



Brooklyn Meeting News

Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

brooklynmeeting.org

February-March, 2020

Brooklyn Meeting Gathers to Support Marna Herrity

Marna Herrity, a Quaker teacher at Brooklyn Friends School for 36 years, was fired last autumn. On Thursday evening, February 13, about 200 meeting members, attenders, Brooklyn Friends students, teachers, parents, trustees, and alumni/ae gathered at our Meeting House for a Community Meeting of Concern for BFS and Marna Herrity.

The evening began with fellowship over some light refreshments; groups of current and former BFS students and faculty greeted their beloved former math, Quakerism and dance teacher. At 6:30, Friends convened in the Meeting Room. Members of Marna's support committee sat on the facing bench with Marna. Nancy Black read a timeline of the events covering Marna's dismissal and responses by concerned Friends. Other members of the support committee shared their own reflections about the fairness and lack of due process. Marna spoke eloquently about what happened. After Marna shared, the group entered into a listening worship and sharing. Current and former students, parents, BFS teachers, and Quakers spoke about their support of Marna, their frustration with her firing, their questions about the recent treatment of other BFS employees, and their concern for our Friends schools in general. There was a strong feeling amongst those who attended that Marna did not receive the kind of respectful consideration we expect from our Friends' schools. Anyone who would like to hear more details are welcome to ask members of Marna's support committee or send questions/concerns to justiceformarna@gmail.com

Marna Herrity's Support Committee:

Michael Black, Nancy Black, Ted Ehrhardt, Jessica Fleischer-Black, Ben Frisch, Joan Malin, Jim Morgan, Benjamin Warnke

On a personal note, Brooklyn Meeting held a meeting for worship to care and support me when I was fired by Friends Seminary in the Spring of 2018. The power of worship shared with my students and former colleagues and meeting Friends gave me the strength of determination and confidence to struggle to retain my job. I felt strong echoes of the love that I experienced then in the recent meeting for Marna. The Friends Seminary Teachers Association won my job back in arbitration in the Fall of 2018 and I was able to return to teaching at Friends Seminary in the Spring of 2019. It is my fervent hope that Brooklyn Friends School will welcome Marna back to teach. It is time for all of our Friends schools to learn how to follow Friends' practices of careful discernment and reject actions borne out of fear and public relations contingency!

-- Ben Frisch

*Are there not different states, different degrees,
different growths, different places?...
Therefore watch every one to feel and know one's
on place and service in the body, and to be
sensible of the gifts, places, and services of others,
that the spirit may be honored in all, and every one
honored in the spirit, and no otherwise.*

-- Isaac Pennington, 1667

A Very Brief Summary of Business Meeting, First Day, Second of Second Month 2020

Out of silence, a quote by James Baldwin was read: "If the concept of God has any validity or use, it can only be to make us larger, freer, and more loving. If God cannot do this, then it is time we got rid of Him." After a reading from *Faith and Practice* about sojourning memberships, the letter for sojourning membership for Charlotte Lapsansky from Lansdowne Monthly Meeting was read and approved. Elizabeth Blake will convene a welcoming dinner.

Polly Kertis and Marilyn Shotts were released from First Day School Committee, which has asked Nominating Committee to find replacements. Maureen McGovern and Alex Rosenthal were approved with partial terms to First Day School Committee. Finance and Collection Committee's report was read; the report and revised budget were accepted. There will be a request from the property committee for an increase in connection with some specific expenses to be carried over to the March meeting. Contrary to common practice, the meeting approved the nomination of Benjamin Warnke as Treasurer prior to receipt of the annual report. Amy Hundley was approved as Assistant Treasurer.

"How has the life of the Spirit been fresh and visibly at work in Brooklyn Meeting during the past year?" Following this query from the committee drafting the State of the Meeting report, discussion ensued. A report on the meeting retreat included transportation cooperation, success with pay-as-lead, and encouraging use of people's preferred pronouns in discussions. Marna Herrity was suddenly terminated from Brooklyn Friends after 36 years. A meeting for worship and concern for Marna and BFS will be held on February 13. The meeting was closed with a reading from Patricia Loring's *A Quaker Path to Simplicity*.

Thoughts on the Health of our Community

With the newest coronavirus (COVID-19) in the news, Communications Committee has been thinking of our community - both in the face of this potential risk, and with a general love and concern towards health and well-being. COVID-19 is highly contagious. The virus is relatively mild for around 80% of cases, with a mortality rate around a 2-3% of cases. We share the following queries:

How can we, as a community, best support individuals and families through potential disruptions in work, school, and earnings, and in access to food, supplies, and needed care through illness?

