

THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

Dear Friends Everywhere...

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS GATHERED AT Bryant University, Smithfield, Rhode Island, 8/4-9/2007, for its 347th Annual Sessions. Our theme was, "Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary." We are not only to make a sanctuary for ourselves; we are called to make a sanctuary for everyone even if that discomforts us. The continuing crises of war and environmental destruction weigh heavily on us. However, most of our work as a body focused on how we can order our own yearly meeting and relate to other Friends: how we can open ourselves to being a sanctuary for the Divine. Calls for understanding, forgiveness, acceptance and unity reverberated in ministry day after day.

This week the Friend of Friends in our midst reminded us that we need each other, but where two or three are gathered together there is always diversity, which can feel like disunity: dangerous, and painful. Conflict is an opportunity given by the Spirit to practice forgiveness, sacrificial love, and relentless engagement. Pain can prepare us: draw us closer to each other and to the Holy One. If we are willing to be put into the fire, the Creator may shape us into a vessel that is a sanctuary, where we can look into each other's eyes and see God, and tears will run down our cheeks.

Issues we dealt with this week have drawn us to consider the history of our yearly meeting, which reunited in 1945 after a century of division. The walls of our sanctuary show stresses from that history. These worry us, and at the same time call us to grow. Fifty years ago we had many pastors and dependable volunteers whom yearly meeting staff could call on. Now, with fewer pastors and volunteers, and in a much different social context, we have had to increase our faithful and overworked staff. The financial and organizational implications are challenging, and we have asked our Permanent Board to continue seeking solutions.

We joyfully gave preliminary approval to the chapter on worship in our new, developing revision of *Faith and Practice*. In this matter as in others, we hunger for words that might pull us to that place where we can stand together.

We heard a proposal for changes in the relationship between the New England Yearly Meeting and the Moses Brown School, which has been under our care for over 200 years. After a period of dryness, there have been fruitful efforts to revitalize the Quaker nature of the school. Many Friends who have labored hard for the benefit of the school spoke in support of the school and of the proposed changes. Others with experience raised serious doubts about the proposal, worrying that it might lead to reduced Quaker influence. We were unable to accept the entire proposal, but agreed to establish a committee to nurture the relationship between the Yearly Meeting and the school. We thank the Divine Teacher for the courage and faithfulness of Friends during this consideration.

We came together in deep distress about the personnel policy of Friends United Meeting. Some of us came wanting to break off all connection. Others came with a strong sense that, despite all our disagreements, it is important to stay in relationship. We felt angry, confused, outraged, frustrated, and brokenhearted, but there was also tenderness, honesty, loving concern for each other, and especially for all those who are in pain. Ministry & Counsel's inspired preparation was of great help to us as we began our conversation with small groups. During the week the Spirit moved powerfully among us, and enabled us to hear each other and open our hearts to new ideas.

We were given unity to affirm that the Holy One loves all people equally, regardless of sexual orientation. We have confirmed this truth through careful study of scripture and searching for the will of God. We prayerfully and respectfully ask that the worldwide community of Friends open its heart to this knowing.

We also need to attend to the beam in our own eye, by talking with each other about sexual ethics and the deepest meanings of family, marriage, and committed relationships. We ask our monthly and quarterly meetings to continue seeking Divine guidance on same-sex marriage. In this process, we have committed ourselves to love and forbearance, and tender care for one another. We acknowledge great pain in our community over these issues. We seek healing, wholeness and God's blessing as we move forward.

We rejoice in the exuberance of youth, from the small voices of children in our worship to the awesome energy of Young Friends. They delight us, leading us in singing, worship and prayer. "We are all the haystack, we are all needle, and we are all found." Our labors and decisions are not only for ourselves, but also for our children and our children's children.

Our history of division makes us aware that our unity is fragile, precious, and holy. Unity will not make our conflicts go away; but it will undergird our struggles with love. We are learning to know and to love each other through our passionate and diverse feelings and opinions. The Creator is knitting us together, stitch by stitch, into a coat of many colors. Holy Spirit, we praise and thank you for all the disparate colors and textures of our threads.

