



# BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

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

[brooklynmeeting.org](http://brooklynmeeting.org)

MAY, 2017

## Minute of Conscience and Sanctuary

At April Meeting for Business, the following minute was approved by the meeting, to be sent to New York Quarterly Meeting.

“We the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, stand prepared to offer sanctuary to refugees and immigrants targeted by the executive orders of President Donald Trump.

Our faith calls us to recognize that of God in every person. We are called to love out of this recognition. This love extends to all people regardless of their circumstance of birth, or station in life. We testify to our inherent equality. As interdependent members of one human family, we recognize that as any of us suffers, we all suffer.

As such, we are deeply troubled and fearful for our entire democracy. These orders seek to further divide our already fractured country with Islamophobia and bigotry. We condemn and defy them, as they

tradition of American Friends who helped those suffering enslavement in the United States find freedom through the Underground Railroad; in the tradition of Friends who provided legal, financial, and material aid to refugees from Central America who fled political repression and violence; and in the tradition of Friends who sheltered those fleeing attack from the police during the Stonewall Uprising.

As a community committed to the truth of the love we have been given, we call on President Trump to rescind this order and to refrain from further attempts to target refugees and immigrants for persecution or unjust treatment. We call on all who act as representatives of our government

to resist further efforts to shred our democratic principles of equality, liberty, freedom, and justice. We call on Americans everywhere to stand with us as we seek to be living sanctuaries of truth. We call for this with the love in our hearts that knows no limits.”



Two posters about welcoming refugees

contradict our religious commitments to equality, peace, integrity, and community.

As a community gathered in faithful service, we offer sanctuary to those who suffer persecution under this unethical ban. We offer sanctuary in the



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*Interested in promoting a Quaker event? Then email [events@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:events@brooklynmeeting.org)*

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## April Meeting for Business, Minutes and Messages

### New Member by Transfer

Lawrie Mifflin was received into membership by transfer to our meeting from Swarthmore Pennsylvania Monthly Meeting.

### Minute of Conscience and Sanctuary Approved

The Ministry and Counsel Committee forwarded a Minute of Conscience and Sanctuary which was approved by the Meeting to be sent to New York Quarterly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, our representative and the President of the United States.

It is included in this issue of the Newsletter.

### Meeting Joins the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees

At the request of the Peace and Social Action Committee, Brooklyn Meeting became a member of the alliance supporting the settlement of Syrian refugees here.

### State of the Meeting Report Approved

The proposed annual State of the Meeting Report was approved with one minor change at its second reading. It will be forwarded to New York Yearly Meeting.

## The Report of the Audit Committee Approved

The annual Audit Committee report was read and approved with corrections from the Meeting Treasurer.

### Two Letters of Appreciation

A letter from a former teacher of our late member, Sarah Nazimova Baum, was read and attached to the minutes.

A letter of thanks from Mary McDowell Friends School for the Meeting School Appreciation Dinner was read and attached to the minutes.

- Molly Rusnak

## Brooklyn Friend Among Friends in San Francisco

On first day, the 25th of 3rd month 2017, I attended meeting for worship at San Francisco Monthly Meeting. Approximately 35 Friends and attenders gathered at 11 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time for silent worship. The meeting remained largely silent, except for the occasional gargle from a toddler who came and went with a parent as her energy required.

The announcements provided insight into the life of that meeting. Regular events include making sandwiches and taking them into the streets to feed the homeless every Friday evening. (If you have not been to San Francisco, understand that homeless people have a presence unlike any in New York's recent history; we saw 5-20 people per block in several

neighborhoods). They also have a bi-weekly meeting for worship with a concern for protest, which allows them to coordinate their protest efforts.

At the rise of meeting, approximately five children joined the adults. During introductions, I shared greetings from Brooklyn Meeting, which were joyfully returned.

-- Elizabeth Powers

## Climate Activism and Spiritual Practice

A group of Friends, organized by Nancy Black met with John McIlwain and Eleanor Bennett from the Garrison Institute's Climate, Mind, and Behavior Program: [garrisoninstitute.org/signature-programs/climate-mind-and-behavior](http://garrisoninstitute.org/signature-programs/climate-mind-and-behavior)

We discussed contemplative resiliency in the face of climate change and the meeting's role in spiritually directed Climate activism.





