



# BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

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

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

October 2013

## **September Meeting for Business: A New Member and a Successful Retreat**

### **Elizabeth Blake and Son, Roland, Join Brooklyn Meeting**

After the second reading of her letter, Elizabeth and Roland Blake were welcomed into the Meeting. An excerpt from the letter follows:

“Choosing to accept my faith in the divine has been enormously rewarding in every possible way. I realize now that it is central to my happiness and, at the same time, a spiritual life is the antithesis of an “opiate”. It requires concentration, faith and a path toward acceptance, not a means of escape. Making peace with the past and embracing my journey has been a long process of unwinding and re-entering my focus. Living simply has also been key -- each experience in Meeting and in Friendship has been deeply affirming for me.”

### **Letter to the President Approved**

A letter to President Obama opposing the proposed military action to destroy the rockets used to attack the Syrian people with chemical weapons was approved.

### **Brooklyn Friends Participate in Conflict Resolution Workshop**

Helen Mullin and Ted Ehrhardt joined a workshop presented by the Committee on Conflict Resolution. The meeting was held, on September 28, and sponsored by NYQM. Members of every meeting in NY Quarter except one participated. This is a structured program that has been successful in many situations.

### **Retreat Committee Reports on a Successful Meeting Retreat at Powell House**

Along with sharing beautiful natural surroundings and living together, Friends took part in worshipful and social activities such as early morning worship, viewing a video of the play set in the Quaker Cemetery in Prospect Park, and a talent show.

The Committee reported that the net cost of the Retreat was \$8,328. The fee was \$115. Three full and two partial scholarships were offered. A \$1,000 donation was also received.

### **The Treasurer Reports**

The Meeting Treasurer reported that the Meeting presently has \$3,656.71 in a savings account and \$6,261.20 in a checking account.

*-Molly Rusnak*

## **Learning About Healing and Reconciliation in East Africa**

On First Day September 22, the Adult Education Committee sponsored David Niyonzima, the founder of Trauma and Reconciliation Services in Burundi. Niyonzima reported on the work of that Quaker group in the countries of Burundi, Somalia, and Congo. He described the violent ethnic history of this area, as struggles for power and resources date back to the precolonial era.

Niyonzima told his own story of escaping a violent situation as a student and running from one hiding place to another. He had an awakening and heard God’s voice saying, “Why are you hiding?” He went back and buried the bodies of the dead in a mass grave. He became depressed, asking, “Why did they die?” feeling guilty for escaping alive. He heard God’s voice again, saying “I have forgiven you.” He felt a load taken off his shoulders and a deep sense of peace. He then asked the question, “What can we do to stop the violence?”

After experimenting with Peace Building seminars without success Niyonzima realized that, in order to break the cycle, the trauma

caused by the violence needed to be addressed. Thus, the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Services was founded. Using “active listening” and storytelling in a neutral setting, the program has spread throughout the region, sponsored by local groups and other religions. David is in the United States raising funds to maintain the program.

At the end of the session our member, Ben Frisch came over and said to David “Do you remember, we were once roommates at a conference in Africa?” David did remember.

If you are interested in giving to the Burundi project, please contact:

THARS International, John Braun  
2217 Honeysett Rd.  
Wenatchee, WA 98801

-Molly Rusnak

## Meeting with a Concern for Quaker Leadership

On Saturday, September 21, Friends gathered in the Meetinghouse to consider Quaker leadership -- both what it is and how to do it. A panel composed of Jim Morgan, Clerk of the Meeting, Elizabeth Powers, Clerk of the Powell House Committee, and Nancy Black who has undertaken many responsibilities for the Meeting and Quarterly Meeting, talked about their experiences with leadership.