—New England Yearly Meeting of Friends

Photo: Robert Freund



The Friends Camp report at NEYM Annual Sessions



CDs of 2007 Sessions speakers available

To order CDs of Duduzile Mtshazo's Keynote Address, and Benigno Sanchez-Eppler's Bible Half-hour talks, contact the NEYM Office, 508/754-6760 • neym@neym.org



Highlights from NEYM Sessions 2007

Christopher McCandless, NEYM Presiding Clerk, Burlington (VT) Monthly Meeting

AS WE GATHERED IN AUGUST, there was a sense of foreboding that a number of potentially divisive matters lay before us. It was difficult to believe that, with God's help, we could create the sanctuary to which our theme called us: that we might be taken together to places that we could not imagine in our minds alone, or that in our hearts we feared to go. However, we were profoundly blessed by the ministry of our keynote speaker, our Bible Half-hour leader, and many other Friends. In her keynote, Duduzile Mtshazo of Central & Southern Africa Yearly Meeting told us powerful stories of overcoming racism and homophobia that lifted our hearts and hopes. In the daily Bible Half-hours, well-attended by Friends from several generations, our own Benigno Sanchez-Eppler delighted and challenged us as he wove together themes of sanctuary: created for our children, for the stranger in our midst, and for the presence of God in our daily lives.

Ministry & Counsel Concerns

On Sunday evening, Ministry & Counsel (M&C) sponsored a wonderful, energetic and thought-provoking presentation by our former staff member Lisa Graustein, ably assisted by Young Friends. In a series of live-action "PowerPoint" slides, they led us through 350 years of Quaker history in 25 minutes. They helped us grasp the many events that have led us to our current struggles with the Friends United Meeting personnel policy. In small groups that evening, in hours of patient listening to one another and the Spirit throughout the week, large numbers of Friends worked to bring back to the gathered meeting for business the following minutes [*all minutes excerpted*]:

2007-50: After a period of powerful testimony of hearts and minds changing, of the need to be a loving presence to those with whom we disagree, of the importance of being witnesses for the gay and lesbian children who are in environments where they are not safe to be themselves, of the simple wrongness of speaking to the world about peace if we can't maintain dialogue within the family of Friends, and of the need to turn passion into action, Friends were clear to approve the following minute:

New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends affirms that God

loves all God's children equally, regardless of their sexual orientation. We have found this truth confirmed through careful study of scripture and searching for the will of God. We re-affirm our minutes 2004-74 and 2005-60. We prayerfully and respectfully ask that the worldwide community of Friends, in which we are all one with each other in the Spirit, open its heart to this knowing. We commit ourselves to ongoing loving, listening, and mutual prayer and reflection as we continue our valued relationships with each other in God's ministry.

2007-67: ...Acknowledging our faith that we have love enough to cover the pain we both inflict and feel we found unity in the body to approve the following minute [of commitment]:

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a yearly meeting to work with one another in witnessing God's movement among us by doing the following:

- Engage in conversation about the deepest meanings of family, marriage and committed relationships and explore what it means to have all of these under the care of meeting.
- Support the work of our M&C working party on Sexuality and Ethics. We need to articulate our sexual ethics and the spirituality of sex.
- Re-distribute NEYM Minute 2005-55, Connecticut Valley Quarter *Minute in Support of Same Gender Marriages*, and ask monthly meetings to season and test this issue and forward the results to their quarterly meetings in preparation for bringing them to YM Sessions in 2008 for discernment.

We commit ourselves to undertake this work in love and forbearance, caring tenderly for one another. We acknowledge that there is great pain in our community felt by the people who are affected at the deepest levels of their identity and relationships by the homophobia that exists within NEYM. We also acknowledge the great pain felt by those for whom this issue has challenged their deepest beliefs about marriage and rightly ordered sexual behavior according to their understanding of God's will. We recognize that these actions ask all of us to re-examine our most deeply held beliefs. It is hard for us to challenge each other. We need our behavior and words to be tender as we explore hard topics. We commit ourselves to undertake

this work by educating ourselves, by exploring these issues within our monthly and quarterly meetings and by undertaking intervisitation within NEYM. We seek healing, wholeness and God's blessing as we move forward.

Faith and Practice Revision

We gave "preliminary approval" to the *Faith and Practice* Revision Committee's new chapter on Worship! Your meeting has received this chapter, and you are encouraged to use it throughout the year, and to communicate with the Committee any helpful responses that use might engender. You have also received a new working paper titled, *A Brief History of Friends in New England*, and responses to the Committee are welcome by 2/1/08.

