

Quaker

N e w s l e t t e r



April 2020

15 Rutherford Place, (2nd and 3rd Aves at 15th St) NYC 10003
212.475.0466 Fifteenthstreetny@yahoo.com
quaker.org/legacy/15stfriends/ or: nycquakers.org

THE NEWSLETTER OF
FIFTEENTH STREET
MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Worship in the Time of Coronavirus

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, **all in-person meetings are suspended** until further notice, but remote worship opportunities are cropping up.

Check 15thStreetFriends@googlegroups.com
or www.nycquakers.org for updates.

MEETINGS continuing Online:

Every Sunday

11:00 15th Street Virtual Meeting for Worship
Worship with 15th Street Friends on your
computer, cell phone or land line phone.

Zoom Video

Click link below to join Zoom Meeting by Video
<https://zoom.us/j/2153104074>

Mobile Phone dial in

Tap number below on mobile phones in order to call.
After message requesting code tap phone again and code
will be entered automatically.
+16468769923,,2153104074#

Landline Phone call in

Dial by phone & Code
PH: 646 876 9923
Code: 215 310 4074

Men's Group will meet virtually

Tentative date: April 19th, Sunday, 6-9 pm
For access, contact Tony here tshitemi@uai-ny.com

Every Wednesday at 5pm

Meeting for Worship and Healing

Formerly known as "Quaker Prayer Healing phone meeting" will be held every Wednesday at 5:00PM EST (New York City time). To join the conference call, start by dialing the number below and then follow the prompts for the access code. You will be prompted to "announce yourself" once you join the call. Please do so, even if it's silent, so we all know who has joined!
USA: (712) 451-0673 Access Code 357843#

For more information, contact Patty Frascatore
at brooklynprayerhealing@gmail.com

Coming to the Table (CTTT) NY Metro group

Will meet virtually

Saturday, April 11, 10-12, and 12:30-2pm
For access, contact Julie: parkerhead@earthlink.net

CTTT holds a monthly meeting to share stories and heal from the legacy of slavery. This is for descendants of enslaved people and descendants of slave holders, as well as people interested in beginning to eliminate white supremacy.

The Brooklyn group will not meet in April.

www.comingtothetable.org



Closed and Cancelled:

Cancelled:

April Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

Friends Shelter has Closed

After a period of operating with only 5 guests, and following procedures to minimize the risk of contagion, the shelter sent the following message to volunteers:

We have made the heartbreaking decision to stop taking guests at the shelter for the duration of the corona virus crisis. The accepted wisdom is to stay in place at all costs. The more we or our guests move around, the more likely and rapid the spread of the virus. This terrible sacrifice in the short term is an attempt to rescue the future.

I am so, so sorry. We have kept our shelter open as long as we could and our guests were so grateful. This is a terrible time.

We are such a generous and warm community, here is a suggestion for something we can all do. Someone you've worked with might benefit from a connection, or might need groceries delivered - or any sort of contact - so reach out, pick up the phone, send a text, or write. Now more than ever we need each other.

Katy Homans, Shelter Committee

Cancelled:

~~New York Yearly Meeting Spring Sessions~~

Scheduled for Friday-Sunday, April 3-5, at Oakwood Friends School.

Cancelled:

**~~World Conference & Rally:~~
Abolish Nuclear Weapons;
Resist and Reverse the Climate Crisis;
For Social and Economic Justice**

Friends,
Concern for people's health has led us to **cancel** the in-person April 24-26 World Conference, rally and march. **BUT**, we are planning for an **international online conference with simultaneous interpretation**. Look forward to future announcements.

For more information: see worldconference2020.org

- Supported by 15th St Peace & Social Justice Committee

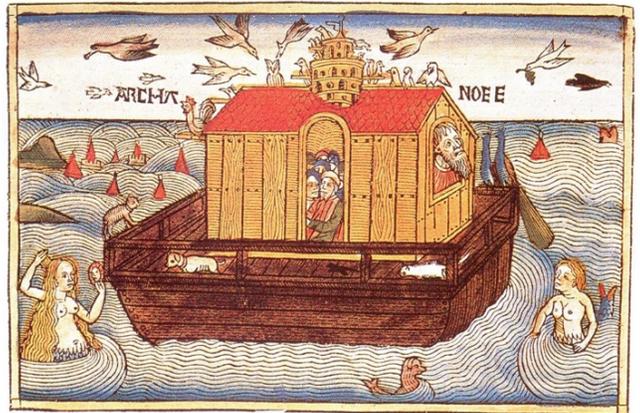
**Still planning for July:
NYYM Summer Sessions at Silver Bay**

Registration for [New York Yearly Meeting's Summer Sessions](#), scheduled to be held July 19-25, 2020 at Silver Bay, NY, is **open now!**

At Summer Sessions you can be part of a Quaker community for a week, meeting and playing and worshipping with other Friends of all ages.

