

“In fear and trembling be bold in God’s service”

August 4–9, Castleton University, VT



Invitation to Sessions

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

JUNE 2018



Skip Schiel 2017 teeksaphoto.org

Sessions 2018 at a Glance:

Explore the theme at neym.org/sessions

Dates: Saturday, Aug. 4 through Thursday, Aug. 9

Location: Castleton University in Castleton, Vermont

Plenary Speakers: Sarah Walton, Meg Klepack, and Adria Gulizia

Bible Half-Hour Presenter: Diane Randall

Other Events:

The **Contra Dance** will be back, Monday night

The **Coffee House** will be Wednesday night—plan ahead!

Learn more and register at neym.org/sessions

Fritz Weiss,
NEYM Presiding Clerk
Leslie Manning,
Sessions Committee clerk

Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak. When decisions have to be made, are you ready to join with others in seeking clearness, asking for God’s guidance and offering counsel to one another? (Britain Yearly Meeting)

Dear Friends,

New England Yearly Meeting will gather for our 358th annual meeting from August 4th through August 9th at Castleton University in Vermont. The theme for this year’s session is “In fear and trembling be bold in God’s service.” Sessions Committee was given this theme after we heard it read into a deeply centered period of prayer. But these words do not occur in the original passage; they were written into our hearts.

I hear it as a call to discipleship and I hear a call which echoes the theme Cuba Yearly Meeting chose for 2017 from Joshua 1:9 “Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid or dismayed for thy God is with you wherever you go.”

When we are together we are best able to hear God’s hopes and experience God’s unending love. We are able to quake and yet be bold. Bring your fears and your hopes for renewal. Come be refreshed. Come with open hearts and with good news. Join us in worship, in tumult, and in play.

We will continue to listen to how we have been faithful to the truths we have named over the past two years: faithfully responding to climate change; challenging white supremacy in our community and our country; welcoming all and supporting immigrants, refugees and sanctuary. How did our lives and the lives of our meetings speak? Come share the stories of how we live into God’s kingdom in these times.

Diane Randall (Hartford MM), Executive Secretary of FCNL, has accepted our invitation to give the Bible Half-Hour talks, Sunday through Thursday.

On Sunday afternoon there will be a panel of three friends speaking to the theme: Sarah Walton (Vassalboro MM), Meg Klepack (West Falmouth Preparative) and Adria Gulizia (New York YM) have each accepted the invitation to serve on this panel.

Sarah has been called to the work of ending racially biased policing and police violence in the US. Meg is active in the group called to prophetic action on climate change in New England. Adria Gulizia writes the blog *Shadow of Babylon* (shadowofbabylon.com) and is a member of the Friends of Jesus Fellowship.

Anchor Groups will meet daily to explore and respond to what we hear written into our own hearts. These groups are led by volunteers and if you wish to lead or co-lead a group, please contact Leslie at sessions@neym.org.

For six days we will gather in worship to faithfully discern our way forward as a community, to do the business before us and to seek to live bravely and fully into the Spirit that transforms the world and us. All of us are needed and all of us are welcome. 



PHOTO COURTESY OF FCNL

Bible Half-hours with Diane Randall

Diane Randall has served as Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation since 2011. Diane is a convinced Friend who came to the Religious Society of Friends through Hartford Monthly Meeting, where she still maintains her membership.

Diane grew up as a member of the Lutheran church in Omaha, NE, where she first encountered the Bible. Of her spiritual and religious practices, Diane writes: “the teachings of Jesus have always been in my heart. Becoming a Friend helped me see a way of practicing my faith in a holistic way, and I’m continually convinced at how much practice it takes.”

“Friends have throughout our history exercised persistent practices of speaking, listening, expectant waiting, community-building, and truth telling as ways to witness to the power of the Spirit,” Diane writes. “In our work

lobbying Congress and encouraging people across the country to engage with their members of Congress, I believe the work we do at FCNL deeply connected to this witness and to Quaker faith and practice.”