Moses Brown School

On Monday, we heard the report from the Moses Brown School, and the recommendation from our Permanent Board that Friends approve the four proposals developed during the past year by the joint MBS-NEYM "Project."

2007-30: In 2006, upon receiving the report from the Permanent Board ad hoc Committee on Corporate Restructure (formed in 2002) to look at the YM's relationship with the Moses Brown School, Permanent Board and Moses Brown appointed members to a small committee known as "The Project," which met together over a period of ten months, facilitated by Arthur Larrabee, currently the General Secretary of Philadelphia YM. The clerk of Permanent Board presented the following recommendations from The Project:

- That NEYM and Moses Brown School establish a caring and nurturing relationship.
- That the title to all real estate used by the school be transferred into a new corporate identity.
- That the expectations of the roles and policies of the Overseers be clarified.
- That the school and YM undertake to address the concerns of Providence MM with respect to these recommendations.

Once again, large numbers of Friends held several threshing meetings during the ensuing days, working to bring back to the gathered body a minute with which we might unite in moving forward. Friends felt clear to approve some but not all of the recommendations of "The Project." However, the

sense of involvement in building a nurturing and caring relationship with MBS was strongly reinforced, as well as our desire to examine our faithfulness to the original dreams and gift of Friend Moses Brown.

2007-72: ...Nancy Haines reported on the work of a group of Friends who met Wednesday afternoon to continue discernment on the relationship between NEYM and the Moses Brown School. They made the following proposal:

- That NEYM appoint an ad hoc committee to examine the original deed of trust and to determine whether we are fulfilling the terms of that trust.
- That NEYM establish an ad hoc nurture and care committee consisting of 12 members: 6 appointed by NEYM; four appointed by the MBS Board of Overseers; the Head of School; and the School's Friends Education

Coordinator. The Clerk of the committee shall be appointed by the YM. This committee will continue the work of fostering understanding and appreciation between the school and the YM, and of building up the trust relationship between NEYM and Moses Brown School that has already begun.

- That NEYM and Moses Brown School undertake to address the concerns of Providence MM in order to strengthen the relationship between Providence MM and the school.

As the work of these committees progresses, NEYM will continue to consider other aspects of our relationship. Friends approved.

NEYM Staffing Patterns

We were also challenged to discern the way forward to an appropriate NEYM staffing structure, a concern that has been with us for several years and has been the subject

of numerous consultations and ad hoc committee work. The body tasked our Permanent Board to discern whether a consultant, familiar with the work and concerns of Friends, might be useful to us in moving toward some resolution of this work.

In Closing

Finally, I must report to you my own powerful sense of the presence of God in our midst during our time together in Rhode Island. Through times of anguish and joy, through exhaustion and elation, we were bound together and lifted up by the many gifts of the Spirit, working through us all. May God lift you up, and keep you in this work. And if you were not able to be with us this summer, please consider joining us next August!

Reflections on NEYM Sessions

Excerpted from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by Jonathan Vogel-Borne

I AM ON A CAMPAIGN. YOU SHOULD ALL GO to NEYM Sessions next year! It is such a good way to get in a main stream of Quakers and see the breadth and depth of issues and the cohesive sense of spirituality. I have come away inspired and energized on so many fronts; I think you would find the same, too. I grow each time I spend the 5 days there. Financial assistance is available to all who need it.

One of the highlights for me this year was the incredible and tender movement of the entire Yearly Meeting's understanding of the Friends United Meeting (FUM) personnel policy—from a sense that it was just about gay and lesbian issues to understanding that is was about cultural issues, too. As Quakers become an international group, North Americans (especially on the relatively liberal east coast) are far-outnumbered by African Quakers who are dealing with many sexual issues, including AIDS, polygamy, and more and they are learning to make decisions of their own. Then realizing that our Yearly Meeting also had a lot of work to do among ourselves on homophobia. This movement of understanding was accom-

plished through drama, small group discussions among all the adults and high school age Friends, heartfelt speeches, pregnant pauses and silences, worshipful silence, and a lot of discussion inside and outside business sessions, but it remains still in process.

