



BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

A publication of the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

brooklynmeeting.org

April 2016

Meet the Meeting: Quakers in the Classroom

This is the first installment of our new “Meet the Meeting” feature, in which we get to know Brooklyn Meeting members and attenders while highlighting the myriad ways in which they apply their Quaker values to the outside world. Would you – or someone you know -- like to be featured in an upcoming article? Then get in touch! (Talk to one of the communications committee members, or email newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org)

What makes for a Quaker education? Is it the use of silence in the classroom? An ingrained respect for diverse perspectives? A recognition of the Light within each child? For Jonathan Edmonds, math specialist in the lower school at Brooklyn Friends School, it is all of these things and more.

In his 14 years at BFS, Jonathan has given a great deal of thought to the ways in which he brings Quaker values to the classroom. In part, he explains, it is the way he approaches the material. For instance, in mathematics, there are a number of solutions to any given problem. If we want to understand how $6 + 7 = 13$, we can simply put six objects and seven objects together and count them. Or we can note that $6 + 6 = 12$, with an additional one making 13; or that $7 + 7 = 14$, and taking one away makes 13.

Understanding the different ways that people might approach adding $6 + 7$ does not just give children a better idea of how numbers

work together; it also teaches that we get to a greater truth when there are more voices contributing.

Similarly, silence is a Quaker principle that also has a pedagogical purpose. At BFS, lower school students have meeting time once per week in their classrooms. As a teacher, Jonathan uses silence to mark the transition from the busy activity of the classroom to the more contemplative time in meeting, in which children can begin to get a sense of themselves as part of a community as well as an individual. As the meeting goes on, silence also sits in the gentle pauses between speakers, as children take the time to absorb what friends have said.

But silence in the classroom is not limited to the weekly meeting. Jonathan points out how important it is to walk the line between making an observation or connection for a student versus simply being in the moment and letting students make those leaps themselves.

“Silence is key to getting them to a deeper spot,” he said. “Knowledge is not just quick recall. They need space to grapple with what they’re thinking about.”

Jonathan notes that he is interested and active in the Quaker identity of the school, as a member of the Quaker Life Committee and Quaker Spiritual Life Communities.

“It is essential that the school understands and reevaluates all the time: ‘What does it mean to be a Quaker school, in the classroom, in student interactions, and with parents?’”

Jonathan specifically sought a teaching position at a Quaker school when he began his career. Raised Lutheran, he learned about Quakers when he studied 19th century social movements in college, and began attending meeting in Nashville after he graduated. He started as a teacher’s assistant at BFS while still in graduate school, and began attending Brooklyn Meeting at the same time. His wife, Rachel, teaches English in the middle school at BFS. His son Eli is in the second grade, while daughter Naomi is enrolled at the Family Center.

Jonathan is quick to note that he does not have all the answers about



Giancarlo Young

Quaker values in the classroom, but that it is important to explore the questions. In doing so, he is taking an approach similar to the ones that he instills in students – to contribute their truths confidently but also humbly, knowing that it is important to learn from other perspectives.

-- Melissa Cavanaugh



March Meeting for Business: New Members; Committee Report; Young Adult Event

Two Letters Applying for Membership

Adrienne Almeida read her first letter of application for membership for her family (including her husband, Howard Oliver, and daughter, Neva). Amy Hundley read her first letter of application. Both letters will be read a second time at the April Meeting for Business.

May Meeting for Business Rescheduled

Due to a conflict with the Meeting Retreat at Powell House, Meeting for Business will be held on May 8.

Recorders Report on Membership

Iris Lee Stoler reported on the present membership of the Meeting. Over the past year the Meeting has added eight adult members and four children. Four members died. The Meeting has 207 members locally, as well as 273 Attenders. 61 members live outside of the area, bringing the total of 541. The Meeting Directory of Members and Attenders is emailed four times a year. Several printed copies are available in the Meeting Library. Iris and Lucy Sikes are nominated as recorders for their 12th terms

New York Yearly Meeting Young Adults Plan Large Event

Glenn Josey, speaking for the New York Yearly Meeting Young Adult

Concerns Committee, announced plans for a Quaker Party. The party, sponsored by the New York Quarterly Meeting, will bring together young adults from four Yearly Meetings. It will be held at 15th Street Meeting from June 17 through the 19th. He asks that Brooklyn Meeting be responsible for a potluck dinner on Saturday evening. Friends agree and ask Anna Staab to coordinate the potluck.