Planning is continuing, and refunds will be issued if necessary.

Do you want to help with the program for youth and children? Junior Yearly Meeting is seeking volunteers. Please [read their letter](#) along with the introduction by Jeffrey Aaron, Clerk of NYYM.



**Minutes of the March Monthly Meeting
for Worship with a Concern for Business**

AT THE FIFTEENTH STREET MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, HELD IN THE MEETING HOUSE AT 221 EAST 15th STREET, MANHATTAN, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, ON A SUNNY SUNDAY, THE 8th OF MARCH 2020, AT 1 PM:

In an opening time of quiet, the assistant clerk reads aloud the 14th advices and 7th queries from FAITH AND PRACTICE, a selection on the conduct of business meetings from Rex Ambler's THE QUAKER WAY, and this jubilee query: 'How do we forgive ourselves for not completing all we hope to accomplish and taking on more than we can handle?' and Friends consider them in quiet.

2020-3-1: The clerk presents the agenda for this meeting and asks that, in the future, Friends with items of business get them to him by noon of the day before the monthly meeting.

2020-3-2: For our pot-luck luncheon on the 29th of this month and the New York Quarterly Meeting to take place in this building on April 19th, **volunteers are needed for community-building activities and lunch.**

2020-3-3: **We agree not to hold a monthly business meeting in April** due to that meeting date being the same as the day called Easter, there being few items to come up, and the next quarterly meeting being on the third Sunday of that month.

2020-3-4: The Nominating committee presents as a **first reading the following names of Friends to appoint to committees and posts** for the terms listed. These names will come to us at the next monthly meeting for consideration.

-Claire Litherland, assistant clerk, term to end 12-2020,
-Charles Brainard, recording clerk, term to end 12-2020,
-Carmen Hendershoff, Budget-and-Collections, term to end 12-2020,
-Margery Cornwell, Ministry-and-Worship, term to end 12-2020, and
-John Maynard, directory, term to end 12-2020.

2020-3-5: The Nominating committee presents as a **second reading the following names of Friends to appoint to committees and posts** for the terms listed, and Friends appoint them:

-Nancy Adelman, Pastoral-care, first term to end 12-2022,
-Jackie Shitemi, Religious-education, first term to end 12-2022,
-Katherine Mylenki, recorder, first term to end 12-2020.
-Richard Accetta-Evans and Sander Hicks, historians, first terms to end 12-2020,
-Linda Hill Brainard, Handbook-revision, fifth term to end 12-2020,
-Elizabeth Enloe, Handbook-revision, fourth term to end 12-2020,
-Amy Scarola,
Peace-and-Social-Justice, ninth term to end 12-2020,
-Glenn Josey,
Peace-and-Social-Justice, fifth term to end 12-2020,
-Carol Jackson,
Peace-and-Social-Justice, fourth term to end 12-2020,
-Diana Smith-Barker, fourth term to end 12-2020,
-Steven Monroe Smith,
Shelter, twenty-second term to end 12-2020,
-Katy Homans, Shelter, ninth term to end 12-2020,
-Phip Kovacevich, Shelter, ninth term to end 12-2020,

-Claire Litherland, Shelter, sixth term to end 12-2020,
-Zachary Edminster, Shelter, second term to end 12-2020,
-Sarah O'Connell Vaishville and Elsa Wilson, hospitality coordinators, first terms to end 12-2020.

2020-3-6: Richard Accetta-Evans, for Ministry-and-Worship, reads aloud the State-of-the-Meeting report.

With some additions, Friends accept the report and ask the clerk to forward it to the New York Quarterly Meeting and the New York Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

2019 State of the Meeting Report

Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting

'How has the Life of the Spirit been fresh and visibly at work in our Meeting during the past year?'

- New York Yearly Meeting.

CONDITION OF OUR MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Our Meetings for Worship have been consistently warm and graced by Divine Presence. We have been blessed with meaningful ministry and often gathered in deeper silence this year. Although we are fewer in number these days, we feel the Spirit moving among us, and we are grateful.

Each First Day we had two regularly-scheduled Meetings for Worship, one at 9:30 AM and one at 11 AM. On the second First Day of each month some Friends gathered at 11 AM for Bible-study. These Friends slowly and intensely studied and shared their insights about the Gospel of John.

