



BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

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

brooklynmeeting.org

JULY, 2017

“No Nukes, No Wars, No Walls, No Warming”

Conference hosted by Brooklyn Meeting

By Martha Speiss

The second substantive session of the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading towards Their Total Elimination opened in New York on June 15th. The Session will continue through July 7th.

The opening of the Session was preceded on June 17th by a Women’s March & Rally to Ban the Bomb at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza with the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Peace Action, and many more organizations. The march was followed by a Vigil and Blockade of the US Mission to the UN, with the demand

that the US participate in these ongoing UN negotiations to ban nuclear weapons.

Peace and Planet organized a conference entitled “No Nukes, No Wars, No Walls, No Warming” to recognize the 2nd Session. The conference was hosted by the Brooklyn Friends Meeting on Sunday June 18th. Panels included: Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Bombs, Movements Against Nuclear Arms, Youth Organizing for Nuclear Disarmament, and a discussion under the heading Ban Treaty and Beyond.

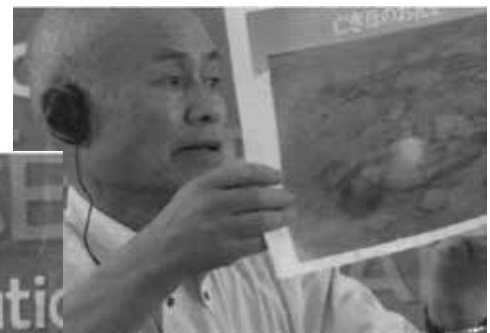
Speakers included Joseph Gerson, who serves as the AFSC’s disarmament coordinator, director of programs in New England, and director of the Peace and Economic Security Program. He has worked with AFSC since 1976. He was the principal organizer of the conference.

Mr. Mimaki Toshiyuki, a Hiroshima Hibakusha (A-Bomb

Survivor) also spoke. He is the Vice President of the Hiroshima Prefectural Hibakusha Organization and a former Executive Board member of Nihon Hidan-kyo (The Japan Confederation of A & H Bomb Sufferers Organizations).

Other participants included Sally Jones of Peace Action NY State, who helped organize these events; indigenous elder Kathy Sanchez of TEWA Women United; Tina Stege of the Marshallese Educational Initiative; and Iram Ali of MoveOn and Tina Stege of the Marshallese Educational Initiative.

From left to right: Elder Kathy Sanchez of TEWA Women United; Joseph Gerson, AFSC’s disarmament coordinator; Mimaki Toshiyuki, Hiroshima Prefectural Hibakusha (A-Bomb Survivors) Organization



Interested in promoting a Quaker event? Then email events@brooklynmeeting.org

Walking to Fight Climate Change

The Prophetic Group on Climate Change of New England Yearly Meeting is inviting friends from New York to join a pilgrimage the week of July 9.

A stable climate requires an immediate phase-out of fossil

fuel use. Given this reality, we must immediately shut down all coal-fired power plants and rapidly shift away from our region's dependence on natural gas and toward renewable wind and solar energy. We will walk about 10 miles a day starting in Portsmouth. Please join us for

all or any part of the walk. For information on the route and how to join, visit climatepilgrimage.org/



Call for Grant Proposals

Brooklyn Meeting's Peace & Social Action Committee reminds readers that we are seeking projects to recommend for grants under BMM's Socially Responsible Fund.

The three categories are:

- projects of organizations that have a connection to BMM
- Individual Quaker-related travel or attendance at Quaker-relat-

ed conferences

- Meeting-wide socially responsible activities (including conferences)

We particularly welcome new projects.

The next deadline for written proposals is September 1. Proposals should be sent or handed to Brendan Glynn, clerk of P&SA, who can also provide more information.

Recently, P&SA recommended approval by BMM Business Meeting of two grants in the second category: one of \$1,000.00 to Jonathan Fluck for a Quaker-sponsored study trip to Israel and Palestine; and another of \$1,300.00 to Willow Bennison for travel to Ghana with the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent. We have requested that both make presentations to BMM upon their return.

Book Review: *Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy* by Anne Lamott

By Carl Blumenthal

The premise of Anne Lamott's new book, *Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy*, is the prophet Micah's query: "What doth God require of thee but to do justice and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God?"

Lamott hangs her hat on mercy, but her spiritual coat rack also contains sympathy, compassion, empathy, forgiveness, charity, kindness, and grace.

These are illustrated in stories that might be described as mountains (a trip to the Hiroshima memorial, a young friend's suicide, AA confessions, reports from the Hunger Project in Senegal) and molehills (fishing by her father's side, experiments with tadpoles, shopping at Zoologie, envy of a colleague, a public speaking

gaffe), with meditations in between—on Jonah, the prodigal son, Ruth, the good Samaritan, Lazarus, the thorn in Paul's side, and the prostitute who gives Jesus water from a well.

You can dip your toe anywhere in Anne Lamott's literary waters and feel in touch with the whole ocean of her thoughts. So moving are the author's words that, by fining me for every tear I shed on *Hallelujah Anyway's* pages, my library could afford to build a new wing.

