

New York Quarterly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

Flushing Meeting, Queens, and online

October 20, 2024

Attendance:

Clerk: Katherine Alford (Morningside)

Staten Island: 1

Recording Clerk: Sarah Way (Brooklyn)

NYQM staff:

Brooklyn: 7

Exec Director: Ted Bongiovanni

Fifteenth Street: 5

Community Organizer: nova sturru

Flushing: 16

Operations Manager: Jose Ng

Manhattan: 1

Visitors/Unidentified: 1

Morningside: 9

2024.10.01. The meeting settles into silence at 1:10 pm.

Out of the silence the clerk, Katherine Alford, shares two readings:

[Kintsugi](#) is a Japanese art form dating back to the 15th century that involves repairing broken pottery in ways that honor and emphasize the cracks—often using gold or silver to piece it back together. The practice itself is a composite of two integral concepts: *mottaini*, the regret one feels when anything goes to waste; and *mushin*, the importance of accepting change. *Kintsugi* is a reminder that while we can't undo the wrongs of the past or perfectly restore what we once had, we can still make something beautiful. — *Willow Defebaugh*

Caroline Fox 1841

Live up to the Light

The Light that thou hast

Live up to the Truth

and remember, my child

You are never alone

no, never

Oh live up to the Light

that thou hast

And more will be granted thee,

will be granted thee

Oh live up to the Light

that thou hast

2024.10.02. The clerk welcomes Friends to our quarterly meeting for worship with a concern for business. Friends approve the [minutes](#) from our July 20 meeting and the agenda for today's meeting.

2024.10.03. Ted Bongiovanni gives [the Executive Director's Report](#). Ted points out the NYQM staff members present (nova, Jose, Sarah). He worshipped on the query "what does it mean to be a Friend today?" "What are our leadings, and what is our vision?" These queries ground the work of the NYQM office. Ted also offers the quote "We're the ones we're waiting for." Ted introduces Jennifer Vallone from University Settlement. The quarter has contracted with University Settlement to support Friends who have needs beyond the capacity of our pastoral care committees to address. Jennifer briefly introduces her work with University Settlement, a community-based non profit that brings resources to whole people and whole families. They will be surveying NYC Quakers about what they might need or want, and will be offering six workshops relating to wellness and individual support. Email communitywellness@nycquakers.org with questions.

Facilities improvements and repairs are taking place with more planned. The quarter is in strong financial shape. The quarter's investments are managed by Friends Fiduciary. A Friend expresses concern about Friends Fiduciary's investment in Amazon, saying that it is complicit with the ongoing violence against Gaza. The People of Color Working Group, a newly-formed group related to the POC Worship Sharing Group that is under the care of Flushing Meeting, would like to meet with Ted about this concern; Ted agrees. The current POC WG members are John Choe, Ernie Buscemi, nova sturup, Helen Garay Toppins, and Linda Shirley. The working group is open to all POC in quarter, and outreach to possible new members will begin soon. Friends receive the report.

2024.10.04. Glenn Josey, 15th Street, presents [the report from the Trustees](#). They meet monthly. Most of the work of the Trustees takes place within its subcommittees. Facilities Coordinating Committee oversees properties; approved projects with the NYQM staff. Finance Sub-Committee is working on updates to our investment policy, to make sure they are in alignment with our values. Personnel Sub-Committee is re-examining its charge.

The Trustees held a weekend-long retreat at which they approved a minute implementing a conflict of interest policy for the quarter. The quarterly meeting committee members responsible for dispersing funds will need to sign a statement about conflict of interest. Our Audit and Budget Committee is small. The Trustees approved a minute asking that Friends approve that the Audit and Budget Committee be combined with the Finance Subcommittee to

do the work of developing the quarter's budget. The responsibility for the audit will remain solely with the Audit and Budget Committee. Friends approve this minute.

Friends accept the report, which is [attached](#).

2024.10.05. Katherine Alford reads the proposed nominations from the Nominating Committee, [attached](#). Friends are encouraged to consider sharing their gifts with the quarterly meeting. With a few minor clarifications, including the allowing of Miguel Herrera of Brooklyn to join the Trustees before his membership has been officially accepted, Friends approve the nominations and receive the requests for release. (The full Nominations Committee roster is available [here](#).)

2024.10.06. Ed Elder, Morningside, presents the report from the [Witness Fund Committee](#). They met in August to decide how to disburse \$50,000 in grants. Difficult decisions had to be made. Seven projects were chosen to receive funds: two that were previously supported and five new ones. Details about the projects are in the attached report. The committee will accept more proposals in January and February for their Spring disbursement. A Friend asks that acronyms in the report be spelled out. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.07. Katherine Alford reads [a travel minute](#) for John Choe of Flushing Meeting from the quarter's Ministry and Counsel Committee. This letter endorses John's leading to travel in his emerging ministry with our Peace Testimony. Friends approve this minute and accept the report.