—Rachel Walker Cogbill,
Plainfield (VT) MM

BY NOON ON TUESDAY I REALIZED I WAS abundantly full, brimming over with ideas, work, fatigue, relationships—especially my wonderful assigned roommate, and a great amount of gratitude for being part of the week at Bryant University. And we had three days to go! By then I had accumulated 6 pounds of paper, several books to take home including *The Bible for Dummies*—which, it turns out, has some good stuff in it—and email addresses of newly-important people in my life.

A lot of conversations at meals, at Ministry & Counsel meetings, at plenary sessions, at worship sharing groups, centered around the discriminatory hiring policy of FUM. I was so proud to participate in two decisions: 1) To stay in relationship and support the

work of Friends whose outlook on gay people is hurtful to many of us in New England, and 2) To commit ourselves to deepening our relationships with those Friends whose perspective is so different from ours—by listening sympathetically to how they use the Bible, by seeking new personal friendships, by making an effort to meet some of the FUM General Board when they come to Woolman Hill this fall, by traveling to their meetings and worship groups, by financially supporting the travel, and by praying that in time God's will will become clear for us world-wide seekers of Truth.

Yearly Meeting was Fun. My Bible workshop was fun, with really intimate sharing on some important texts. My women's worship-sharing group was fun, partly because two visitors from Kenya were part of it and we talked and prayed, woman to woman, mother to mother, about our hopes and fears for our children and our world. Even conversations that started with, "Ohhh, you're from Sandwich MM" were fun because I had a chance to translate, so to speak, or to temper, negative perceptions of what kind of Friends we are. Our reputation in some quar-

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Reflections on NEYM Sessions (continued)



Photo: Robert Freund

Left to right: Miremba Miremba, Vokoli (East Africa) YM, Cynthia Freund, Framingham (MA) MM, & Zelikah Galavu, Kaimosi YM

ters doesn't matter to me much when people off-Cape get a glimpse of how we live. I even wondered if we Cape Cod Quakers might decide one day to 1) stay in relationship, and 2) commit ourselves, with God's help, to working for restoration. As with the task of working through FUM-NEYM differences, we will be remembered for how we treat each other.

—Sally Fritz, West Falmouth (MA)
Preparative Meeting, Sandwich MM

DURING 2007 NEYM SESSIONS, I FOUND myself deeply saddened. The reason for my sadness is that I believe we did not follow good Quaker process regarding the issue of our relationship with Friends United Meeting.

I feel strongly that when we give ourselves over to God during a meeting for worship with attention to business, we listen to God's leadings more closely than at any time other than a gathered meeting for worship. When we discuss a difficult, even contentious issue, we can be led to new insights, assuming we have wise clerking and assuming people avoid fighting words and intolerance.

We find examples of this friendly struggle in our own history. In 1967 New England Friends spent ten hours on the last day of YM Sessions seeking light on the question of whether or not to give aid to North Viet-

Photo: Robert Freund



Dining tent at NEYM Sessions

nam, an illegal act. In 1990 we prayed mightily over the issue of corporate tax resistance, to the extent that some Friends knelt in prayer.

Such was not the case during 2007 YM Sessions. Instead of considering the question of our relationship as a corporate body, we spent one evening in a large number of worship groups. We were told that this would give everyone a chance to speak or perhaps to vent their anger. No time was scheduled for corporate discernment.

Moreover we were asked not to discuss what for some are our clear theological differences with FUM. This request was made despite the fact that these theological differences have existed for decades, that New England Yearly Meeting has changed a great deal since our 1945 unification while FUM has not, and that the personnel policy is only one example of these theological differences.

Open meetings of Ministry & Counsel—sometimes attended by a great number of people—could not come to unity. Therefore, I think, Friends assumed the corporate body would be unable to do so. We thus did not give God a chance to enter among us as a group.

We also missed the chance to discuss whether or not we should continue to contribute to FUM. The clerk did not explicitly call for such discussion. In a session where the process seemed so planned by others, not calling for such discussion meant there would be no discussion, since many members of the body had patiently waited to be directed.

I do not claim that corporate discernment would have led to unity. The two extraordinary sessions describe above did not do so. But we would have had the opportuni-

ty to be unified under God's discipline as a gathered meeting.

I am aware that other forms of process exist, and that a number of people thought what we did was in the Light. But these Friends should know that others think that many of those who planned sessions are people who are strongly committed to FUM, and, consciously or not, did not want to risk corporate discernment.