Communications Committee Reports on the Meeting Newsletter

The Communications Committee reports that the Newsletter was published every month but August. Many Friends from the Meeting contributed articles during the year. The committee has been short one member for two years. This member is needed to provide the Calendar of Events for the Meeting website and would need to attend Meeting for Worship twice a month to hear announcements of events.

The Nominating Committee re-nominated three members for the Communications Committee. They are approved.

-- Molly Rusnak

Quaker Values and End-of-Life Decision Making Workshop

Dear Friends,

I feel compelled to write personally about the ARCH workshop that took place on February 28th, on End-of-Life Decision making. The process of choosing a healthcare proxy, or describing one's preferences around

death, or hearing the preferences of others is fraught with discomfort. I might not have gone to the workshop if I hadn't committed to writing about it for the newsletter, but I left afterwards feeling like the conversation was one that more of us should have more regularly.

The group was led by Yana Landowne and Electra Cummings, and the meeting started by asking people to describe a good death. People described being close to nature, having time to say goodbye, being comfortable, listening to music, going quickly, and disintegrating naturally. Although I'd never asked myself specifically about my own death, I realized that very distinct images came to mind. There was a joyful quality in the details that people shared—they were descriptions of relationships and favorite places, beauty and art, and in sharing them the idea of planning for death didn't feel like an invitation to disaster, but also a moment of celebration.

The opportunity to hear useful information, and learn from the experiences of others was extremely reassuring. I had assumed that the role of a health care proxy was (stressful, but) straight forward, but there were several questions that made me aware of the need for more specific conversations. A sense of anxiety, that I hadn't even admitted, was relieved just by knowing more about what to ask, and where to find resources for the information. It was also wonderful to share this conversation with people who were older and younger than myself; I felt like speaking about it more regularly within a broader community, with less emotional

tension, might actually make it easier to talk about more intimately as well.

So much of the conversation about death seems medicalized usually—seems to come in moments of crisis, around the need to make complicated decisions on short notice. A lot of things are worse for being put off, but death is a subject, I'm realizing, that has so many rewards for being discussed. The discussion can be the basis for community, and part of a practice of prioritizing one's values. The initial discomfort of broaching the conversation is so small in comparison to the benefits of having it. I hope others will consider attending these workshops as well.
-Catherine Despont

Happening Soon! Walk and Talk with the Monks of the New England Peace Pagoda

An evening with the walkers from "Walk for a New Spring" and talk on "Shared Security, Re-Imagining US Foreign Policy." Tuesday, April 5th, 6:30 -- 9 p.m. at New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th Street - Ceremonial Hall

The Monks of the New England Peace Pagoda initiated their 15th annual "Walk for a New Spring," a 56-day peace walk from Leverett, Massachusetts to Washington, DC. This year they are carrying the Quaker paper "[Shared Security, Re-Imagining US Foreign Policy](#)", and sharing it with communities along their way.

Join us for an interfaith potluck dinner to welcome the walkers to NYC when they arrive on April 5th. Sister Clare Carter and Towbee Shonin will give a talk on "**Shared Security: To End War, Poverty, Racism, and Address the Climate Crisis!**" followed by a discussion with the other walkers. Hear about their experiences so far, some of the history of their annual peace walks and their visions for the

future. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. Bring some food to share or just come and share. The event is free. Donations welcome.

On the morning of April 5th, we are invited to join the Walk into the city over the George Washington Bridge from New Jersey beginning at 9 a.m. or on the New York side at 9:40 a.m. This will be a beautiful way to honor them and a powerful opportunity to help bring peace to our city. The walkers will be holding a vigil at 4 p.m. at the United Nations' Ralph Bunche Park which people are welcome to join. Also, there is an open invitation for anyone to join the walkers on their continued journey from NYC to DC, leaving on the morning of April 8th.