How can we, as a community, help to mitigate risks and to support one another and our communities in the event of potential home-quarantine as one of the most effective ways to minimize contagion?

Some of the best things we can do to take care of ourselves and others are quite familiar:

- If you are feeling sick, stay home.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. Try to avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.
- As much as possible, maintain a healthy lifestyle. A person's overall health impacts their body's immune system and can affect their ability to fight off, or recover from, an infectious disease.

See further recommendations at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>

We welcome further queries and conversation about this topic - please feel free to write to us at newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org

-- Catherine Dibble

First Day School Corner

Joseph Eismen shared a thought Friends might consider after the rise of meeting: When the people come downstairs, we could have a dance party. As he described it, dancers could form a circle, follow the music - but there's the catch - we need somebody to put on the music. This led to some consideration and a very interesting conversation about instruments, hopefully to be followed up in future newsletters.

Not as important as the dancing, but an opinion all shared by other young Friends interviewed for this story, is that it would be nice to have monkey bars.

While at work preparing cookies for February's Community Dinner, young Friends MD, Drew, Ray, and Joseph were quite adept at sharing their thoughts about what they'd like to share with the Meeting - and, I suspect, inspired by their work. I think we may have a regular feature from this group, as they have developed a survey about cookies (but they have all kinds of ideas for which they could ask opinions. So be sure to stay tuned.)

Two concerns were timing and formatting. Cookies, of course are a very important topic, and getting information out there as quickly is important. Formatting is a concern because the goal is to survey the community's favorite cookie: Oreo, chocolate chip, or oatmeal raisin. How to do this? Voting will happen during community dinner, through the newsletter, and by a clipboard where people can tally marks. Results can then be printed in next month's newsletter along with a new survey question.

-- Heather Buchan

Coordinating Committee Weekend

Coordinating Committee Weekend (CCW) is an annual planning gathering of many of the most committed activists for the work of our yearly meeting. It is also open to all NYYM Friends and attenders. This year's CCW focused on "changes and adjustments we may be called to in who we are and what we bring to what we do. How do we move away from cultural norms into a space of spiritual growth, connection, and liberation—from fear, from being controlled/constrained by finances, and to be the people whom we are truly called to be?" Topics covered included membership, distributed clerkship, institutional racism, and the budget.

-- Heather Buchan

Kuwesa Kenya

Friends will remember that Jean Smith visits Brooklyn Meeting about once a year to talk about her work with HIV widows and the water purification project. She brings items to sell to benefit Kuwesa Kenya. Now they have a website: <http://kuwesakenya.com/> where you can learn about their programs and purchase products.

-- Nancy Black

Friends can also read an article that Jean wrote about this project: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/new-paths-in-later-life/>

Australian Friends Need Space

Two Australian Friends, Elizabeth PO' and Adrian Glamorgan are looking for someone to host them for April 25-May 22 (or part of it) while they are in New York to promote the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review.

They would hope to stay no further than 30-45 minutes commute from the UN, but are open to being further afield. Most of the day they will be attending meetings. On weekends we may be visiting Friends out of town. Know that they are friendly guests and enjoy making connections with people and sharing time together, as well as taking responsibility for chores around the house, and covering costs. They are non-smoking, vegetarians.

They could also run workshops for our School/Meeting/group on: Earthcare, heart-to-heart communications, nuclear issues, community journalism. Some of their work is at: <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Earthcare/earthcare-invitation-newsletters-0>

Their weekly radio programs have covered the climate emergency, including Australia's bushfires - these are available at <https://rtrfm.com.au/blog/category/understorey/>

-- Heather Buchan

Upcoming Events

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

Adult Education Committee Discussion Around The Presence of God

Sunday, March 15th, at 1:00pm in the Meeting House (110 Schermerhorn)

