, Communications Technology Coordinator; Tom Jackson, plenary & display room coordinator; Betty Ann Lee, JYM Sessions Coordinator; Kevin Lee, Sessions pastoral counselor; Jean McCandless, Child & Family Bookstore; Christopher McCandless (co-opted); Jana Noyes-Dakota, access needs coordinator; Jay O'Hara, YAF representative/Climate Group; Karen Sargent, Child & Family Bookstore; Jacqueline Stillwell, NEYM presiding clerk; Ruah Swennerfelt, Earthcare Ministry Committee (Alt.); Will Taber, YM Sessions recording clerk; NiaDwynwen Thomas, Young Friends/Young Adult Friends Coordinator; Susan Vargo, Ministry & Counsel representative; Kathleen Wooten, Events Coordinator; YAF clerk (vacant); YF clerk (vacant)

Youth Ministries

Ex Officio: NiaDwynwen Thomas, YF/YAF Coordinator; Gretchen Baker-Smith, JYM/JHYM Coordinator

Representatives to Other Friends Organizations

American Friends Service Committee

2015: Martha Mcmanamy
2016: Anne Nash, Carole Rein
2017: Sara Burke, Elias Sánchez-Eppler

Friends Committee on National Legislation

2015: Kaj Telenar, Rodman Zwirner
2016: Scot Drysdale, Katherine Fisher
2017: Susanna Thomas, Donn Weinholtz

Friends Peace Teams

Nancy Shippen

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Rodman Zwirner

William Penn House

William Jennings-Hess

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December 2014

Dec 6–7	JHYM Retreat
Dec 27–30	Young Friends Retreat

January 2015

Jan 1–4	YAF Retreat
Jan 2	<i>New England Friend</i> deadline
Jan 16–18	JHYM Retreat
Jan 30–Feb 1	JYM Retreat
Jan 31	Committee Day

February 2015

Feb 13–15	Young Friends Retreat
Feb 21	Permanent Board

March 2015

Mar 1	<i>New England Friend</i> deadline
Mar 6–8	6 th Grade Retreat
Mar 20–22	JHYM Retreat
	Young Friends Retreat

April 2015

Apr 11	Committee Day
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May 2015

May 1	<i>New England Friend</i> deadline
May 1–3	JHYM Retreat
May 8–10	Young Friends Retreat
May 9	Permanent Board
May 15–17	JYM Retreat

June 2015

Jun 5–7	8 th Grade Retreat
Jun 26–28	Young Friends Reunion

August 2015

Aug 1–6	NEYM Annual Sessions
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New England Yearly Meeting of Friends

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