Diane resides in Washington, DC, with her husband, Roger Catlin. Their three adult children have all benefited from the guidance of Friends Camp and New England Yearly Meeting youth programs. Diane travels widely among Friends and relishes the opportunity to worship in new settings. **f**

Pay-as-Led: A Spiritual Approach to Fees

Our experiment with a “Pay-As-Led” approach to Sessions fees has been a great success—but your faithful participation is essential. Friends have found it to be a much simpler way to determine how much to pay, and collected fees and donations have covered all the costs of the gathering. :

At the time of registration, Friends are shown three different suggested amounts: an “average limited income” fee, a “traditional” fee and a “complete cost” fee. Some Friends may decide that they are unable to pay anything this year, and nobody will be required to ask for funds. Pay-As-Led relies on your integrity as a Friend, trusting that each of us will contribute what we are

led and able to support our wider faith community.

Under this system, **contributions from individuals and meetings have proven to be essential in covering our costs.** Any amount which a Friend pays in excess of the “traditional” fee will be counted as a tax-deductible donation to support others’ participation. Monthly meetings are also encouraged to contribute to support Sessions. All of these contributions (previously identified as the “Equalization Fund”) are now pooled and support the attendance of all Friends—including members of your meeting—who are unable to cover the actual costs of their participation.

Last year, approximately \$20,238 in overall Sessions costs was subsidized by the Yearly Meeting beyond Pay-As-Led Sessions fees and Equalization giving from local meetings. The average amount of financial support per person who received Equalization (253 Friends) was \$241.

If your monthly meeting supports Annual Sessions with an Equalization contribution in its budget, we are very grateful and ask you to consider increasing that gift. If your meeting does not provide such support on a regular basis, please consider doing so. **We invite meetings and individuals to send checks**, payable to NEYM, to 901 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602; or, give online at neym.org/donate. **f**

Arriving in Castleton on Saturday

ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON, August 4, Castleton’s main street will again be occupied by a Shriners parade, limiting access to campus for a couple of hours, yet providing a fun opportunity for Friends to spend time together!

Friends are encouraged to arrive before 2:00 p.m. The dining hall will be serving lunch (pay at the door), and many campus facilities will be open in the afternoon for Friends.

Workshops and Evening Opportunities

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS will be offered on Tues. and Wed. from 3:30 to 5 p.m. A choice of 10 one-day workshops and 5 two-day workshops will be offered. Evening opportunities remain in the schedule, Sun. through Tuesday at 9 p.m. Applicants are urged to offer programs through a committee, with the support of a meeting or a Yearly Meeting interest group, and that will appeal to a wide variety of Friends. Remember, be bold! Applications to sessions@neym.org will be accepted through June 15.

We appreciate that there is currently limited care for children during these times, and that this may limit the full participation of some parents of young children. Sessions Committee continues our efforts to remove barriers to full participation of all Friends in Sessions activities, and welcomes suggestions for new ways of meeting the needs of families.

Is Your Meeting Represented?

Remember: Meetings are asked to appoint and send representatives of all ages to attend Sessions, share in discernment, and report back on the work and life of the Yearly Meeting.



Youth & Young Adult Programs

NEYM YOUTH PROGRAMS offer robust and grounded communities, from infants in childcare to Young Adult Friends. For many, the youth programs are amongst the most meaningful aspects of Yearly Meeting Sessions.

Participants must have health information and parental permission submitted as part of the registration process. Parents should not bring or send children unless they are prepared to participate in the program. Parents are responsible for their children during unscheduled periods. Orientation times and locations for the youth programs will be in their particular schedules, as well as the *Yearly Meeting News*.