Endorsers of the 2016 "Walk for a New Spring":

American Friends Service Committee, Peace Action, Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, Mass Peace Action, Merrimack Valley People for Peace, NorthShore Coalition for Peace and Justice, The House of Peace, Salem Peace Committee, United for Justice and Peace, Veterans for Peace, Arise for Social Justice, Traprock Center for Peace and Justice.

Starting a New "Work Exchange"

This is an invitation from Patricia Glynn to join me in cleaning up and planting my small back garden at 278 Sterling Place on Saturday, April 23rd. Call me if you have a few hours that day (718-638-5739). The rewards: Getting to know some new friends; coffee, tea, bagels, etc. throughout the day. Bring work/gardening gloves if you have them.

Quakernomics: It's Not the Book You Think

Most Friends know that Cadbury's Chocolates was owned by Quakers (until 1969) and that Quaker Oats never was (although the "Quaker Man" on the box supposedly represents the product's integrity).

Quakernomics: An Ethical Capitalism, released in 2014, has a title reminiscent of the runaway bestseller *Freakonomics*. But the two are not to be confused. The book's author, Mike King, is an English non-Friend with an admiration for the contributions Quakers made to the Industrial Revolution in Britain. These contributions were not just in manufacturing, but also in the humane ways that they treated their workers. King documents the depth and breadth of Quaker enterprises to such an extent that the disappearance of Friends from the field of business begins to resemble the extinction of a once-dominant species.

Perhaps it is just as well that we Quakers no longer feed our sweet tooth. But, for much of the 19th and 20th centuries Cadbury, Rowntree, and Fry were three Quaker firms that, together, controlled the market for confectionaries.

King provides a litany of Quaker innovations in iron, steel, railways, canals, textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, trade, finance and banking (such as Barclays, the firm

for which Brooklyn's eponymous arena is named).

However, after several generations, the founding families relinquished their companies as capitalism became more of a dog-eat-dog

QUAKERNOMICS
AN ETHICAL CAPITALISM



MIKE KING



world. (Initially, Meetings moderated the business excesses of their members.)

King adroitly brings to life the men -- Quaker women were equal in all things, except business -- and their operations during this seemingly far-off period. His facility with economics and the clarity of his prose is a welcome departure from the usual jargon of the "the dismal sciences."

King compares the booms and busts of the time with our 2008 meltdown, instead of tracing how the ethical capitalism of Quakers became the corporate social responsibility of today. But he does devote the book's second half to analyzing the relevance of Quakernomics to the theories of a slew of economists, from Adam Smith to Paul Krugman. (The importance he grants Ayn Rand as a right-wing darling is his one, albeit brilliant, departure into pop culture.)

King identifies as a liberal in the British tradition, but that relevance is zilch for free-marketers and erratic for left-wingers. His take-down of Karl Marx in five pages is worth the price of the book (which I got from the Brooklyn Library). In other words, Quaker entrepreneurs with their paternalism and philanthropy charted a mid-course long before Capital and Labor battled over the ship of state.

-- Carl Blumenthal

Worship with Elementary School Students at Mary McDowell Friends School

Have you ever worshipped with a group of young children, ages 5 to 11? It can be a profound experience, as young wisdom is enlightening.

Mary McDowell Friends School is offering such an experience on Friday, April 8th, 2016.

Coffee will be served from 8:45 to 9:15. Meeting for worship will be from 9:15 to 9:45. The Meeting will

start with a query, and then messages will flow out of the silence.

After Meeting there will be a tour of the school and a chance to meet some of the elementary school students.

The school is located at 20 Bergen Street, between Court and Smith Streets. You will recognize the building, as the façade is a copy of the entrance to our Meetinghouse.