Trusting God means that we must be under God's discipline. Let us have the courage to do so.

—Allan Kehrman, Wellesley MM

OVER 700 FRIENDS from throughout New England gathered to worship, sing, do business, and share in hospitality together. We were challenged to create a sanctuary, such as God offers us as a covenant: "let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them," Exodus 25:8.

Friends continued difficult discussions on our relationship with FUM; one of our affiliates (the others being Friends General Conference and Friends World Committee for Consultation). Simply, FUM has a personnel policy prohibiting anyone that is not in a monogamous marriage [defined as being between one man and one woman]... The basis of the conversation is around the differences among the world's Quakers.

The depth of these differences became clearer to me the more I learned of the history. It also became clear that despite our differences, we are all rooted in our testimonies and faith. I am hopeful we can build upon our similarities and educate on our differences. We are challenged to do this at home as well as abroad.

—Beth Trusansky, Burlington (VT) MM

Around the Yearly Meeting

Compiled from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by Jonathan Vogel-Borne

• **Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting (MM)** and Friends and family throughout New England and beyond are saddened by the deaths of Louis Marstaller, former NEYM Field Secretary, and Peter Jonitis, a recorded Friends minister.

• **Monadnock (NH) MM** grieves the passing of Bob Hillegas, longtime Quaker activist who, in his later years, carried a special concern for the care of the Earth.

• **Sandwich (MA) MM**, the oldest monthly meeting in North America, celebrated its 350th anniversary. On two consecutive nights in late August, along with an historical display, over 200 members of the public enjoyed a dramatic presentation, written by West Falmouth's David Douglas, portraying the lives of 20 individual Friends from throughout the meeting's history.

• **Mt. Toby (MA) MM** joyfully approved taking the **Upper Valley Worship Group** under its care. Upper Valley Friends meet at 10am each Sunday morning at the Green River Yoga Studio B, 158 Main St., Greenfield, MA. Contact, 413/772-1049.

• **Wellesley (MA) MM** Young Friend, Mari Oye, was awarded recognition as a Presidential Scholar and while being honored at the White House, she helped organize 49 of her fellow Scholars to endorse a letter to George Bush calling for him to reject torture and treat terrorism suspects humanely. Picked up by the national news media, Mari and other Presidential Scholars gave several interviews about the letter. Mari's grandfather, George Oye, was interned in a Japanese-American concentration camp during World War II. Through contacts with Quakers who came to the aid of Japanese-Americans in these camps, George Oye and his family joined Friends at Media (PA) MM. George also became the director of the Material Aid Program of the American Friends Service Committee.

• **Vassalboro (ME) MM** has completed renovations on their circa 1833 meetinghouse. Changes include handicapped access, improved interior arrangements and a more inviting entranceway.

• **Winthrop Center (ME) Friends Church** is holding an 8-week Wednesday evening study group based on a Northeast Earth Institute curriculum "Healthy Children, Health Planet."

• **Cobscook (ME) MM** hosted a weekend Friends General Conference (FGC) Traveling Ministries Program workshop, "Listening to the Spirit," facilitated by Deborah Fisch, FGC's Associate Secretary for Programs and Traveling Ministries.

• **Portland (ME) MM** has asked Friends to fill out a Pastoral Care Survey form, asking "How can I help thee? Let me count the ways! As Quakers we are committed to providing care for each other. Besides the warm feelings of doing a good deed, the doing can actually be fun." The Pastoral Care Committee suggests things Friends might do, including cooking, cleaning, transportation, visiting & chatting, etc.

Portland MM also reports that Portland Friends School began its second year with a new Head of School, James Grumbach, formerly of George School, a Quaker boarding school outside of Philadelphia.

• **Fresh Pond (MA) MM** has united in a minute joyously affirming the ministry of their member, Beckey Phipps, supporting her work in various ways including receiving charitable contributions for her ministry. Beckey is co-clerk of Fresh Pond MM, clerk of the FGC Traveling Ministries Program Committee, is a spiritual director, and leads courses and retreats at Pendle Hill and for School of the Spirit.

Fresh Pond Friends also report that their First Day School ran a "Simplify Your Life Yard Sale" as a year-end project concluding their year-long study of simplicity. Friends and others were asked to simplify their lives and donate items that were cluttering up their houses.

