

New York Quarterly Meeting Clerks Report Tenth Month 2023

The clerk has met with Trustees Dan Seeger, Glenn Josey, and Executive Director Ted Bongiovanni to discern how we might improve committee structures, engagement, and support for friends on NYQM committees. This is an ongoing process with many opportunities for needed community input.

With the participation and support of friends from 15th Street, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, Pennington, Morningside, and our office we partnered with Green Faith on the September 17, 2023 March to End Fossil Fuels.

In preparation for the march 15th Street meeting hosted an art build with Green Faith and Look Loud to make spirit led messages on large hand-painted banners for the march. The feedback from the organizers of the art build was “Friends get things done.” Brooklyn Friends hosted out of town marchers the night before in the Meetinghouse as well as made beautiful banners for the march.

Over 75 friends from as far as Georgia, Vermont, Upstate New York, and near as our local NYQM meetings participated in this peaceful march. It was a beautiful day.

The morning started with an Invocation of Spirit, organized by Green Faith, by peoples of diverse faiths and spiritual communities. We invited the spirit of the divine from many traditions, as well as the spirits of our ancestors, of future generations, of nature, plants, animals, elements, and all the places of the earth affected by what we do. We had blessings and prayers from Indigenous peoples, Rabbis, Zen Monks, Iman and were moved by the determination of Pacific Islanders and called to action by the dynamic Dr. Cornel West. It was a very powerful and grounding way to ignite compassion, strength, and courage as we assembled to “pray with our feet” through the streets of NYC. A beautiful reminder that we all are in a scared fight to protect Mother Earth and create a just and thriving world.

Many friends have expressed their concern for the many Migrants that have come to NYC and how we can support them. As places of worship our meetinghouse are often sought out as places of refuge by the newly arrived. Friends and staff have expressed their concern to the Clerk and have asked how we can support this vulnerable community. The Clerk suggests the formation of an ad hoc working group to explore ways NYQM can collaborate with other organizations and programs to support migrant families in New York City.

In friendship.
Katherine Alford
NYQM Clerk