2024.10.08. The [Flushing Meeting Report](#) is brought by Hugo Lane. The meeting continues to struggle with divisions. Their Peace and Social Action Committee is organizing a "Lets Talk" event for the community. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.09. Gloria Thompson presents the [Manhattan Meeting Report](#). The 2024 theme, rebuilding faith in changing times, continues. Regular intervisitation with other meetings continues, and all are welcome to join their worship at 9:30 am every First Day in room 1 at 15th Street Meeting. Two members attended and actively participated in the Friends World Committee on Consultation Meeting in South Africa this summer. They are raising funds to support expansion of the Davanga school in Kenya. As the 15th St Friends shelter is closing soon the meeting is working on feeding the hungry near the meetinghouse. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.10. Michelle Dodson reads the report from the [Downtown Manhattan Allowed \(Outside\) Meeting](#), which had a strong turnout this season. The report includes a history of the meeting and its location at the Battery Park labyrinth. A Friend suggests that we flag this report for inclusion in the history of the quarter. Friends receive the report.

2024.10.11. Katherine reads the [Morningside Meeting Report](#). Fall brings increased attendance to their meeting, with many new visitors. Their Ministry & Counsel held a workshop on speaking from the silence during meeting. Morningside is grateful to be connected to its community. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.12. Barbara Barnard gives the [Fifteenth Street Meeting Report](#). Their Arts Committee and Speaker Events Committee have presented exciting events.. As part of the quarter's "Welcome Back to Meeting" month for Friends School alumni, Friends Seminary joined them for worship on Oct. 6 and George School joined them on Oct. 13. Two memorials were held for beloved Friends.

On Sept. 8, the meeting approved a minute from their Peace and Social Justice Committee endorsing legislation to establish a commission on investigating Indigenous boarding schools and other attempts at assimilation. The minute is aligned with work done by FCNL:

"Bill S. 1723 and H.R. 7227 propose the establishment of the first U.S. commission dedicated to examining the policies and practices of numerous federally sponsored, faith-run institutions. This commission would investigate efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples, eradicate their cultures and languages, and document human rights abuses. The legislation holds profound significance for tribal nations, which continue to grapple with the enduring impacts of the boarding school era. It also represents a crucial step toward reconciliation for faith communities, many of which have acknowledged their roles in these historical traumas and are committed to a process of truth-telling. Furthermore, it is vital that the commission be granted authoritative powers, including subpoena authority, as enjoyed by over 15 other federal commissions. This capability is essential for accessing undisclosed records from faith organizations, thereby advancing the atonement and healing at the heart of this bill."

15th Street sent this message to legislators and shares this minute in hopes that other meetings will choose to endorse it. FCNL contact information is in the report.

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At their Oct. 13, 2024 business meeting, after a presentation by a Friend who had visited the West Bank, 15th Street Meeting minuted their support of the Apartheid-Free Pledge written by the AFSC and endorsed by a number of faith-based groups:

WE AFFIRM our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;

WE OPPOSE all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and

WE DECLARE ourselves an apartheid-free community and to that end,

WE PLEDGE to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

15th Street asks other meetings in our quarter to consider joining this pledge. For more information, go to apartheid-free.org.

15th Street's Ministry and Worship Committee has planned a workshop on serving as a recording clerk; see announcements, below, for details.

2024.10.13. Marna Herritty presents the [Brooklyn Meeting Report](#). Attendance at their 11 am meeting usually exceeds 100 people. They held an in-house retreat that included games, pot luck dinner, a movie, ice cream, sleepover, and breakfast. Peace & Social Action is funding some projects — leadings from meeting Friends. Andy and Lynn Von Salis, and Joan Malin, active and important members, are moving out of our area and are missed. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.14. Ted Lochwyn reads the [Staten Island Meeting Report](#). They continue to meet twice monthly for worship and once monthly for business; all are hybrid. They meet on the beach once a month for worship during summer. Katherine shares photos of a recent meeting at the beach. Friends accept the report.

2024.10.15. Announcements:

- **Registration for the NYQM Retreat, Nov. 15-17 at Powell House, is now open.** Visit bit.ly/NYC-retreat-2024 for more information and a link to the registration form. The theme is "The Joy that is Set Before Us." This is an intergenerational retreat; three children have already registered. On Saturday, Oct. 26, at 1pm, there will be an online info session about the retreat. The Zoom link is linked to from [the retreat page](#).
- On Election Day, Nov. 5, Brooklyn Meeting's coworking open hours will be extended to 9:00 pm with a soup potluck and an open space for Friends who might want to be together.

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- “How to Be a Recording Clerk” workshop will be held at 15th St. Meetinghouse on Saturday, November 2, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Registration and more information is available on 15th Street’s. website: 15thstmeeting.org/calendar/
- NYYM’s Fall Sessions will be Dec. 6-8, online, and all are encouraged to attend.
- George Lakey will be visiting 15th Street on Nov. 7th, Thursday, at 6:00 pm for a screening from the documentary by Glen Holsten titled “Citizen George.”
- Quaker Call to Action on Sunday Nov. 3 is holding a national zoom call for worship
- AFSC national zoom call on election violence prevention on Oct. 30.

The meeting ends at 3:30 pm with a request to hold poll workers and other election workers in the Light, followed by a brief period of worship.

UPCOMING NYQM DATES:

2024:

November 15-17 — NYQM Retreat at Powell House

2025:

January 19 — Brooklyn Monthly Meeting

April 19*** (Saturday) — 15th Street Monthly Meeting

July 20 (Saturday) — Friends Cemetery Prospect Park

October 20 — Morningside

***Note this is Saturday due to the 3rd Sunday being Easter. The body minuted that when 3rd Sunday in April falls on Easter our NYQM business meeting will be held on Saturday.