Our First Day School is scheduled weekly for 11 AM. Our community is blessed to have a child-care person with a strong connection to our families and Friends' values. The children enjoyed fellowship with her and each other in dedicated First Day School space each First Day, and, when opportunity arose, also welcomed teaching by different members of our community. At approximately 11:45, the students joined the 11 AM Meeting for Worship.

On September 22d, our Friends-in-Unity-with-Nature and Peace-and-Social-Justice committees sponsored a Public Meeting for Worship entitled 'Holding Earth in the Light' as part of the week-long United Nations Climate Summit that followed. We experienced a profound meditation together with activists and organizers from the UN and members of our own community. Chief Dwaine

Perry, of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, also joined us and spoke briefly.

Beginning in July, New York Quarterly Meeting began celebrating a Jubilee Year. Our Meeting labored with ways to participate. On fifth First Days we held extended Worship from 9:30 AM- 12 PM. Friends were encouraged to come for as much or as little of that time as they felt led. These Meetings were followed by joyful potlucks and fellowship.

CONDITION OF OUR MEETING FOR BUSINESS

With the beginning of the Jubilee Year, some of our ways of conducting Meeting for Business changed. We reverted to beginning at 1 PM instead of at noon. We asked our committees to present their reports prior to Meeting for Business and offer queries so that the Meeting could reflect upon them. We found this to be an enriching experience.

The business of our Meeting benefited from devoted attention by members and committees. Our Property Committee addressed needed property improvements, while preparing for larger projects in the coming years. Our Nominating Committee worked diligently to fill the open positions with a smaller active membership. After working with all committees and reviewing the composition of our meeting, the Handbook Committee brought revisions for Meeting approval. Our Directory Committee updated contact information. Our Greeting Committee assured a welcoming presence at the front door of the Meeting House. Our Social-hour Committee required support to organize refreshments during the social hour. Our Library Committee made available our Quaker collection each Sunday. Our Newsletter Committee distributed a monthly publication of news and announcements. The Treasurer reported quarterly, reminding us of the gap between annual contributions and our aspirational budget. Budget-and-Collections Committee worked on the description of the Witness Fund and the newly-approved Fund for Leadings and Sufferings. The Religious-Education Committee requested Meeting-wide reflection on the responsibilities of the entire Meeting for our First Day School, on the strain carried by current members of the Committee, and on fresh participation and connection with new realities.

CONDITION OF OUR WITNESS

Our faith deepened, and the Spirit was refreshed, in great part because our witness committees brought participants to Fifteenth Street. Our four distinct committees of outreach served our Meeting's continuing effort to represent Friends' work in the world for peace and justice, care of the Earth, and faith and action. They did so through artistic expression, participation in multiple peace demonstrations and protests, and provision of shelter and community to homeless adults. Our experience more than ever in 2019 was that our witness work attracted new attenders to our worship and community.

Increasingly, our witness committees worked together on projects of mutual concern such as: performances on faith and non-violence; films, discussions, and lectures open to the public on social justice and the environment; allocation of funds for Africa Education work of the Quarter; anti-nuclear action; and support to a member travelling in the ministry. The witness committees provided meeting space to social-service groups such as Coming to the Table (healing from the effects of slavery), New Sanctuary Coalition (training programs to assist immigrants), and the Truth Action Project (advocacy for an evidentiary investigation of 9/11).

The Peace-and-Social-Justice Committee continued to hold a Peace Vigil every first Sunday of the month at Washington Square Arch from 1 to 2 o'clock. It encouraged participation in peace demonstrations organized to protest against the wars in Yemen and other Middle-East countries. The committee worked with the Arts, Shelter, and Friends-in-Unity-with-Nature committees and Friends Seminary to sponsor and present public programs. Programs supported were, for example, the Veterans-for-Peace exhibit on the My Lai Massacre and a fund-raising event for 'The Boys Who Said No,' a film on conscientious objection. The Peace-and-Social-Justice Committee continued to seek reform of the prison and justice system, and supported just pay for prison labor and end to solitary confinement.

The Friends-in-Unity-with-Nature (FUN) Committee focused on the climate-correction program in the book Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming, edited by Paul Hawken, by educating themselves and presenting the book's suggested solutions to our Meeting. As a result, the Meeting in turn conserved paper, eliminated plastics, and preserved our common spaces with tips found in Drawdown. The committee continued to sponsor talks and trips to inform

Meeting members of how to better preserve our environment in micro and our Earth in macro. Our Meeting was grateful for this work and for the committee's sponsorship of the interfaith service 'Holding Earth in the Light.'

