



Brooklyn Meeting News

Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends • brooklynmeeting.org

April 2018



Linda Clark (center left), Nancy Black (center right) and Ben Frisch (right)

Showing Support for a Friend

On Friday evening, March 16, 50 to 60 Friends gathered at the Meeting House for a Meeting for Worship with a concern for Ben Frisch and his wife Jenny Knight. As we entered the Meeting Room, we were greeted by Ted Ehrhardt, Ben, and Jenny on the Facing Bench. The spirit in the room allowed me to feel the Light and Love. After an appropriate passing of time, Ted rose to explain the Meeting for Worship for Ben, and to provide support and love for him and his family. It was neither to explore nor to attempt to resolve any issues.

As the silence deepened, Friends were moved to speak their hearts. One Friend explored the benefit of his Quaker education in Pennsylvania and the very lessons he learned as a child and how those very teachers are with him in his daily deeds. We were fortunate to hear from a senior at

Friends Seminary. She was a student of Ben's last year. She was so articulate in her feelings. She explored how she felt that her fellow students were being deprived of the opportunity to experience Ben's skills in life along with the educational subject matter. At some point we heard from a parent of a student at Friends Seminary. He was surprised at how all of this has been carried on in the lack of communication and process. Your reporter rose to add her voice in concern for Ben. On a more global view, it is my observation that our Quaker schools have lost their footing in Quaker testimonies and practice.

In conclusion, one could only feel the confusion and pain over this situation. Just prior to the rise of meeting, Ben rose to address us all. He added his voice and thanked us for our concerns. We were all given the information that there was an appeal

Meeting for Ben Frisch

Brooklyn Meeting recently welcomed Friends from other Meetings and from the Quaker schools in the Quarterly Meeting to gather and share their appreciation and support for Ben Frisch, a longtime member of Brooklyn Meeting and teacher at Friends Seminary. The group, which filled the Meeting Room, included teachers and students from the Friends Schools, as well as Friends from the Monthly meetings and from New York Yearly Meeting. Ben has served on many committees in these Quaker organizations. I particularly remember serving with him on the Friends Seminary Committee years ago when he was the faculty representative. Children in Brooklyn may also recall sharing with him old photographs and letters from his family's long Quaker history.

On that Friday evening, Friends and students described their experiences with Ben's dedication, warmth, professionalism, humor and kindness in school, in worship, in committees and in personal friendships.

—Molly Rusnak

by the teachers' union on Ben's behalf. I'm certain that the tremendous Love and Light, shared by all, moved all who were in attendance.

—Leslie McCarthy

Sharing Spiritual Practices: Reading Psalms Together

A couple of weeks ago, my wife Jenny and I felt the need to draw spiritual strength together. We sat in silence holding hands. Then we took turns reading the 23rd Psalm out loud:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not
want.
He makes me lie down in green
pastures,
he leads me beside still waters...

After the readings, we held hands
again in silent waiting. We spent less
than fifteen minutes in total worship.
At the end of the silence, we shared
some new insights that came from
these familiar words. We emerged
from this worship feeling stronger and
better grounded.

—Ben Frisch

How Students Helped Rebuild Europe

Present day-students working for
change are part of a long American
tradition. In 1950, more
than 100
college
students,
including
Quakers
and those
of other
religions,
embarked
for Europe
to help
rebuild
after the
destruction
of World

War II. Unfortunately, all of us were
stranded in New York City for almost
two weeks because the ship that was
to take us didn't pass inspection. We
were rescued by President Truman,
who assigned us a troop ship on its
way to Europe to bring troops back to
fight in Korea.

We landed in Rotterdam, which was
mostly rubble from the bombing. Then
we went on to London, also mostly
rubble, and joined British students in a
forum planning for the future, which
was to be Socialism. We then spent
most of the summer in the American
sector of Berlin, which was all rubble.
The Quaker students picked up bricks
for eight hours a day. I was with a
YM/YWCA group that was
constructing a Social Center for
children of single mothers who were
part of the Nazi program to breed

more Nazis. We were mostly from the
U.S. and Scandinavia, along with
some German young people. So we
had an interesting time
communicating with each other. There
was little food. The Americans were
able to contribute peanut butter from
the army PX. But the menu was
mainly boiled potatoes with some sort
of pink syrup poured over them.

Once in a while we went exploring
into the British and Russian sectors of
Berlin. When going to the Russian
sector we were told not to dress well
so we would blend in with the native
population. This was not hard for me
because, in order to travel with one
suitcase, I only had two dresses and
washed one by hand each night. When
we took a train to the British sector,
we were ordered about by some
British soldiers who thought we were

German.
They were
much
surprised
when we
told them
off!