**Cemetery Workday:  
A Quiet Corner**

On April 22, approximately 40 Friends braved a steady drizzle for the annual spring cleanup of Prospect Park’s Quaker Cemetery. Members of the Cemetery Committee handed out rakes -- including child-sized rakes for young Friends -- and tarps to volunteers who spread out across the cemetery to clear out fallen leaves and underbrush. Friends took breaks to enjoy cookies, cheesecake and hot apple cider, huddling near the maintenance building to stay dry.

Established in 1849, the cemetery covers about 12 acres in the southwest area of the park. With approximately 2000 graves, it remains an active cemetery and is open to members and former members of New York Quarterly Meeting as well as spouses, children and their spouses, and grandchildren. Markers are sim-

ple and many date back to the 19th century, worn by weather and time.

The cemetery is closed to the public but occasionally open for tours, including during fall and spring cleanups. Surrounded by a high fence, it maintains a peace and seclusion that feels far removed from the rest of the park.

-- *Melissa Cavanaugh*



**Open Saturdays:  
Friends Cemetery Welcoming Friends, Relatives**

The Quaker Friends Cemetery in Prospect Park has announced its Open Saturdays for the remainder of 2017: May 6, June 3, July 8, August 5, September 9 and October 7. Weather permitting, the cemetery will be open from 1 to 4 p.m.

Persons who are affiliated with one of the NYC Meetings or who have relatives buried here will be able to enter the cemetery. The cemetery will not be open to the general public. No previous arrangements will be necessary.

-- *Mary Owen, on behalf of the Cemetery Committee*

## European Refugees After World War II, A Personal Experience

In 1950, at the end of my junior year in college, I traveled with other American leaders from college YW and YMCAs on a "Student Ship" to Europe. Among other students were young people sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee. The original ship, a Canadian one, did not pass inspection. So all these college students were stranded in New York City for over two weeks until we were rescued by President Truman. He commandeered a troop ship which took us to Europe and brought soldiers back.

The purpose of our trip was to meet with students from different countries and to spend some time building a settlement house for orphaned children in Berlin.

Wherever we went, from Holland to England to France to Germany to Italy, the landscape was piles and piles of rubble from German and Allied bombing. Refugees were wandering everywhere. The students we stayed with, in the different countries, were short of clothes and food but enthusiastic about building a better society in the future. I found out later that my family was concerned about my letters home seeming too "Socialist."

During the six weeks we spent in Berlin, we could see that most everyone was a refugee, without a permanent live-able home. Food was scarce. Our meals were mainly potatoes with some kind of sugary syrup on them. We Americans would buy and share peanut butter from the Army PX (post

exchange) and detergent for washing clothes by hand. And few, including us, had a change of clothing. So we would wash every night and hang up items to dry, pulling them to take out the wrinkles. I kept thinking about the amount of clothing in my closet at home.

Every day when we went out, we could see the students from AFSC picking up rubble hour after hour. We had an easier time because we were involved with carpentry and also had some time to explore the city -- what there was of it.

When I got back to college I found my perspective had changed and

my consciousness of the human suffering around the world was very real. Every year the YWYM presented a Convocation, a religious service for the student body. We in the Y decided to do a dramatic piece about the experience of refugees in Europe. This seemed to be well-received by the other students.

However, after a few days, my history professor called me into his office and gave me a message from the college administration saying that this presentation was not acceptable. It was too political. He suggested that I should be more careful in the future.

-- Molly Rusnak



## Peaceful Productivity at New York Yearly Meeting's Spring Sessions

On Friday evening we were welcomed by Long Island Quarter with pizza and an informative program on early Quakers in the area. Led by Elizabeth Martin,



director of education for Flushing's Bowne House, we learned the role the 1662 arrest of its owner, Quaker John Bowne, played in the foundation of religious tolerance and freedom in the colony and, later, in the United States itself.

We welcomed Kathleen Wooten, visiting with a letter of introduction from Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting in New England Yearly Meeting.