Our Meeting's active Arts Committee presented socially-relevant films, plays, exhibits, and live performances by Meeting artists, both for the Meeting and the public. The committee produced an original and well-received play, 'The Way of a Pilgrim,' written by committee member Steve Capra Greechie, to a packed Meeting House with many newcomers. The Arts Committee worked on new initiatives including the improvement of our audiovisual capabilities.

A core group of volunteers from our Meeting and the neighborhood, supported by material and labor donations from Quarterly Meeting, Friends Seminary, Mennonite friends, and caring individuals, kept the Shelter open nightly for up to 14 guests. The Shelter Committee worked with 15th-Street Property Committee to install dishwashers and switched to reusable plates and stainless-steel tableware for environmental sustainability. Several Friends Seminary students worked with the Shelter Committee to record its long history and to assist with fundraising.

CONDITION OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Beginning in July, we welcomed New York Quarterly Meeting's proposal to observe a year of Jubilee as a time of intentional repose. With discussions and time, we came to embrace and give shape to our range of perspectives - whether and what to set aside, and what new opportunities to create. We as a whole, and as individuals engaged in fellowship with increased awareness and intent, used a consent agenda at Business Meetings to release time for less-pressured considerations, and worshiped with queries on forgiveness.

We are learning to grow into our new relationship with Friends Seminary. New, formal and mutually-agreed-upon communications and decision-making structures began to take hold. Friends Seminary's construction project was completed, and the Meeting and the School together with New York Quarterly Meeting embarked on agreements concerning the shared use of space in the Meeting House and Rutherford Place. The Care-Relationship Committee turned its attention to opportunities for meaningful engagement over shared beliefs and interests.

We are mindful that personal relationships are strengthened under the guidance of the Spirit when intentionally cultivated and nurtured with open hearts.

GOING FORWARD

In our 2018 Report we ended with the words, 'Going forward we want to focus on our strengths - our worship, our witness, and our desire to improve our relationships. We trust that new Friends will arrive.' This year we deepened our worship, welcomed new Friends, and actively shared our witness with the world. Through our Jubilee Year experiences we have also worked on forgiveness and improving our community. We continue this focus into the year before us.

2020-3-7: Bobby Gonzalez, for the **Arts committee**, reads **aloud this report**, and Friends accept it:

Arts Committee Report

In the last 12 months, the Arts Committee has realized several projects:

THE BOYS WHO SAID NO - On March 30th at 3 PM, Meeting presented a documentary on draft resisters in the Vietnam War, THE BOYS WHO SAID NO, in the Meetinghouse. The Committee's role was to provide audiovisual support and volunteers for the event.

MY LAI MEMORIAL - On March 22d through 24th, Veterans for Peace presented an interactive art exhibit and presentation on the Vietnam War in various rooms at 15 Rutherford Place. The Committee's role was to provide audiovisual support and volunteers.

THE WAY OF A PILGRIM - On June 16, in the Meetinghouse, the Committee presented a reading of Steve Capra's inspirational play THE WAY OF A PILGRIM, co-sponsored by Ministry and Worship.

SOCIAL SCULPTURE FOR INDIVIDUAL GOALS - The Committee continued its discussion group SOCIAL SCULPTURE FOR INDIVIDUAL GOALS on First Days. The group did not meet every week since we didn't have a group leader every week. We'll continue to schedule this group in partnership with Pastoral Care.

BULLETIN BOARD PRESENCE - The Committee put up three envelopes on the bulletin board in the Lobby of the meeting house with forms for anyone who needs them to contact the committee. The forms are: Proposal for Sponsorship; Logistical and Technical Request; Borrowing Equipment.

INVENTORY - The Committee has been testing our audiovisual equipment and evaluating our needs to determine how we can better support the Meeting.

STORAGE - As part of the renovation of Committee Room, the Arts Committee assisted the Property Committee by reorganizing items and moving our audiovisual equipment to the storage space above the Meetinghouse lobby. We also worked with other committees to reorder the storage space.

DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY - Peace and Social Justice screened DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY, a film about the victimization of indigenous peoples. The Arts Committee provided audiovisual support.

MATERIALS PLANNING - Upon request, the Committee submitted to Quarterly Meeting a list of materials and improvements we'd like to see in the long run - i. e., a Dream Sheet of improvements to be included as part of the visioning process.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT - The Committee exhibited photographs by Molly Holland in the Meetinghouse lobby for a few weeks, and sold some of these for Molly, a long-time attendee at Meeting.

SPOKEN WORD OPEN MIC - On January 26th the Committee sponsored a Spoken Word Open Mic in the lounge, which was well attended.

WEDDING - The Arts Committee provided audiovisual assistance to Claire Litherland's wedding.

WITNESS FUND - Committee members met with members of the other Witness Committees to decide how to use the money remaining in the Witness Fund for the year but asked to use none itself.

2020-3-8: Lorraine Krehling, for the **Property committee, reads aloud this report**, and Friends accept it:

Property Committee Report

Director of Facilities Departs: *Alas, our new director of facilities, George Smith, has left his post.*

Tables and Chairs at Social Hour: *This innovation is the brainchild of our member Charles Brainard who noted that when Social Hour had to meet in the school cafeteria a month or so ago, being able to sit made Friends more 'social' and eager to linger. Charles suggested and our committee requested that Ahmet instruct Huot to set up tables and chairs each Sunday. The innovation seems very welcome.*

New Space Available for 15th-Street Use: *This summer Friends Seminary will vacate the basement of the Central Building and other spaces that will be available for use by our Meeting. When the school vacates the storage space in the Common Room (now used by the school for toy storage), we will finally have space to store the shelter beds outside the kitchen area. In this same arrangement, the Meeting will give up its use of Room 3 downstairs in the school building currently used by First Day School, and FDS will move to space in the basement of the Central Building (which it had previously occupied). We plan to add a conference table to the large room (the vacated school's wood shop) to convert it to a sizeable committee meeting room/conference room. Once the Property Committee assesses what the school leaves behind in terms of cabinetry et al. in the Central Building basement, we will add some lockers and tables and chairs that will afford badly needed hang-out and storage space for Quarterly meeting maintenance staff. (The Meeting will also gain use of office space currently used by FS elsewhere in the basement and on the mezzanine and second floor of the Central Building.)*

The committee is in the process of envisioning the future use of the entire Central Building, as well as the Meeting House lounge, lobby, and other spaces that are becoming available as part of the separation agreement. We continue to consider how we might best provide an accessible and congenial space for social hour, how we can best accommodate the needs of our Shelter and First Day School, and how to provide the best use of space for committee meetings, as well as other activities that take place and may take place in the future in our spaces. We also recognize the need to provide adequately for our staff and other tenants, including Friends Seminary.

Front Fence Gate Closures to be Made Safer for Emergency Exit: We have new architectural drawings for automatic closures for the Meeting House gates. The purpose of these new mechanisms is to eliminate padlock and chains on the exterior gates, which are a fire safety hazard. The new automatic closure mechanisms will make exiting the courtyard and Meeting House and surrounding properties possible after hours, particularly in an emergency. The drawings have been sent to several ironwork vendors for bids as to who can supply and stall the necessary hardware. This has been a long process. We are hoping for closure (pun intended) by summer.

Clean-up Complete: The clean-up of the Meeting House storage area (above the rest rooms) is complete, with great thanks to Michael de la Force and his son Gabriel who ferried unwanted objects to Housing Works. Many file cabinets from the committee room are now in the storage area. Friends should find the committee room a more welcoming space to meet and rest, with more access to the light from the large window there, new lighting and counters, and less clutter. The code to the committee room is.... Friends are asked to mark any materials left in the storage area with the name of its committee.

Quaker-themed Art Work Reframed for Display: During the clean out of the above areas, we discovered artwork depicting the Meeting House and other aspects of Quaker life (including a nineteenth-century etching). The Property Committee has this artwork reframed and rehung in the Central Building entryway. We've also discovered a 1905 bas-relief triptych depicting the events of John Bowne and the Flushing Remonstrance of December 27, 1657, a protest by Flushing citizens against Peter Stuyvesant's dictum against letting Quakers peaceably assemble. John Bowne, who allowed Quakers to gather for Meeting for Worship in his Flushing home, was arrested and exiled from the colonies by Stuyvesant. He protested to the Dutch West India Company in the Netherlands in 1663, and they overruled Stuyvesant, effectively placing the first real stake on the American continent for full religious freedom - well in advance of Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom in 1786 or the Bill of Rights. The plaster in this artwork has been cracked and is in need of restoration before it is displayed. If anyone has an idea of where to hang this two and one-half foot by 18-inch 40-or-so-pound piece once it's restored, please let me know. Friends can have a look at it in the Committee Room.

To Happen this Summer: - Inner courtyard trim to be painted: The window frames, doors, gutters, and cornices on the inner courtyard façades will be painted this summer.

- The electrical panels in the Central Building will be upgraded
- Major and minor repairs will take place on the roof of the Central Building
- A new air-conditioner (the somewhat environmentally friendly kind recommended by Friends in Unity with Nature) will replace the two units in Room 1, and TPAC heating and cooling units will be replaced in upstairs Central Building offices.