At the
end of the
summer,
we
traveled
third class
to Italy
and stayed
in a youth

hostel in Florence. We crossed the
only bridge across the Arno that had
not been blown up. On our way back,
we shared a car with some returning
Italian prisoners of war who were
delighted to see us and show off their
English.

When I returned to my senior year in
college, the first thing I did was pack
up more than half of my clothes and
send them to Europe. I then organized
an assembly program about the plight
of refugees. This was received well by
other students but my department
chairman gave me a message, from the
administration, that I should be more
careful in the future.

—Molly Rusnak

*“There is light within a
person of light and that one
lights up the entire world.
If that one does not shine,
there is darkness.”*

—Thomas 24

Stories of Their Journeys

The Meeting for Worship with a
Concern for Business on March 4
heard two letters requesting
membership in Brooklyn Monthly
Meeting. Michael Hanson shared his
letter first, followed by a shorter letter
requesting membership for his
daughter Charlotte as well. He was
followed by Eric and Melissa
Cavanaugh, who read their letter with
their children, Kara and Grant. Both
families agreed to share their letters
here.

Michael and Charlotte Hanson

I grew up attending the Pittsburgh
Friends Meeting, from my earliest
memory. I first came to the Brooklyn
Friends four or five years ago, in a
time of personal crisis, having only
visited a Meeting for Worship 2 or 3
times in the intervening 20 years. In
the Meeting room, in silent worship, I
sought solace in the familiar comfort
of the Quaker community, and the
quiet of shared worship.

Since that first visit, my experience
with the Friends on Schermerhorn has
evolved. What began as a need for
something familiar and supportive on
which to lean, has become the
foundation on which I have begun to
build my own place within the
community. In sitting in worship in
these handful of years, I have heard
many thoughts and messages from the
community. More often than not, these
messages have felt directed at me.
These have been the words I have
needed to hear, and they continue to
strengthen and nourish me.

When my daughter was born, I
couldn't wait to share the Meeting
with her. Since then, I've learned that
I also need to share my daughter with
the Meeting. Her enthusiastic embrace
of the community leaves me smiling,
proud, and often working hard to keep



up. I am proud to be able to give her the gift of that same foundation, even as I find ways to contribute. I've befriended parents, watching their own children grow alongside my Charlotte. I was given an opportunity to join the Property Committee, where I have truly begun to feel my own contribution, and where I have begun to develop closer relationships within the Meeting.

I've made my spiritual home here in the Meeting. I'd like to make that relationship formal, and share this community with my daughter, until such time as she can choose her own path, knowing that she has the solid foundation of Love, Light, and Support here.

I request membership in this community, that I can continue my spiritual journey, and to share it with the community. My route has been circuitous, and I would not have it any other way. I've found my way home, and in so doing, have made this home my own, and one I look forward to sharing.

Eric, Melissa, Kara, and Grant Cavanaugh

The first time we came to Meeting for Worship as a family, we were new to Brooklyn, new to being a family unit, and trying to figure out a lot of things. Kara was 2, Grant was a few months old, and all of the external pieces of our life seemed to be in place. We were happy in our new

neighborhood, content with our jobs, and supported by a strong network of friends and family. But we were missing a deeper sense of community where we could feel fellowship with like-minded individuals. Eric had grown up going to Friends schools, and Kara was about to start the year at the Family Center. We thought Brooklyn Monthly Meeting was a place where we could start figuring out the questions that would be important to ask ourselves as we started this next phase of our lives.

We all brought different perspectives to that first Meeting. Kara really liked the puppets in childcare. Grant, who was a terrible sleeper, had a fantastic nap in the Meeting room, which seemed like a good sign. Eric was reminded of Newtown Friends School, where he first spoke in a Meeting for Worship. The entirety of Newtown Friends School would walk the 10 minutes to the George School Meetinghouse. In a room full of students ranging from kindergarten to eight grade and all the teachers, he stood up and meekly stated, "I like Meeting," and quickly sat back down. Melissa was a little confused – what was everyone thinking about? If everyone was going to sit in silent meditation, why not do it at home?

We talked at length about it: what we observed, what we felt, how it compared to previous experiences and preconceived notions. We decided, as

a family, to keep learning more.

Looking back on that first visit, it feels so different from what Brooklyn Friends Monthly Meeting means to us today. While the outward event remains similar week to week, the internal experience continues to enrich and fulfill us. The intensity of communal worship is powerful and the silence is not quiet—it can be felt! Meeting for Worship is a mirror, where every individual's Light is amplified. Our family feels our Light shine brighter as part of this group.

We have felt welcomed into the community in so many ways. We've gotten to know many people by volunteering for childcare and cemetery clean-up days. Melissa especially values all she has learned about Quakerism, in our meeting and beyond, by serving on the Communications Committee. Eric found a new way to stretch himself last year for the Thanksgiving community dinner, when he cooked his first turkey! Kara now attends First Day School and continues her Quaker education at Brooklyn Friends School, while Grant is following in her footsteps as an active participant in child care, where he has learned to find silence for seconds at a time.