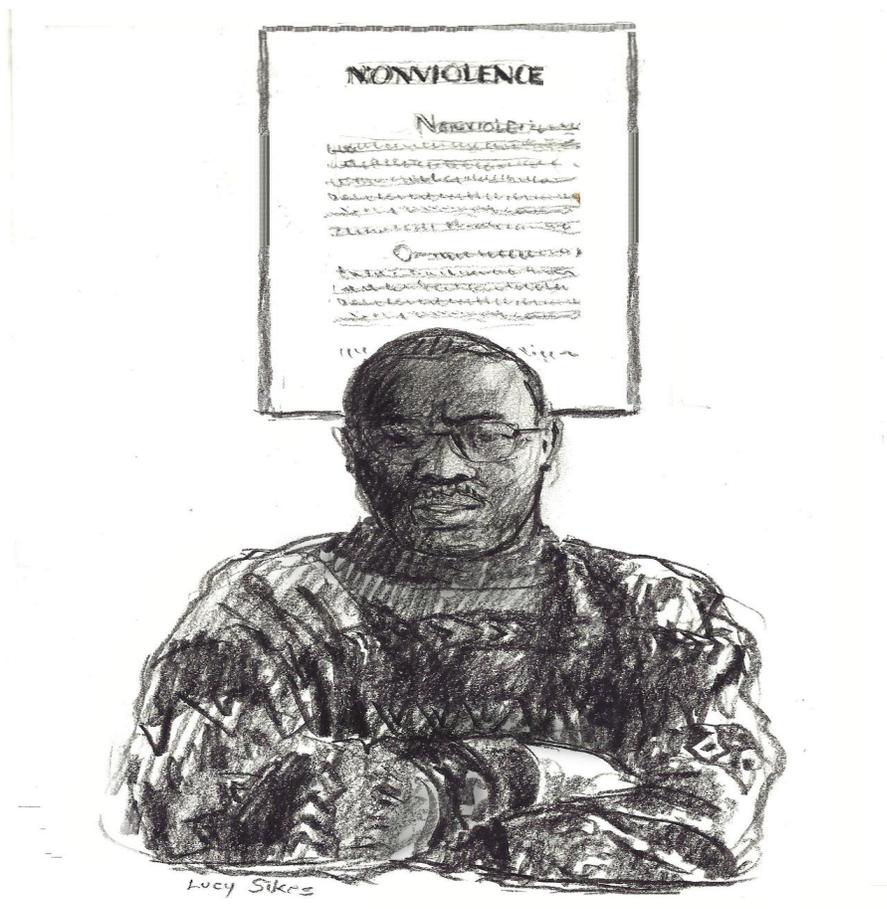
Information was shared about serving on Quaker Committees which, to some extent, follow the practice of silence and group discernment. Responsibilities of the committees include: convening

regular meetings, choosing a clerk, agreeing on an agenda for the meeting, and choosing a recorder to write minutes. Decisions are made by the group. If there is disagreement, the decision can be

encouraging more silence during meetings, possibly at the end of each agenda item or when disagreements arise.

-Molly Rusnak

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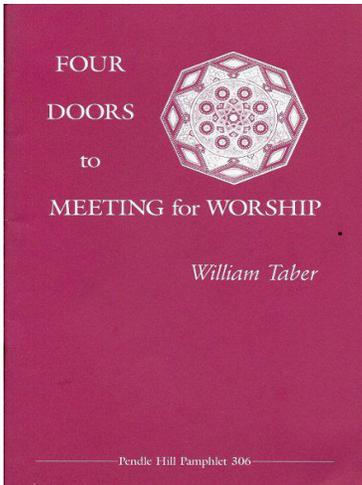
given more thought. However, when a decision must be made, committee members reach unity through silence and withdrawing objections, if necessary. Each committee reports to the Meeting on a particular month. All members participate in the report, which includes budget and expenditures. At that time a new clerk or co-clerks can volunteer. If committees run into difficulties, they can ask for help from Ministry and Counsel or from former members.

The group then divided into smaller groups. The group I participated in talked about

## Recent Additions to the Meeting Library

*Whether new to Quakerism or a life-long member, the Brooklyn Meeting Library offers literary selections designed to educate, provoke thought, and inspire debate. What follows is a recent selection, courtesy of Library Committee Clerk Angus McKillick.*

## Four Doors to Meeting for Worship by William Taber



“Some people ‘find it’ almost instantly when they attend their first Friends meeting for worship; as they settle into the silence they feel themselves gathered into a living Presence and they know they have come home at last. Others may experience their first Quaker worship as difficult and strange, but something keeps

drawing them back until they gradually grow into a richer and richer experience of worship.”  
-from the introduction. William Taber offers four doors -- or ways to access -- worship so as to experience the living Presence.

-*Angus McKillick*

## Quotation Corner

I believe that the unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

-- *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

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## Submission Guidelines

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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 at least two weeks in advance. General Guidelines:

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

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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

### 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

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## Upcoming Events

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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 [calendar@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:calendar@brooklynmeeting.org).*

*Member Kate Rapoport also maintains an  
email event announcement list; send a request to [brooklyn.kittens@gmail.com](mailto:brooklyn.kittens@gmail.com) to join.*

### October 2013

*Friday, October 8- Sunday, October 20:*  
Fall Work, Contra Dance, and Storytelling.  
Visit [www.powellhouse.org](http://www.powellhouse.org) to register.

### November 2013

*Friday, November 15, 2013*  
*6:00pm - Sunday, November 17, 2013*  
*3:30pm:*  
NYYM Fall Sessions.  
Chatham-Summit Meetinghouse and  
Caldwell College

*Friday, November 1- Sunday, November 3:*  
Stewardship: Loving Care of Ourselves, our  
Families, and the Bigger World.  
Visit [www.powellhouse.org](http://www.powellhouse.org) to register.

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*Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to [calendar@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:calendar@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: Eli Gwynn (clerk), Ben Hill, Marie Hoguet, Barbara Mack, Molly Rusnak, and Anna White.*

*Drawing by Lucy Sikes*

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