• **West Falmouth (MA) Preparative Meeting** sponsored a Saturday workshop introducing "Quaker Quest," an outreach/in-reach program developed by British Friends. The workshop was led by Jane Berger, clerk of the Friends General Conference Advancement & Outreach Committee.

• **Northwest (VT/NH) Quarterly Meeting (QM)** Nominating Committee is circulating the following questions about the vitality and viability of the QM among its constituent MMs. "What is essential for the QM to do? What will this MM be willing to do to help fulfill the essential mission of the Quarter?" The Committee has found it nearly impossible to fill the Quarter's vital

roles, such as clerk. Some QM Friends are visiting local meetings to hear responses to these questions.

• **The Meeting School**, a Quaker 9-12 grade boarding and day school, held its 50th anniversary celebration on the third weekend in August where over 300 alumnae, faculty and families came to the campus in Rindge, NH. With voices lifted in song, laughter and tears, participants shared memories of life changing moments during their time at the school. The barn, with much commentary from the chickens, hosted Tom Weidlinger's documentary film about the school, a contra dance, rock-n-roll dance, coffee house, singing and worship. Cards were sent to absent friends, and an apple tree was dedicated in memory of those who are no longer with us. Over 1000 biodegradable plates and eating utensils were successfully composted to provide healthy soil for the next 50 years!

• **Northampton (MA) MM** Quaker Choir, *The Sounds of Silents*, begins a new season this fall. They hope to include singers from Mt. Toby (MA) MM as well.

• **Bennington (VT) MM's** Jane Radocchia spoke at the Adams (MA) Meetinghouse Annual Open House Day, this past August on *Green Architecture, Then and Now*. The meetinghouse is cared for by the Adams Society of Friends Descendants (Susan B. Anthony was one of Adams Meeting's ancestors).

• **New England Friends Home—Thayer House** director, Gretchen Condon, was honored as one of the 2007 "Unsung Heroines" by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women at a State House ceremony last May. Gretchen is one of the "women who quietly, without fanfare, recognition and usually behind the scenes, use their time, talent, spirit and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of others."



New England Friends Home—Thayer House

In other Quaker news

Children & Family Calendar of Queries

The NEYM Christian Education Committee has published a 2008 Calendar of Queries for Children & Families. A great gift idea for all the families in your meeting. \$10 each + \$3.50 shipping, contact the NEYM Office, 508/754-6760 • neym@neym.org

NEYM—Moses Brown School threshing

On 11/3/07, Friends will gather at 4pm at Providence Meeting for threshing, potluck and discernment about the relationship between the School and NEYM, Contact Nancy Haines, 508/435-9660 • vintage@gis.net

Interested in intervisitation?

Come meet with others who visit meetings near or far, out of simple friendship or under a concern. Join Putney (VT) Friends for worship at 11am, Sunday 12/9/07, then gather with the “traveling ministries” group for brown-bag lunch, followed by a meeting to exchange news, get to know each other, and seek ways we can encourage each other. All welcome! Contact Brian Drayton, 603/654-6001 • brian_drayton@terc.edu

FUM Triennial in North Carolina

Friends who are thinking about attending the Friends United Meeting (FUM) Triennial, 7/9-13/08 in North Carolina are invited to attend the next NEYM FUM committee meeting, on 1/26/08, for an informal orientation. Contact, Ann Dodd-Collins, 207/832-6103 • doddco@gmail.com

A one-time giving opportunity!

Are you 70? or Over? Consider this one-time charitable opportunity from the Pension Protection Act of 2006. Through December of this year you can contribute any amount up to \$100,000 from an IRA directly to a charity. NEYM's Development Committee invites NEYM's older members to consider the advantages of making a gift to YM through your IRA. Advantages include reducing your taxable estate by the full value of your contribution to charity. You are also able to avoid the income taxes normally associated with an IRA distribution. To give to NEYM in this manner, contact Dorothy Zug, 603/242-9607 • dzug@webryders.com or Jerry Sazama 860/429-0087 • gerald.sazama@uconn.edu