We heard moving witness from Gabi Savory Bailey as she spoke of her call to move on from her

position as our Young Adult Field Secretary. In worship following her statement we expressed gratitude for her faithful service. We heard of other staffing changes and listened with attention as Christopher Sammond, our General Secretary, celebrated our ability to “care for one another and discern way forward” and of his sense that “we have grown stronger, more trusting, and more faithful to the work we are called to do.”

I found evidence of this in Nurture Coordinating Committee's laboring so under the weight of a concern that some felt called to continue meeting after the building closed that evening—perhaps in the first ever car committee meeting.

Our children delighted and inspired us with a poster of the peaceable kingdom and helped the earth with a beach cleanup service project.

We were invited by Steve Mohlke, co-clerk of this summer's Friends General Conference Gathering, to attend the Gathering, held this year at Niagara University. He and his committee described the many opportunities

for transformative experience. Y'all come!

We did so much more—please read through the minutes for news on the pay-as-led for sum-



mer sessions proposal, for information on the progress toward finding a new general secretary, and for much more.

I look forward to seeing many of you twice this summer—once at the Gathering, and again at our Summer Sessions—a feast of opportunities for celebration and community.

*In peace, Lucinda Antrim  
Clerk, New York Yearly Meeting*

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## FCNL Executive Secretary Visits New York

Friends Committee on National Legislation is a Quaker lobby in the public interest with a nearly 75-year history. Perhaps best known for establishing the Peace Corps or the Americans with Disabilities Act, the organization is currently advocating for issues ranging from nuclear weapons to criminal justice, environment and energy, and peacebuilding. Wikipedia notes that the issues

advocated are extensions of the Quaker testimonies of peace, equality, simplicity, and integrity. Yelp even has a review.

On April 8, FCNL Executive Secretary Diane Randall came to New York to share details on the current capital campaign via a presentation entitled “The World We Seek: Now Is the Time.” The four main components: Supporting the Young Adult Program which creates opportunities for young adults to be trained in

advocacy and lobbying both in and outside of D.C.; building a Quaker Welcome Center, to be used both for hosting visitors and trainees, and to serve as a neutral space for bringing policymakers together; establishing a funded “Friends in Washington” program which would both bring in experts for short term service and send them home as FCNL ambassadors and local lobbying coaches; expanding and sustaining lobbying efforts. -- Heather Loza

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## REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

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### 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

### Outdoor Worship

6:00 PM, every Thursday, weather  
permitting spring through September,  
outdoor worship under the Quarter-  
ly Meeting's care in Battery Park  
(Manhattan) at the Labyrinth just  
north of Castle Clinton

### 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, Sep-  
tember to June. Three classes, roughly  
related to age: Bodies (age 4-6), Minds  
(agr 7-9) and Spirits (age 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, 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

### Prayer Healing Meeting

10:00 AM, fourth Sundays  
in the meeting room

### 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 wish-  
es a free hot meal. Children encour-  
aged to volunteer. Contact: Andres  
Colapinto, acolabus@gmail.com

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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Panel and discussion on

### “FAITH AND JUSTICE: HOW OUR RELIGIONS CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION”

*Tue, May 9, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.*

at Brooklyn Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Description: sponsored by the Brooklyn Heights Interfaith Clergy  
Association and the BMM ministry and counsel committee

### QUAKER LIGHT IN ACTION

*Saturday, May 13, 7 – 9 p.m.*

at Grand Army Plaza

Description: sponsored by the  
BMM Quaker Activism group.

For more details email

[Quakeractivism@protonmail.com](mailto:Quakeractivism@protonmail.com)

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## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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The Communications Committee wel-  
comes Brooklyn Meeting News contribu-  
tions from all Meeting members and at-  
tenders. 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 December 19th, so that we  
may briefly discuss your contribution, as  
regards its timeliness, appropriateness,  
and length.

General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to  
[newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org)

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 for-  
ward to your input!

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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](mailto:events@brooklynmeeting.org).**

Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to [events@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:events@brooklynmeeting.org).

Send inquiries or suggestions about the newsletter to [newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org).

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

Current members: Melissa Cavanaugh, Ben Frisch, Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, Dan Bodah, Heather Loza Drawings by Lucy Sikes

To keep up to date on the latest events, [visit brooklynmeeting.org/calendar](http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar).