



MONTHLY MEETING NEWSLETTER

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

February 2012

The Peace Testimony: From Two Yearly Meeting Friends

By Molly Rusnak

Brooklyn Friends gathered on the afternoon of First Day, January 8, to hear the personal experiences of Christopher Sammond and Greta Mickey of New York Yearly Meeting with the Quaker peace testimony in today's world.

Greta Mickey, Peace Coordinator for New York Yearly Meeting

Greta expressed the point of view of an activist with a spiritual center. She believes that, before we act for peace, we must find peace within ourselves. Personally she came to a point in her life when she needed to take a new direction. She was concerned about world peace and said to herself, "What are you going to do about it?" She searched for peace within herself and was led to bring it to others. She was called to form a worship group in Georgia. She sold her home and ventured to Georgia to work with a group of six Friends on the refugee emergency in that country. At first it seemed just too big a problem for a small group to address successfully. But they said to themselves, "Just do it". They prayed and, with \$3,000 from Friends World Committee for Consultation, they brought in fifteen facilitators from the Quaker Alternatives to Violence Project and trained Georgians to branch out bringing "Love Speech" instead of "Hate Speech" to the nation. She says, "This is the Peace Testimony at work."

Christopher Sammond, General Secretary of New York Yearly Meeting

Christopher shared his personal take on the Peace Testimony as "the fruit of our practice" in the words of George Fox. Fox taught that when we give up our egoistic desires we live in "the power that takes away occasion for war." Personally giving ourselves up to this power and abandoning our personal needs is the first step in a life of peace. He describes an ecstatic experience in which one realizes "I am broken", reaches a "bottom", and then is

able to let go of the need to have his or her



own way. It may happen in a moment and can last into the future.

Brooklyn Begins the New Year Tending to Business

By Molly Rusnak

Our new Interim Clerk, Andy von Salis opened 2012 with Meeting for Business. A surprising number of Friends attended.

Dan Bodah, New Member of Brooklyn Meeting

After his letter was read a second time and his membership approved, Dan Bodah was welcomed into the Meeting. He comes from an evangelical background and he describes the ecstatic religious experience he had as young person as similar to his experience with silent worship in Meeting. Dan has been attending for a number of years and Friends expressed their pleasure at his becoming a member. Heloise Rathbone from Ministry and Counsel Committee will gather Friends to welcome him.

Brooklyn Care Relationship Committee Reports a Busy Year

The committee organizes the annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Dinner for BFS and Mary McDowell Friends School. The dinner was a great success with the largest number of attendees ever. The committee also sponsored an art exhibit of work by Brooklyn Friends School students

and their sister school in Africa, the Kisangura Friends School. The reception and exhibit took place on First Day in the social room of the meeting with the title of "Jambo Si Jambo".

Other activities of the committee were the Family Worship with the schools at Meeting in November and encouraging the First Day School to submit a film to the BFS Bridge Festival which was attended by several members of Brooklyn Meeting.

Brooklyn Meeting: How Are We Doing? State of the Meeting Report

The State of the Meeting Report which is submitted to New York Yearly Meeting every year, is an opportunity for Friends to reflect on all aspects of the Meeting. The committee had invited Friends to submit responses to a questionnaire. As Friends responded to the draft they questioned how much of the report should be factual and how much should reflect the spiritual state of the community. They were reminded that the Recorders will report next month on membership figures. The report emphasized the contributions that young adult Friends are now making to the community, including their own activities, those shared with the Meeting as a whole and their participation in committees.

Friends made a number of suggestions to the committee and a revised draft will be presented next month.

How Should Brooklyn Meeting Support "Occupy Wall Street"?

For a second time Peace and Social Action Committee came back to Meeting for Business to ask this question and how to address it. Concerns from Friends at this and the December meeting ranged from a desire to fully support the whole of "Occupy Wall Street" because the way it is organized and its ideals reflect are similar to Quakerism to concerns about the ways it differs from the beliefs of some Quakers. The Meeting decided to refer the question back to the Peace and Social Action Committee for further discernment.

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Meetings for Worship

11:00AM Sundays, in the Meeting Room
6:30PM Tuesdays, in the Meeting Room

Social Hour

12:00PM Sundays, Ground-level Dining Room

Hymn Singing around the Piano

9:45AM, First Sunday of every month, in the Meeting Room

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

1:00PM, First Sunday of every month, in the Meeting Room

Bible Studies

9:45AM, Second Sunday of every month, in the Meeting Room

Quaker Studies for Newcomers and Members

1:00PM–3:00PM, Third Sunday of every month, in the Meeting Room.

Calendar of Events

February, 2012

Fri, Feb 03 - Sun, Feb 05

Creativity and Spirituality; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Sun, Feb 05

Worship Sharing; 10am at Meeting House; contact Amy Hundley.

Hymn Singing around the Piano; 10am at Meeting House; Contact Heloise Rathbone: hcrathbone@gmail.com.

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business; 1pm at Meeting House; Contact Andy von Salis: avonsalis@gmail.com.

Fri, Feb 10 - Sun, Feb 12

Me, My Partner, and the Divine; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Sun, Feb 12

OWS Panel Talk; 1pm at Meeting House; Contact Mara Komoska: maramia8888@hotmail.com.

Fri, 17 - Sun, Feb 19

Winter Wonderland; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Fri, Feb 24 - Sun, Feb 26

Clerking Weekend; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

March, 2012

Fri, Mar 02 - Sun, Mar 04

Cooking & Baking from the Cooks' Book; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Community Dinner

1:00PM, Last Sunday of every month, Ground-level Dining Room
Volunteers are needed and appreciated for this monthly dinner that we prepare and serve to anyone who wishes to join us for a free, hot meal. Children are also encouraged to volunteer.

Childcare

Childcare is available every First Day (Sunday) for children ages three months to three years in the care of an early childhood teacher and dedicated volunteers.

First Day School

First Day School meets from September to June, 11:00AM to 11:45AM each First Day (Sunday) and has three classes, roughly relating to the ages of the children: Bodies (4-6), Minds (7-9) and Spirits (10-12).

Sat, Mar 03

Meeting for Discernment; Ithaca Meeting House; *see* www.nnym.org.

Fri, Mar 16 - Sun, Mar 18

Conflict & Intimacy; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Fri, Mar 23 - Sun, Mar 25

Non-Theism Among Friends; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

April, 2012

Thur, Apr 05 - Sun, Apr 08

Work/Messiah Sing; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

Sun, Apr 15

New York Quarterly Meeting; Fifteenth Street Meeting; *see* www.nnym.org.

Fri, Apr 27 - Sun, Apr 29

Women's Multi-Generational Weekend; Powell House; *see* www.powellhouse.org.

July, 2012

Sun, Jul 22 - Sat, Jul 28

New York Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions; Silver Bay; *see* www.nnym.org.