Woolman Hill retreat schedule

Making Your Activism More Sustainable, 11/17–18/07, George Lakey & Judith Shea; *The Simplicity of Silence*, 12/30/07–1/1/08; Nick Roosevelt; *Bridging the Gap: Quaker Families & American Culture*, 1/18–20/08, Beth Collea Jessica Harris & Rachel Cogbill-Walker; *Deepening Your Relationship: A Couple Enrichment Retreat*, 2/1–3/08, Mary Kay Glazer & Mark Moss; *Transforming Conflict In Meetings (co-sponsored by NEYM Ministry & Counsel)*, 2/29–3/2/08, Joanna Komoska; *Being and Becoming Friends (co-sponsored by NEYM Ministry & Counsel)*, 2/28–30/08, Beckey Phipps & Laura Melly. Contact Margaret Cooley, 413/774-3431 • www.woolmanhill.org

Faith and Practice Revision news

Chapter 2: *Worship* was given preliminary approval at 2007 NEYM Sessions. Please use it and send reflections to the Committee as led. Working paper for Chapter 9: *A Brief History of Friends in New England*: send comments to the Committee by 2/1/08. Both texts can be obtained at neym.org/fandp. Paper copies available from the NEYM Office. Contact Jan Hoffman, 343 West St., Amherst, MA 01002 • fandp@neym.org

BHFH 50th anniversary lecture series

The Beacon Hill Friends House (BHFH) continues its 50th anniversary with a new lecture series, *Listen!* This series honors the voices of New England Quakerism today, the Quaker soil which grounds the Friends House in its identity. The next and final speaker in the series is Maggie Edmondson (Winthrop Center MM), *A Road Less Traveled: Living Pastoral Ministry among Friends in New England*, at 1pm, 11/11/07. Maggie will be telling her personal story of a week in the life of a Quaker pastor. The first two talks were given by Debbie Humphries (Hartford MM) on *Being Grafted Into the Root* and Katharine Clark (Framingham MM) *Faith and the Database*. All lectures will be available as pamphlets. Contact: Holly Baldwin, 617/227-9118 • hbaldwin@bhfh.org

BHFH publishes Drayton pamphlet

Unity, Disunity, Diversity~or~Some mysteries of the Holy Spirit's LIFE at work in its body's members hinted at. A letter to New England Friends from Brian Drayton—the

letter that Benigno Sanchez-Eppler, during Bible Half-hour at NEYM Sessions, told you to read—is now available at \$4 each. To order contact BHFH, 617/227-9118 • pubs@bhfh.org

Stillness Retreats

11/23 – 25/07, theme, *Thanksgiving*; 12/28 – 30/07, theme, *New Year*. All retreats start at dinner on the first day and end at noon on third day. Contact, Charlotte Fardelmann 603/436-7652 • cfardelmann@comcast.net

Quaker Peacebuilder Camp 2007-08

The Meeting School's summer camp for high school youth will happen during the last half of June 2008. This camp brings together Quaker and non-Quaker youth for 10 days of community-building, with a focus on community organizing and social action. The new Spiritual Transformation Program is underway. The opening retreat at The Meeting School, 10/5-7/07, featured a public lecture and discussion, *Revolutionary Quaker Witness: Learning from the Lamb's War of the 1650s*, by Douglas Gwyn, pastor of First Friends Meeting in Richmond, IN. Contact John Humphries, 860/236-5175 • jhumphries@igc.org

“The Way of Ministry” retreat

This is a nine-month program, with four short term residencies at Pendle Hill (total of 17 days) that will begin in the fall of 2008. The three core teachers of the new one-year School of the Spirit Ministry program, Marcelle Martin, Laura Melly, and Beckey Phipps, will facilitate an exploratory retreat at Wellesley Meeting Saturday, 3/22/08. Starting in fall 2008, the program is especially designed for Friends involved in public, gospel, and/or traveling ministry. Contact, Beckey Phipps, 781/891-3783 • baphipps@earthlink.net

Thomas Farm Community co-housing

The Thomas Farm Community, in affiliation with The Meeting School, is a small co-housing village based on sustainable and simple living with a spiritual foundation in the Religious Society of Friends. If you are interested in living in a close-knit, diverse community with modest private homes and generous common facilities, co-housing may be for you. Contact Jackie Stillwell, 603/654-2123 • thomasfarmcommunity@gmail.com