To say "I'm kidding" is to invoke one of Lamott's principal rules: Every time you hit readers on the head with a weighty insight, relieve their burden with a joke about how not to lose weight. In other words, one good metaphor begets another, even if her wisdom is bittersweet as the darkest chocolate.

Try "What if we know that forgiveness and mercy are what heal

and restore us, that they actually are the fragrance that the rose leaves on the heel that crushes it." Or "My humility can kick your humility's butt anytime." And how about "trauma seeps out of us as warnings of worse to come." Another of my favorites: "I often recall the New Yorker cartoon of one dog saying to the other, 'It's not enough that we succeed. Cats must also fail.'"

Just as reciting poetry resounds in the ear before making sense to the mind, Lamott often stumps us with her Zen-like koans. Friends will respond favorably to the way she weaves together the sacred and the profane. She characterizes her sermons as "Jesusy"—a relief for those of us who are spiritual fellow travelers rather than innkeepers of the faith.

Anne Lamott possesses a unique sense of humor that's as sharp as a stiletto and will make you cry as her epiphanies fall like rain.

Quakers in Russia

By Heather Buchan Loza

Julie Harlow recently shared a slice of Russia through the lens of Friends House Moscow (FHM), a Quaker resource center that supports grassroots organizations envisioned, operated and sustained by Russians.

One theme for her talk: one person can make a difference. An American and former fourth grade teacher, Julie was inspired by her students' concern over the Russian people after the collapse of the Soviet Union. She traveled to Russia and photographed people, effectively humanizing stereotypes.

There's more than a newsletter article just on the faces she captured, not to mention her adventures wrangling tours, but her current traveling minute rallying support for FHM also follows the spirit of the theme, so to introduce the essence of FHM, here's a typical story of how Friends House Moscow works. Ludmilla came with an idea to address a concern over orphans. She wanted to organize a support system for foster families, since just knowing other people sharing similar situations can make a huge difference in a country with essentially no history of fostering. The program, which offered training to parents including both practical and emotional support, was so measurably successful that the state adopted it when Ludmilla said she had to leave, as she was working on a new program. This also hints at a second theme: the ripple effect. A small start

can grow into something much grander than initially envisioned.

FHM is an independent non-governmental organization (not to be confused with the religious Friends, Moscow Monthly Meeting). I think a safe comparison would be to suggest they're an incubator for projects. People come to them with ideas and FHM helps with paperwork, teaching them how to write grant proposals to get financial resources for their programs, as opposed to the limited seed funding FHM is able to provide. Julie emphasized the projects are initiated by Russians, but many fall under Quaker areas of interest including AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project), conscientious objection, work with disadvantaged groups (eg. children, the disabled, refugees), and social work.

The talk included all kinds of statistics exemplifying the need for services, such decreases in the number of hospitals. While FHM can't address such issues direct-

ly, they do provide assistance to those working to improve the civil society. The board is international: Russian, American, British, Norwegian, German, and Dutch.

What is harder to convey here is how well Julie highlighted the differences between how Americans and Russians perceive how daily life changed in this part of the world between the height of the Cold War and current democracy. To get a better feel, visit www.friendshousemoscow.org, sign up for their newsletters, catch a future talk, or e-mail Juile at fhmus@sbcglobal.net.



How a Brooklyn Meeting Member Recreated Our Neighborhood

By Molly Rusnak

Brooklyn Meeting is located on the edge of a neighborhood now called Boerum Hill. It is approximately 30 blocks and covers the area between Schermerhorn Street and Wyckoff Street, Fourth Avenue and Court Street. In the 1800's it was originally built as a middle class suburb of Manhattan with brownstone and federal brick houses. However by the 1960's it had deteriorated into a run-down neighborhood with many rooming houses. The city was beginning to tear down buildings there in order to rebuild as part of an urban renewal plan. In 1962 a member of Brooklyn Meeting, Helen Buckler, known to her friends as "Bobby", a journalist and author, crippled by a hip injury, was looking for a house in Manhattan with a fireplace. She was unable to find anything she could afford.

She saw an ad for a house in Brooklyn on Dean Street between Nevins and Bond Streets, with several fireplaces, for \$18,500. Despite warnings from her friends about the crime and poverty of the area, she bought it and moved in.

Almost immediately she began an effort to bring other middle class home-owners into the neighborhood and to save houses from demolition. She formed a small group in her living room, calling themselves the Boerum Hill Association. This name was derived from the owner of a large farm in Revolutionary War times. She even persuaded the

purchasers of another house on Dean Street to become licensed realtors and advertise in the New York Times. And that was when my family, among other young families, bought and struggled to renovate run-down former rooming-houses in Boerum Hill. Some of these folks, now much older, still live in the neighborhood as do some of the previous Puerto Rican and African American families who owned houses as well. The Boerum Hill Association still exists.