Landmarks Preservation Commission Text for Bronze Plaque: After multiple revisions - and with an effort to incorporate the suggestions I received from the Meeting, we have final text for the bronze plaque that will be issued by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. LPC, it should be noticed, focuses on architectural history and preservation. While we were unable to preserve words about Quakers 'belief of God within,' the commission has included words about our testimony to social justice, peace, and equality, tying it to the grace, simplicity, and elegance of the historic architecture. The final text can be only 125 words. Here it is.

15 Rutherford Place

Friends Meeting House and Friends Seminary

Quakers, members of the Religious Society of Friends, arrived in the colonies in the 1650s, and this Meeting House has been used for Quaker worship since its construction in 1861. Friends' testimony is one of simplicity, peace, and human equality, and these principles are reflected in the restrained Greek Revival style of these buildings. Followers of Elias Hicks, a Quaker abolitionist, constructed this brick Meeting House and seminary, and Charles T. Bunting, a member of this meeting, was the architect and builder. The pedimented entrance porches, plain window sills and lintels, and end gables with sloping wood cornices and lunette windows typify mid-19th century Greek Revival style. The Friends Meeting House and Friends Seminary were together designated as a New York City landmark in 1969.

Sustainability and Preservation Assessment Planned for

Meeting House: The Property Committee has worked toward moving the properties at 15th Street toward sustainability and decreased carbon footprint. Inevitably that includes how we heat and potentially cool our historic buildings. In November the Facilities Coordinating Committee, which included members from all branches of the Quarterly Meeting as well as Trustees, approved our proposal for a sustainability assessment/feasibility study of our historic buildings, and well as an assessment of what a full restoration and preservation of the Meeting House would entail.

The Property Committee sought proposals from three architectural firms: one a Philadelphia-based firm that has worked with a number of Quaker organizations and meetings on making their properties more sustainable; another, a well-known preservationist firm, which is responsible for the restoration of St. Thomas, Temple Emmanuel, and many other major historic buildings in New York. The third is headed up by the former director of historic preservation at the above very large firm, who nearly three decades ago began her own firm focused on historic preservation, and now has a long list of restoration projects in the city.

All three firms spent considerable time on the phone and in person answering the Property Committee's endless questions. We rather surprisingly were able to reach unity on our choice, choosing the last firm headed by Page Ayres Cowley.

We will get a full menu of options of what a complete restoration of the Meeting House would entail, including: improvement of acoustics; burying wires; reconsideration of lighting; plastering and painting options; improved window insulation; methods of heating and cooling that are environmentally and historic-property friendly. One of the biggest considerations and if not the most important - in part because of lead paint concerns - is the prospect of restoring all benches, wainscot, railings, and floor boards to the original unfinished wood. This would eliminate paint chipping and paint chips in the future. The first steps in this process will be a study/assessment of what can be done - and possible timelines.

2020-3-9: Elizabeth Enloe, Linda Hill Brainard, and Sally Arteseros, for the **Handbook committee**, summarize, and Friends accept, their proposals in this second reading for sections to do with the Budget-and-Collections committee, financial information, as well as sections in the scheduling section on the role of New York Quarterly Meeting, how to arrange for a memorial meeting, and how to arrange for a wedding.

They invite Friends to make suggestions for the rest of a section on buildings, property, and event scheduling and will bring this section to us for consideration in the future..

They present us with two sections on leadings and a leading-and-sufferings fund, which we hold over till a future monthly meeting.

They also present us a first reading of a section on 'Guidelines for participation in cooperative events or religious coalitions,' which they will present to us again in a second reading for our consideration.

2020-3-10: One Friend speaks about the **current spread of the corona virus** and hopes that there will be signs about

personal cleanliness and procedures for regular and frequent cleaning in the buildings.

2020-3-11: She also speaks about the numbers of **visitors to meetings seemingly outnumbering members** and asks us to consider the matter. We ask her and other Friends to speak to Ministry-and-Worship about this and have us consider this in the future.

2020-3-12: Another Friends speaks about **lighting in the meeting room**. She has talked with two Friends with opposing views on it. We asked Friends breaking meeting to judge whether or not to turn on lights. We ask Pastoral-Care to talk with these Friends to seek reconciliation.

(And please see a minute from February 2018 - #2018-2-14 - concerning this: Concerning our decision some years ago not to keep lights burning in the meeting house during Sunday-morning meetings and a later decision to keep lights on on dark days, there have been google-group messages about them. Ministry-and-Worship has prepared this statement: Ministry and Worship Committee considers Meeting Clerk Glenn Josey's suggestions regarding lighting in the meeting room during worship hours and forwards them to monthly meeting for approval or refinement: a) We approve as a short-term immediate solution that the member or attender who is to break meeting for the coming hour determine a level of lighting that will allow worshippers to come and go comfortably and safely; he or she will set the lighting to that level at the start of worship. We ask all worshippers to respect the lighting level set by the one designated to break the meeting. b) We approve, as a long-term technical solution to the occasional dimness versus light from our electric-lighting-system concern, that the meeting recommend to the Property Committee the installation of light sensors programmed to turn our system to the level safe for worshippers' comfort and to keep the lighting system off when not needed. We ask worshippers to understand that the safety-programmed sensors will not be overridden during meeting for worship. We note that the hallway, lobby, and some stairway lights have to stay on all the time according to the New York City code. We also note the more-efficient light-emitting diode bulbs recently installed in the meeting-house overhead fixtures. We agree to allowing the Friend breaking meeting to set the light level for the meeting, erring on the side of light. It is suggested that lighting setting #9 is adequate. We agree to have the Property Committee investigate the cost, process, and flexibility of the light sensor and report back to the meeting next month.)

2020-3-13: One Friend speaks about Friends' sometimes-confusing-to-visitors jargon, **perhaps calling ourselves the**

Fifteenth Street Friends' Meeting (instead of the Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting) in the future. Friends voice approval. The clerk will speak to Ministry-and-Worship and Budget-and-Collections and the treasurer in order to clarify the things that would be needed for this change.

THEN, after a time of quiet, at 3.30 PM, with 19 present, ADJOURNED to meet on May 17th at the usual time.

/s/ Glenn Josey, clerk

PRESENT, 3-2020: Richard Accetta-Evans, Nancy Adelman, Sally Arteseros, Robert Baldrige, Lisa Bateman, Charles R Brainard, Linda Hill Brainard, Dorothea Coiffe-Chin, Margery Cornwell, Zachary Edminster, Elizabeth Enloe, Julie M Finch, Bobby Gonzalez, Mary Grimes, Nancy Hadley-Jaffe, Maureen Healy, Sander Hicks, Glenn Josey, Ann Kjellberg, Lorraine Krehling, Claire Litherland, John Maynard, Anthony Shitemi, Steven Monroe Smith, Diana Smith-Barker, Janet Soderberg (26)

Our Travelling Minister Online

Emily Provance Ministers from Powell House

One of the blessings of COVID 19 has been Emily's arrival! Her need for a place to stay has allowed PoHo to host her for the immediate future. She is working from the Pitt Hall dining room each day.

She is producing daily family devotions on Zoom. They include singing together, a story, a query and discussion.

Sign up for this free activity at: [family devotions link Emily is also helping us to arrange our series of online PoHo seminars!](#)

Emily offers a video workshop on **virtual clerking**, and tips for **gathering in worship** without physically gathering. For a full posting of resources and opportunities with which Emily is directly involved: <https://quakeremily.wordpress.com/connection-in-a-time-of-covid-19/>

To see Emily's blog or sign up for her weekly email newsletter, go to quakeremily.wordpress.com

To support Emily's ministry, contribute at <https://goodnewsassoc.org/donate/>

Virtual Powell House Programs



Powell House is a Quaker retreat and conference center in Old Chatham, NY. Our mission is to foster spiritual growth and to strengthen the application of [Friends' testimonies](#) in the world.

Powell House is still here.

We're facilitating a series of **virtual retreats**, through Zoom video conference technology, on a donate-as-led basis. Please join us, and please offer whatever financial support you can.

“Sacred Ritual”

Saturday morning, April 4, 10:00am-12:00pm.
with Mary Kay Glazer,

“Pastoral Care and Care Teams”

Saturday Afternoon, April 4, 2:00pm-4:00pm.
with Callie Janoff

“Contemplative Retreat: Good Friday”

Saturday Morning, April 11, 10:00am-12:00pm.
with Scott Wagoner.

“The Paradidomi Chain: John's Easter Story”

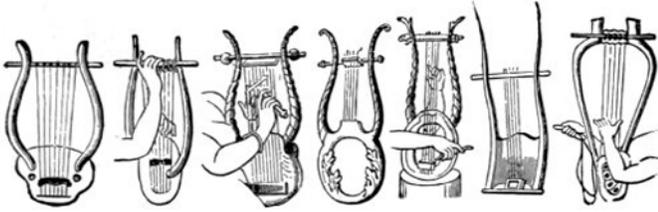
Saturday Afternoon, April 11, 2:00pm-4:00pm.
with Regina Baird Haag

and there's more –

For more information call 518-794-8811

<http://www.powellhouse.org/>

Poem of the Month



selected by Margery Cornwell

Psalm 23 New King James Version

A Psalm of David

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside the still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness
for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for You are with me;
your rod and Your staff,
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.



Friends Committee on National Legislation

lobbies Congress and the administration to advance peace,
justice, opportunity, and environmental stewardship.

To sign up for email action alerts, like the one below, go to
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by Amelia Kegan

**Tell Congress to Support Vulnerable
Communities During Coronavirus Pandemic**

The coronavirus (COVID - 19) has shaken countries around the world and impacted the well-being of millions of people. It also threatens to spark a recession. Uncertainty grows as communities struggle to respond to this pandemic. Although Congress recently passed an \$8 billion package, that legislation is insufficient.

Policymakers on Capitol Hill are quickly drafting another bill to assist individuals and communities affected by the outbreak. This legislation needs to focus on those who most need assistance, and whose jobs and situations do not provide the resources or flexibility to weather a time of self-quarantine. It must also account for shifting caregiving responsibilities and the possibility of an economic downturn.

Low-wage workers who deal with the public are the most likely to be exposed to infection. Yet, they are the least likely to have paid sick leave.

As people of faith, we hold in the Light all healthcare workers, people who are exposed or are undergoing treatment, and our government as we cope with the coronavirus pandemic.

Personal Choices for Climate Health



(The following are ways to help the Earth. However, right now, in the midst of this virus, use these ideas as you see fit. After all, you Are the Earth and your safety is most important.)

Inspired by the book Drawdown, which lists “the 100 most substantial solutions” to **REVERSE GLOBAL WARMING**, the Friends in Unity with Nature committee will be collecting and presenting practical suggestions for how each person can help the Earth. This means taking a hard look at daily practices and implementing new practices that don’t add to the problem of global warming.

This is an ongoing project. We need and welcome suggestions from all of you! If you have found a process or a product that works for you, please let us know, and we will add it to our list. Eventually we will cover Plastics, Shopping, Cleaning, and Miscellaneous.



1. Food management

- Organic is not only good for you; it keeps pesticides out of the soil and rivers and the ocean.
- Composting nourishes the soil. Eliminating compostable organic waste from rubbish cuts the use of large trash bags and reduces methane emissions from the landfill. Save your food and vegetable scraps in your freezer, take them to a place that composts, such as the Lower East Side Ecology Center in Union Square (Sat,

Mon, Weds, Fri). Also, this raises awareness about how much food you may be wasting.

- When going to the grocery store, don’t go hungry, bring a list, use a grab bag instead of a cart. When possible, buy in bulk from food coops.
- Some green markets in addition to Union Square have brown bins to recycle food and garden waste. Your building may do this, if not, there is a brown bin in the 15th Street Common Room.
- Buy compostable bags for fruit and vegetable scraps. Trader Joe’s green produce bags work, and a paper bag will also do.
- Or, if you’re buying frozen vegetables, defrost only what you need at the time, to reduce waste.
- If you have a sunny windowsill, grow your own herbs and veggies.
- Eat locally. Seek out local producers for year round sustainable eating.
- Consume less meat.
- Carry a small nylon bag (or plastic bag folded up with a rubber band) with you in a purse or backpack for bringing groceries home.
- Shop locally. Support local vendors and artisans.
- Cook more. Skip the takeout containers and enjoy more meals at home. Your savings account will thank you.
- Join a Community Garden, or local food co-op.



From Friends in Unity with Nature: Janet Soderberg (clerk), Sally Arteseros, Helen Saffran, Mary Grimes, Katherine Mylenki, Christine McVay, Elsa Wilson, Dorothea Chin.



“Art thou in the Darkness?”

Mind it not, for if thou dost it will fill thee more,
but stand still and act not, and wait in patience till
Light arises out of Darkness to lead thee. Art thou
wounded in conscience? Feed not there, but abide
in the Light which leads to Grace and Truth, which
teaches to deny, and puts off the weight, and
removes the cause, and brings saving health to
Light.”

- James Nayler

Quoted in Quaker Faith & Practice
of Britain Yearly Meeting



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editors, Julie Finch and Sabrina Jones, preferably by e-
mail, *by the 15th day* of the month preceding publication.
15stnewsletter@gmail.com

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- Use the envelopes in a basket in the common room.
- By check payable to 15th Street Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.
- On line: at <http://fifteenth.quaker.org/> use a credit card or checking account. Donations are processed securely by Click&Pledge.

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