We, as a family, are growing with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting. The Light in us is amplified with the Light in others around us. We would like to continue to nurture ourselves, and the community, by formally coming under the care of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

"For thou hast created us for thyself, and our heart cannot be quieted till it may find repose in thee."

—Saint Augustine

Light Up the Night

Quaker Activism is calling on the community to **Unite in Light** on April 28, 2018 at 6:00pm in our second family-friendly, interfaith march against racism and white supremacy. Friends are asked to meet at the

Meetinghouse at 6:00pm so that we can march to and across the Brooklyn Bridge, spreading love and light as the sun sets and the full moon rises.

Friends who would like to join us in publicizing and organizing the event can join us on March 27 and April 10 at 6:30pm at the Meetinghouse.

Would you like to make a light sign? Check out an instructional video at <http://bit.ly/LightSign>, made by our own Todd Drake, to learn to create your own light sign to carry in Unite in Light!

Poetry Corner for April Fools

Friends are encouraged to share poetry through the monthly Poetry Corner. This can take many forms. A number of those who attend meeting write poems; this space is for you to share your poems, perhaps accompanied by a description of your writing process, or a reflection on how the poem connects with Quaker practice, or a note about the inspiration for your work. Or perhaps you have recently been contemplating a poem written by someone else and feel moved to share the poem or your reflections with Friends. Perhaps you would like to submit a review of a recent volume of poetry, or of a style of poetry that you have been delving into. Poems and commentary for the Poetry Corner are welcomed by email at newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

This month, Carl Blumenthal helps us break our fast with a blast of fiber.

PUTTING THE QUAKER BACK IN QUAKER OATS

By Carl Blumenthal

Why did George Fox eat the chicken before it crossed the road? Because he knew he'd run out of loaves and fishes on the other side.

When it comes to the truth, Quakers can take the hard stuff, even though we are not spirits led.

What's the difference between enemies and Friends? They apply war paint to one cheek while we turn the other.

One thing you can say about Friends: we're as faithful as the Spirit is fickle.

A Friend in need is a Friend indeed

until the contribution envelope is handed out.

How long does it take Quakers to screw in a light bulb? Eternity, if we're waiting on the Lord.

Why is centering down like pearl-diving? We dredge up worthless sand more often than God's riches.

Eldering is a not-so-subtle way of saying "I'm OK, you're not."

You'd never know meeting clerks are narcissists. Their sense of the Meeting is really "I'm No. 1."

Quakers are so merciful we forgive the barrel for holding the rotten apple.

When Quakers say, "Friend, you speak my mind," we're probably hearing voices.

In the old days, Friends banned music to keep Meetings sober. Now we jump on every bandwagon of souls who can carry a tune.

If there is that of God in everyone, can I make an exception for the guy who stole my parking space?

Friends live so long and are so prosperous because we avoid eating Quaker Oats at all costs.

For Your Bookshelf

Recently, Inga Schwarzkopf was kind enough to share with me her recommended reading list for those who would like to learn more about the history and practice of Quakers. Whether you're looking for something to keep you occupied during these first (snowy) weeks of spring or looking ahead to beach reading, here are some suggestions, listed alphabetically by author. Look for them in the library or at the book table.

- *Friends for 350 Years* by Howard Brinton
- *Guide to Quaker Practice* by Howard Brinton
- *Apocalypse of the Word* by Douglas Gwyn
- *First Among Friends* by H. Larry Ingle
- *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers* by Rufus Jones
- *A Testament of Devotion* by Thomas Kelly

- *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* by Bonnelyn Young Kunze
- *Let Your Life Speak* by Parker Palmer
- *Beyond Majority Rule* by Michael Sheeran
- *Quaker Spirituality* edited by Douglas Steere
- *The Quaker Reader* edited by Jessamyn West
- *Faith and Practice of Britain Yearly Meeting*
- *Faith and Practice of New York Yearly Meeting*

—Melissa Cavanaugh

From Newsletters of Years Past

30 years ago (March/April 1988):

"Recipe for Scripture Cake (King James) from *The Powell House Cook Book*:

- ½ c. Judges 5:25, last clause
- 2 c. Jeremiah 6:20
- 2 T. 1st Samuel 14:25
- 6 Jeremiah 17:11
- 1½ c. 1st Kings 4:22
- 2 t. Amos 4:5
- 2nd Chronicles 9:9, to taste
- Pinch of Leviticus 2:13
- ½ c. Judges 4:19, last clause
- 2 c. Nahum 3:22
- 2 c. Numbers 17:8
- 2 c. 1st Samuel 30:12

Whip Judges, Jeremiah and 1st Samuel until light. Beat the 6 Jeremiah centers. Sift and add Kings, Amos, Chronicles and Leviticus alternately with Judges. (For spices, try 2 t. cinnamon, 1 t. nutmeg, ½ t. ginger, ½ t. cloves.) Fold in Nahum, Numbers and Samuel, then also the 6 Jeremiah remnants beaten stiff. Bake 2 hours in greased and lined 10 inch tube pan at 300 degrees F."