Please RSVP to MMFS if you plan to come, at 718-625-3939

-- Mary Doty, for the Care Relationship Committee

Brooklyn Meeting Welcomes George School

On February 28, the Meeting welcomed more than two dozen alumni, parents and friends from George School, a Quaker boarding and day school in Newtown, Pennsylvania. During announcements, the visitors introduced themselves and Karen Suplee Hallowell, George School's director of alumni relations, shared some background information about the school. Founded in 1893, George School was co-ed from its inception. "Which, like many things Quaker, was radical at the time," Hallowell observed.

Today, students from 20 states and 52 countries learn about Quaker values at George School. Hallowell notes that meeting for worship is central to the life of the school, as is the notion of service. Students are required to complete service learning projects and have the opportunity to take service trips during school breaks to destinations such as China, Cuba, France, Haiti, Nicaragua and South Africa.

Hallowell concluded with the hope that, as the school's Brooklyn-based community becomes aware of Brooklyn Meeting, there will be more cross-fertilization between the two groups. The visitors stayed and mingled during social hour, after

which George School parent and trustee Rebecca Boucher opened her home for a small gathering.

--Melissa Cavanaugh

TED Talk on Radical Empathy

I would like to recommend *Radical Empathy*, a TED Talk by Brooklyn Meeting member Peter Laughter. This talk, to me, is deeply connected to the Quaker Testimony of Peace. It also relates to our belief that there is "that of God in all people." I wonder whether his ideas are an outcome of his years as a Quaker, or if he was attracted to the Meeting because our values were in harmony with his long-standing belief system.

He speaks from experience in handling difficult people and situations. In this intense talk, he sets forth a philosophy and mindset for coping with loved one and others us who present us with emotional challenges. While it may be counter-intuitive, his concept of Radical Empathy illuminates a way of disarming hurtful situations. You can view the talk at <http://bit.ly/1pN2Dqy>

- Lucy Sikes

Quaker Witness and Service, Here and Around the World

On Tuesday evening, March 15, Brooklyn Peace and Social Action Committee and Brooklyn Friends School sponsored a combined Meeting to hear Friends' experiences of living Quaker testimonies through service. These included American Friends Service Committee Legal Services for Immigrants, The Halawai Voyaging Society in the Pacific Islands, Planned Parenthood of New York City, The Two Row Wampum movement representing indigenous people in the Eastern United States, the campaign for African-American equality and reparations, "The Power

of Goodness" bringing peace education to children in Russian, Chechnya and the Near East and, finally, Kisangura Friends School for children orphaned by AIDS in Tanzania, Africa.

American Friends Service Committee Legal Services for Immigrants

Amy Gottlieb described the Service Committee's legal work in representing and helping immigrants incarcerated or at risk of detention. She described the conditions in commercially-operated detention centers, the violations of human rights involved in individual cases and the lack of legal representation for those caught up in the system.

Planned Parenthood of New York City

Joan Malin, long-time member of Brooklyn Meeting, reported on the work of Planned Parenthood in New York City and around the United States in providing reproductive services for women. The recipients of these services include many poor women, and are under political and governmental attack in many parts of the country as well as in the United States Congress. This persecution, sometimes illegal, has deprived women of access to services in many states and created an atmosphere of fear. The struggle to protect women's reproductive rights is ongoing and has been supported by Brooklyn Meeting.

The Power of Goodness

The Power of Goodness is a mission bringing peace education to children in Near East, Russia and Chechnya through stories, art and interactive experience. Nadine Hoover led interactive activities with the group and shared her experiences traveling and working with children, as well as

some materials used by Friends in this work.

Halawai Voyaging Society

The Halawai Voyaging Society works with indigenous peoples of the Pacific Islands, encouraging them preserve their sea-going wisdom and native culture. Theirs is a tradition of harmony with the natural world and of communities living and interacting with kindness and compassion. Amy Hundley shared her experiences with this culture, though she stopped short of demonstrating her skills with hula dancing and described its meaning instead.

Kisangura Friends School

The Kisangura Friends School was founded by New York City Friends and is represented by the Africa Education Committee of New York Quarterly Meeting. It has a "sister" relationship with Brooklyn Friends School, thanks to the dedication of Marna Herrity, a member of Brooklyn Meeting and a teacher at Brooklyn Friends School. Art and technology have been shared. Tony Shitemi of 15th Street Meeting described the rural area where Kisangura School is located, as well as a major school project in water collection and a school garden.