Ujima Friend's Peace Center of Friends of African Descent

The Fellowship of Friends of African Descent is a 25 year old Quaker non-profit corporation whose mission is to support the spiritual nurture of Quakers of African descent and provide opportunities for the sharing of their concerns. Friends of African Descent are opening the Ujima Friends Peace Center in Philadelphia. This is the first of many peace centers that we hope to open throughout the United States. This work grows out of

witness against State Sanctioned violence and other forms of oppression in our community.

Ujima means Collective Work and Responsibility. In the Spirit of Ujima we pledge to make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and solve them together.

The Center is located in the heart of North Philadelphia. We will begin to establish a worshipping presence there in May, 2017. The work of the Center will be to reduce violence and provide a safe haven with educational, cultural and recreational opportunities for adults and young people. This in-

cludes offering community education programs such as our summer Freedom School, peace training for a peace force that bring a police together with peace force workers in the community, and disarmament to reduce gun violence.

We call on all Friends of African Descent to make a monthly donation to the Center and also to donate to our Freedom School. Come and be with us for our dedication this August 25-27 at the Gathering.

From the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent.

June Meeting for Business:

Treasurer Reports on Procedures

Helen Mullen described her work in reconciling check balances and reports. She also encouraged Committees to be conscientious and prompt with record keeping, noting that she will promptly return expenditure forms with current committee balance information.

Finance and Collections Reports on Contributions

Between 1-17 and 5-31 this year we received 193 donations, a total of \$22,408.91. More members have arranged for regular automated contributions through their banks.

Friends should be aware that approximately half of these funds go to meet the expenses of New York Yearly Meeting.

Friends Approve Two Grants for Travel and Service Abroad From the Socially Responsible Fund

Willow Bennison is supported to participate in a "Friends of African Descent" conference in Ghana.

Jonathon Fluck is supported on a mission to Israel and Palestine to work with residents and Peacemakers.

Carl Blumenthal Reports on Our Donation to Mental Health Journal

"New York City Voices", a peer journal by and for present and former mental health patients used financial support from the Meeting to increase circulation, readership and advertising.

Property Committee Announces Work on the Meetinghouse This Summer

Michael Phillips informed Friends that asbestos will be removed from the basement of the Meetinghouse during the summer to prepare for the installation of a new boiler. This will entail the closing of the Meetinghouse for two weeks, which will be announced. Friends are encouraged to attend other New York Meetings: Fifteenth Street, Morn-

ingside and Flushing. Information about these Meetings is available on the Quarterly Meeting website or by calling the QM office, 212-777-8866.



Mary Owen Welcomed Into Membership

After Meeting for Worship on June 4, Friends gathered in the side yard next to the Meetinghouse to welcome Mary to the Meeting and meet her husband. The sun shone, the flowers bloomed and all enjoyed refreshments.

Volunteers needed for JYM

As we look ahead to NYYM Summer Sessions at Silver Bay, Sunday, July 22 to Saturday, July 28, 2017, we are looking for volunteers to work with the Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). Friendly adults are sought to work with young Friends from Grades 1-12. Perhaps you, or someone in your meeting, has the gift of working with children or teens and would welcome this opportunity. It is a wonderful way to get to know the Yearly Meeting.

Volunteers may request that part of their Silver Bay costs be covered by JYM.

Friends who are not led to give the entire week to JYM may have gifts to share for an hour or so during the week.

Please contact Ellie Rosenberg (ellierosenberg7@gmail.com)

Activities for Quaker Families and Teens This Summer:

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Powell House is offering a number of options this summer, including:

July 12-16

"Unwinding at Powell House" for young people in grades 9-12

July 21-23

"On the Way to Silver Bay": Whether you are on your way to NY Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions or just want a relaxing weekend, spend time at Powell House visiting, playing games, quilting and enjoying the out of

doors and home-cooked food.

August 6-10 Powell House Camping Trip to Tacon State Park

August 18-20 "Oneness With Nature" Powell House Annual Women's Weekend

To register or learn more, visit powellhouse.org.

AVP Summer Camp

Another summer option for young people in grades 6-11 is the Alternatives to Violence Summer Day Camp, taking place August 7-17 in conjunction with Chatham/Summit Mtg. To learn more, visit, nfo:avpnjyouth.weebly.com

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

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), 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, www

UPCOMING EVENTS

a living flame

31st Triennial Gathering of

Friends United Meeting

July 12-16, 2017

friendsunitedmeeting.org

NY QUARTERLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS

Sunday, July 17, 2017, 1PM

Quaker Cemetery in Prospect Park

NYYM SUMMER SESSIONS

July 23 - 29 Silver Bay, Lake
George, New York

HELP WANTED AT SILVER BAY:

NY Yearly Meeting Summer Ses-
sions: Worship Sharing Leaders,
info at sunfirequaker.earthlink.net

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Communications Committee
welcomes Brooklyn Meeting News
contributions from all Meeting mem-
bers 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 December
19th, so that we may briefly discuss
your contribution, as regards its time-
liness, appropriateness, and length.

General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to
newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org

Contributions should generally be
brief, between 150-450 words in
length.

Please send your newsletter submis-
sion 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!

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.

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, Ben Frisch, Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, Dan Bodah, Heather Loza Drawings by Lucy Sikes