2007-2008 YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

Photo: Robert Freund



NEYM Clerks (l to r): Jeffrey Hipp, Reading Clerk; Christopher McCandless, Presiding Clerk; Melissa Foster, Recording Clerk; Margaret Wentworth, former Presiding Clerk; Carl Williams (back turned), Recording Clerk

October 2007

- 19-21 Young Friends Retreat—Portland FM (ME)
- 19-21 FWCC NE Regional Gathering—Mercy Center (CT)
- 20-21 RI-Smithfield QM retreat—Camp Clara Barton, North Oxford (MA)
- 27 Falmouth QM—Windham FM (ME)
- 27 Sandwich QM—Martha's Vineyard FM (MA)
- 28 Salem QM—Fresh Pond MM (MA)
- 28 United Society of Friends Women—Providence MM (RI)

November 2007

- 2-4 Jr. High Retreat—Woolman Hill, Greenfield (MA)
- 3 Vassalboro QM—Midcoast MM (ME)
- 9-11 Ministry & Counsel Retreat—China Lake, ME
- 9-11 Young Friends Retreat—Hanover FM (NH)
- 16-18 JYM Elementary Retreat—Westport FM (MA)
- 17 Permanent Board—Wellesley MM (MA)

December 2007

- 1 Northwest QM—Burlington FM (VT)
- 27-30 Young Friends Midwinter—Littleton, MA
- 30 Dover QM—Location, TBA
- 31 *New England Friend* Deadline

January 2008

- 3-6 YAF midwinter—Wellesley
- 5 Sessions Committee—Location, TBA
- 11-13 Jr. High Retreat—Westport FM (MA)
- 12 Ministry & Counsel—Location, TBA
- 19 Permanent Board—Hanover FM (NH)
- 25-27 JYM Elementary Retreat—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 26 Falmouth QM—Portland FM (ME)
- 26 Sandwich QM—Westport FM (MA)
- 27 Salem QM—North Shore MM (MA)

February 2008

- 2 Vassalboro QM—Cobscook MM (ME)
- 3 CT Valley QM—Hartford MM (CT)
- 9 Committee Day—Location, TBA
- 29-3/ 2 Jr. High Retreat—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 29-3/ 2 Ministry & Counsel Workshop *Transforming Conflict In Meetings*—Woolman Hill (MA), [See p.6]

March 2008

- 1 *New England Friend* Deadline
- 1 Northwest QM—Plainfield MM (VT)
- 8 Ministry & Counsel—Location, TBA
- 14-16 JYM/JHYM 6th Grade Retreat—Westport MM (MA)
- 15 Permanent Board—Location, TBA
- 28-30 Ministry & Counsel Workshop *Being and Becoming Friends*—Woolman Hill (MA). [See p. 6]
- 30 Dover QM—Location, TBA

April 2008

- 19 Sessions Committee—Location, TBA
- 12 Committee Day—Location, TBA
- 15 *New England Friend* Deadline
- 18-20 Young Friends Retreat—Wellesley MM (MA)
- 20 RI-Smithfield QM—Worcester MM (MA)
- 26 Falmouth QM—Durham FM (ME)
- 26 Sandwich QM—New Bedford MM (MA)
- 27 Salem QM—South Shore PM (MA)

May 2008

- 2-4 Young Friends Senior's Retreat—Monadnock MM (NH)
- 2-4 Jr. High Retreat—Portland FM (ME)
- 3 Vassalboro QM—Pondtown/Winthrop (ME)
- 4 CT Valley QM—Mt Toby MM (MA)
- 16-18 JYM Elementary Retreat—Woolman Hill (MA)
- 17 Ministry & Counsel—Location, TBA

June 2008

- 7-8 Northwest QM—Farm & Wilderness (VT)
- 7-13 Young Adult Friends (YAF) Camp—Location, TBA
- 14 Committee Day—Location, TBA
- 21 Permanent Board—Location, TBA
- 29 Dover QM—Location, TBA

July 2008

- 20 RI-Smithfield QM—Providence MM (RI)
- 26 Falmouth QM—Brunswick FM (ME)
- 26 Sandwich QM—Mattapoisett FM (MA)

August 2008

- 2-7 NEYM Sessions—Bryant University, Smithfield RI

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Note: The *Faith & Practice* Revision Committee generally meets on the first or last Saturday of each month.



Photo: Robert Freund

Noon Sing in the Bryant University Rotunda

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