Equality for African-Americans

Naceo Giles, a long-time member of Brooklyn Meeting with first-hand experience in the struggle for Civil Rights, brought Friends up to date on the present concerns and agenda of the African-American community. He emphasized the creative power of current political action and writing, particularly proposals for reparations for the economic losses from slavery and discrimination that could bring about more economic equality for African-Americans today.

-- *Molly Rusnak*

Bridge Film Festival announces "Judges' Choice Awards"

The [Bridge Film Festival](#) is proud to announce that the 2016 Judges' Choice Awards ceremony will be part of the Friends Council on Education's Annual Conference. The event takes place on Thursday, April 28. We will reveal the results of the festival, present trophies and screen the award-winning films of our student filmmakers for the first time at Friends Center in Philadelphia! Festival films are available on-line and the BFF encourages all Friends' educational institutions to make full use of them. Let your film speak!

Submission Guidelines

The Communications Committee welcomes Brooklyn Meeting News contributions from all Meeting members and attenders. Our newsletter includes a variety of content which may be of interest to our community, including but not limited to:

- Recaps of recent Meeting events
- Previews of upcoming events
- Issues pertaining to our Quaker faith and history

The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of each month, and we request that submissions for the next issue be submitted by **April 21st**.

General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org so that we may briefly discuss your contribution, as regards its timeliness, appropriateness, and length.
- Contributions should

- generally be brief, between 150-450 words in length.
- Please send your newsletter submission as an attached Word document.
- Keep in mind that contributions will be copy edited, and may not appear in the newsletter in exactly the same form as how they were submitted.

Thank you for your interest - we look forward to your input!

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Meetings for Worship

9:00–9:50 AM and
11:00 AM–NOON on Sundays,
in the meeting room
6:30 PM Tuesdays,
in the meeting room

Childcare

Sundays during 11:00 AM worship, for
children of 3 months to 3 years, in the care
of an early childhood teacher and dedicated
volunteers

First Day School

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM, Sundays, September to
June. Three classes, roughly related to age:
Bodies (4-6), Minds (7-9) and Spirits (10-12).

Social Hour

12:00 PM Sundays,
Ground-level dining room

**Meeting for Worship with a
Concern for Business**

1:00 PM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Hymn Singing around the Piano

10:00 AM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Readings of Spiritual Texts

10:00 AM, second Sundays, in the meeting
room

Worship Sharing

10:00 AM, third Sundays, on the third
floor

Community Dinner

1:00 PM-3:00 PM SET-UP
3:00 PM-4:00 PM MEAL/SERVING
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM CLEAN-UP, COME FOR
SOME OR ALL!

Last Sunday of every month, ground-level
dining room; volunteers appreciated for
this monthly dinner for anyone who wishes
a free hot meal. Children encouraged to
volunteer.

Contact: Andres Colapinto,
acolabus@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Ongoing additions to upcoming Meeting events are regularly added to the Meeting website at <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar>.

To submit an event, email events@brooklynmeeting.org

April

**Tuesday, April 5 6:30 – 9PM New York Society
for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th Street -
Ceremonial Hall:**

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New Spring" and talk on "Shared Security, Re-
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Worship with th students, tour to follow. Please
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3939.

Saturday, April 23rd:

Join Patricia Glynn in cleaning up and planting
small back garden at 278 Sterling Place. Contact
her at 718-638-5739

**Thursday, April 28 Friends Center
Philadelphia:**

The [Bridge Film Festival](#) is proud to announce
that the 2016 Judges' Choice Awards ceremony
will be part of the Friends Council on Education's
Annual Conference.

**April 29th- May 1st:
Brooklyn Retreat**
Save the date!

Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to events@brooklynmeeting.org.

Send inquiries or suggestions about the newsletter to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

The Monthly Meeting Newsletter is published by the Communications Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

Current members: Melissa Cavanaugh, Catherine Despont, Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, Lucy Sikes, and Anna White.