"Jonathan Lethem is having a short story published—his first publication—in *Aboriginal Science Fiction*."

47 yrs. ago (Spring 1971):

"Strange how the seeds of an idea take root among Friends. At a recent

Preparative Meeting in Brooklyn and at a Monthly Meeting in Manhattan, Friends from different areas spoke—quite independently of each other, and without foreknowledge—of their concerns over the ‘paper membership’ which exists in so many Friends’

Meetings. Other Friends quickly rose to express their concurrence in this concern: perhaps the day is coming when Friends who consistently absent themselves from Meetings for Worship and from Meetings for Business without excuse from the

presiding clerk may be asked whether they would not prefer to be dropped from the membership rolls....”

— compiled by Dan Bodah

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. We ask that submissions for the upcoming issue be submitted by the 15th of the month before to allow time for the Communications Committee to prepare the newsletter.

Please send your article, artwork, letter, essay, poem, photograph or other item in an email to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

Contributions should generally be brief — aim for between 150-450 words in length. Please send your newsletter submission as an attached

Word document or high-resolution image file.

Keep in mind that all contributions are copy edited and subject to editing for length. Your item thus may appear in the newsletter in slightly modified form.

We look forward to your input in creating a newsletter we all wish to read!

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

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

Social Hour

12:00 PM on 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

Outdoor Worship

6:00 PM, every Thursday,
weather permitting, spring
through September. Outdoor
worship takes place under the
Quarterly Meeting’s care in
Battery Park (Manhattan) at the
Labyrinth just north of Castle
Clinton

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

1:00–3:00 PM (set-up)
3:00–4:00 PM (meal/serving)
4:00–5:00 PM (clean up)
Last Sunday, in the ground-level
dining room
Come for some or all!
Volunteers ARE appreciated for
this monthly dinner for anyone
who wishes a free hot meal.
Children encouraged to
volunteer.

Upcoming Events

Ongoing additions to the Meeting calendar can be seen at <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar>

New York Yearly Meeting Spring Sessions

Friday April 6 through Sunday April 8, 2018. Sessions will be held at Brooklyn Meetinghouse (110 Schermerhorn Street) on Friday Night, at Brooklyn Friends School (375 Pearl Street) on Saturday, and at Brooklyn Meetinghouse on Sunday morning.

ARCH Workshop

Saturday, April 7, 1:00pm – 3:00pm at Brooklyn Friends School, 375 Pearl Street in Brooklyn.

Unite in Light Planning Meeting

Tuesday, April 10, 6:30pm at the Brooklyn Meetinghouse, 110 Schermerhorn Street. Attend if you would like to help with publicizing and organizing the Unite in Light March happening on April 28.

Presentation: Quaker Work for Peace in North Korea

Thursday, April 12, 7:00pm–8:30pm at Fifteenth Street Meetinghouse, 15 Rutherford Place in Manhattan. Linda Lewis and Daniel Jasper of the American Friends Service Committee will discuss AFSC's peace work in North Korea.

New York Quarterly Meeting for Business

April 17, 2018, Fifteenth Street Meetinghouse, 15 Rutherford Place in Manhattan. Worship at 11:00am, potluck lunch at noon, meeting for business at 1:00pm, annual Corporation meeting (with ratification of two new Trustees expected) at 2:00pm. Childcare and kids' activities provided.

Unite in Light March

Saturday, April 28. Meet at Brooklyn Meetinghouse, 110 Schermerhorn Street, at 6:00pm for a our second family-friendly, interfaith march across the Brooklyn Bridge against racism and white supremacy.

New York Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions

Save the Dates: Summer Sessions will be at Silver Bay on Lake George, July 22-28, 2018. View the Summer Sessions page at www.nyym.org/session/summer-sessions-2018 for full information.

To submit an event or a change to the list of regularly scheduled activities, email events@brooklynmeeting.org.

Inquiries and suggestions about the newsletter can be sent to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

The Brooklyn Meeting Newsletter is published by the Communications Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting. Current members: Dan Bodah, Melissa Cavanaugh, Ben Frisch (clerk), Heather Loza, Leslie McCarthy, and Adam Seigel-Isaacson.

*“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God...
My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you...
Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls all your waves
and breakers have swept over me.”*

—Psalm 42