The Adult Education Community is bringing a discussion around the many different ways of seeing God. Thomas Kelly, in a Pendle Hill Pamphlet titled [DWS/fk aXfZWb|dfgS'I adV](#), wrote: "MgfQZMWeSi Za^k V|XWVi Sk aXIV YegdWZSf9aV|edS^;f|e`afS` [^ fWVfG^bchaXS dS^ea` WeWgWUViXZagYZe;f|efZVWSuf fZSf_ W VjbW|WUVZVbdWUVaX9aVzzEa_ W| WfZVW_a_ WfeaX h|efSf|a` La_ Wage|` edS` Wgdbg` V| Ye£ a` a` Wk Lag` fkdSVel [^ S USeecha_ 1Sf fZW|[fUZWd`]zEa_ W| WfZVWLa_ W` fZWZagd aX adZ|bi ZWi VScWVfZVWV| fa a` W a^k BdWUV Za efS` Vel` agd_ [VefS` Vi WVegefaWZVd|` TdSfZVéZgeZiS` Vi dbegeS^|` é WVLá_ XdSTWvé| fa: |eSd_ eaXahW;` egUZf| W^aX|dW VjbW|WUVaXbdWUM W` ai fZSf9aV|egffWk dS^ZI WVV` a Sdég_ WZi ZWi VScWVSI|` Y|` fa fZVg` i WVV` a Sdég_ Wf ` a bchaXZSf fZVg` |eZ|` [^ Y"

A few printed copies of the essay are available in the library and a PDF can be found at <http://www.pmoser.sites.luc.edu/idolanon/KellyReality.pdf>

The Moving Orchestra: Saturday, March 28th, at 5:30pm in the Meeting House (110 Schermerhorn)

Jubilee is a time for celebration and reflection! Let's do that with a classical music concert. A snacky potluck will follow.

Change is inevitable. But how do we navigate life's many transitions - from morning to afternoon, school to work, sleeping to waking feeling secure to feeling threatened, one decade to the next, this place to that, life to death? Maybe there is wisdom in the language and spirit of classical music to help guide us. The Moving Orchestra has put together a program on the theme of transitions. This large chamber ensemble is offering a concert that will include classical music improvisation and movement. We've had help organizing this event from [Groupmuse](#).

Please RSVP for this event at <http://1.grpm.us/DGvckg> Your \$3 reservation fee helps the Groupmuse organization continue to bring communities together around great art. Please also bring a suggested donation of \$10 for the performers on the day of the event. Of course, all are always welcome, regardless of financial circumstances.

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The Moving Orchestra

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Jub

NYYM YAF 2020 Calendar

Save the dates for our upcoming Young Adult activities, workshops, and retreats. As always, all events are pay-as-led, and transportation assistance and childcare are available! Check out the full calendar at the link below:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GN03IjgswTN70YQKeSmr5bTWu98Gss0qP9JRhyZC7VA/edit>

You can also add all events to your calendar using this link: <http://bit.ly/yafcalendar2020>

Brooklyn also has an active Young Adult Friends (YAF) group. For more information contact brooklynnyaf@gmail.com

NYYM Summer Sessions

July 19-25, 2020, Silver Bay, NY

Welcome! You are invited to join New York Yearly Meeting Friends at Summer Sessions! This year's theme is **Embracing our Past, Envisioning our Future**. This will be New York Yearly Meeting's 325th annual gathering, and the second year of the Pay as Led experiment. For much more information, including details on how to register, see <https://nyym.org/session/summer-sessions-2020>

Upcoming Events at Powell House

Powell House is the conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting, offering programs for all ages. Located in Old Chatham, New York, in rural Columbia County, the mission of Powell House is to foster spiritual growth after the manner of Friends and to strengthen the application of [Friends' testimonies](#) in the world. Powell House's events calendar is available online at: <https://www.powellhouse.org/calendar>. More information on current and upcoming events can be found at <https://poho.org/> In March there are youth events for 4th-8th graders and high schoolers. There are family events and conferences for adults, such as "Opening to the Heart of Worship," an FCNL lobby event, and the Messiah Sing in April.

Upcoming Events at Pendle Hill

Pendle Hill is a Quaker study, retreat, and conference center welcoming all for Spirit-led learning and community, located on 24 tranquil acres in the heart of a Quaker community in Wallingford, Pennsylvania. Pendle Hill's events calendar is available online at <https://pendlehill.org/calendar-view/>. You can subscribe to their monthly e-newsletter at <https://pendlehill.org/enews-opt-in/>.

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 or previews of upcoming events
- Visual and artistic contributions
- 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 of the month, 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.

To submit an event for the weekly events and announcements email, or a change to the list of regularly scheduled activities, please write to events@brooklynmeeting.org. Submissions must be received before 9pm on Sunday evening to be included for the upcoming week.

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, Ben Frisch (clerk), Heather Buchan, Bethany Rickwald, Adam Seigel-Isaacson, and Esme Spanier.