CHILDCARE

(ages 4 and under) is available in the mornings and afternoons. Coordinators: Choë Grubb-Saleem and Whitney Mikkelsen • childcare@neym.org

JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING

(entering grades K–6) is a structured program of learning, fun, and friendships. Planning Coordinator: Betty Ann Lee, 508-994-1638 • wlees@comcast.net

JUNIOR HIGH

(entering grades 7–9) is a welcoming, joy-filled community. Multiple blocks of daily program time include music, games, discussions, worship and creativity. Coordinator: Gretchen Baker-Smith, 508-997-0940 • jym.jhym@neym.org

YOUNG FRIENDS

(entering grade 10 to 2018 high school graduates) have their own dorm and program, with some activities shared with the adult Sessions program. The YF program requires adherence to expectations, some mandatory participation and an adult sponsor. Coordinator: Maggie Nelson, 978-8382-1850 • maggie@neym.org.

YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS

(ages 18–35) have daily “affinity group” (worship-sharing) time and young adult-specific programming as well as participating in general Sessions activities. Stop by the YAF lounge. Coordinator: Hilary Burgin, 978-760-0116. • hilary@neym.org.

Sessions Bookstores: Read by the Light

For Readers...

AGAIN THIS YEAR we will have two large and lively bookstores.

The general bookstore will be open Saturday to Wednesday. We stock lots of books by Quakers and other interesting people. You’ll also find buttons, bookmarks, t-shirts, espresso drinks—and plenty of hanging out. Have a free hour or two? Volunteer to work at the checkout counters, tidy up, or recommend your favorite books to curious shoppers. No experience is necessary. Just check the box on the registration form and we’ll contact you. And in the meantime, find us on Facebook at “Quak-E-Mart”!

If you are an author with a new book out, we would love to do a lunch-

Call to Artists

To display your art at Sessions, contact Nancy Marstaller at marstallern@gmail.com by June 15. Include information about the type of work, how many pieces you hope to display, and their sizes. Nancy will contact each artist in early July.

The Family Neighborhood

We invite families, especially those with young children, to request housing in the Family Neighborhood during registration. From early-bird coffee and tea, to Parent Conversations, to end-of-day story time, we stir up a spirit of community, drawing forth joy, warmth, mutuality and care. If you are traveling as a single parent, the community becomes extra pairs of eyes and hands.

Harriet Heath, co-founder of the Quaker Parenting Initiative, will be hosting some conversations in the Neighborhood!

To add your presence to this “pop-up family reunion” check “Family Neighborhood” under Housing Choices. We have a beautiful dormitory space!

Register early—space in the Family Neighborhood will fill up fast!

time book signing and sale for you outside the cafeteria. Email bookstore@neym.org.

Come to the Child and Family Bookstore at the Fireside Lounge in the Campus Center. We’ll have books and more for children, parents, grandparents and families, including curriculum and service project information for home and First Day School, flags, posters, and starry crowns, cards and late-afternoon music!

For Consignment Sellers ...

Please contact consignments@neym.org. The consignment coordinator will be sending out the forms and guidelines to everyone who has consigned in past years. **i**

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

901 Pleasant Street
Worcester, MA 01602-1908
Address correction requested

NEYM Annual Sessions Information & Registration
Register online at neym.org/sessions

NEYM Contacts

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Accounts Manager: Frederick Martin, accountsmanager@neym.org

Events Coordinator: Elizabeth Hacala, 740-478-2537 | events@neym.org

Friends Camp Director: Anna Hopkins, 207-445-2361 | director@friendscamp.org

Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator:

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781-784-3471 | recoord@neym.org

Treasurer: Shearman Taber, 618-965-7042 | treasurer@neym.org

Yearly Meeting Secretary: Noah Merrill, 617-615-6396 | ymsec@neym.org

Young Adult Engagement Coordinator: Hilary Burgin, 978-760-0116 | hilary@neym.org

Interim Young Friends Coordinator: Maggie Nelson, 978-382-1850 | yf.yafcoord@neym.org

STAY IN TOUCH!

Send your change of address, telephone or e-mail to office@neym.org so you don't miss important news and announcements.

If you're not subscribed to the monthly e-mail newsletter lifting up the life and ministry of New England Quakers, sign up on the website: neym.org/mc-signup

DON'T MISS OUT!

Make sure neym@neym.org is in your e-mail address book to ensure that our messages don't end up in your junk e-mail folder or labeled "spam."



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