

Morningside Matters

*The Newsletter for Morningside Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)*

www.morningsidemeeting.org

September 2020

Calendar

Weekly	Sunday	Meeting for Worship	virtual	11:00 am
Regular Meeting events	First Sunday	Moving with the Spirit	virtual	10:00 am
	First Sunday	Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business	virtual	12:45 pm
	Second Sunday	Peace & Social Concerns Committee meeting	virtual	12:45 pm
	Second & Fourth Saturdays	Bible Study	virtual	1:00 pm
	Fourth Sundays	Racial Justice Study Group	virtual	1:00 pm
	Fourth Sundays	Welcome breakfast	suspended	
Monthly, Quarterly, Yearly Meeting events	Thursdays	Downtown Manhattan Outdoor Meeting	Labyrinth in Battery Park	6:00 – 7:00 pm
	October 17	NYQM meeting	virtual	1:00 pm
	October 23 – 25	Morningside Fall Retreat	Stony Point, NY	
	November 6 – 8	NYYM Fall Sessions	virtual	
Regular events of interest	Daily	Meeting for Worship at Pendle Hill	virtual	8:30 – 9:10 am
	Saturdays	Meeting for Worship at Powell House	virtual	6:00 pm
	Saturdays	FGC: Worship and Worship Sharing Groups	virtual	9:00 pm
	Tuesdays	FGC: Ministry on Racism Worship Sharing for People of Color	virtual	5:00 pm
	Wednesdays	FGC: Worship and Worship Sharing for People of Color	virtual	1:00 pm and 8:00 pm
	Fridays	FGC: Ministry on Racism Worship for Friends of European Descent Confronting Racism	virtual	12:00 pm
Special events	September 14	Pendle Hill: Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous People	virtual	7:30 – 9:30 pm
	September 17	Friends Committee on National Legislation: Diplomacy, Peacebuilding, and the Resurrection of Landmines	virtual	4:00 pm
	September 18 – 20	Pendle Hill: Divine Exploration: A Spiritual Journey for Women	virtual	
	September 19	Pendle Hill: Garden Arts	virtual	10:00 – 11:00 am
	September 19	Powell House: Spiritual Self-Care	virtual	2:00 – 4:00pm
	September 19	Pendle Hill: The Road to Pendle Hill	virtual	7:30 – 9:00 pm
	September 24	Pendle Hill: Poetry Coffeehouse	virtual	7:00 – 8:00 pm

September 26	Powell House: PoHo Bookclub discusses <i>Just Mercy</i>	virtual	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
September 26	Pendle Hill: Virtual Garden Workshop	virtual	2:00 – 3:30 pm
September 28	Pendle Hill: Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous People	virtual	7:30 – 9:30 pm
October 1	Friends Committee on National Legislation: State of Native America	virtual	4:00 pm
October 5	Pendle Hill: Can Quakers & Others Help Prevent an American Slide into Dictatorship?	virtual	7:00 –9:00pm
October 6 – November 17	Pendle Hill: Arts for Spiritual Discovery, Weekly	virtual	6:30 – 8:00 pm
October 10	Pendle Hill: Garden Arts	virtual	10:00 – 11:00 am
October 12	Pendle Hill: Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous People	virtual	7:30 –9:30 pm
October 14	Pendle Hill: Reading Group: Four Doors to Meeting for Worship	virtual	6:30 – 8:00 pm
October 15	Friends Committee on National Legislation, Women, Children and Peace in Afghanistan	virtual	4:00 pm
October 19 – 23	Pendle Hill: Spirits in Darkness—Black Women’s Virtual Writing Group	virtual	
October 24	Powell House: PoHo Bookclub discusses <i>An American Marriage</i>	virtual	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
October 26	Pendle Hill: Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous People	virtual	7:30 – 9:30 pm
November 2	Pendle Hill: What Happens Wednesday? Preparing Ourselves for the Work Ahead [to create a more just world]	virtual	7:00 – 9:00 pm
November 5	Friends Committee on National Legislation: Finding Justice in Police Reform	virtual	4:00 pm
November 6 – 8	Pendle Hill: Mutual Accompaniment & the Creation of the Commons Online	virtual	
November 14 – 17	FCNL Public Policy Institute and Annual Meeting: Fierce Love	virtual	
November 20 – 22	Pendle Hill: Friends Decision Making and Clerking	virtual	
December 5	Powell House: PoHo Bookclub discusses <i>Hamilton</i>	virtual	10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Explore websites of Powell House: Pendle Hill: and FGC at <https://powellhouse.org>, <https://pendlehill.org/contact-us>, and <https://www.fgcquaker.org/resources/online-worship-opportunities>.

Remember to check the Calendar and the Bulletin Board at www.morningsidemeeting.org

Newsletter Submission Guidelines: The purpose of the newsletter is to inform members, attenders and other interested people of Meeting news, including member interviews, news of Friends, other Quaker-related subjects, news of Quaker organizations, upcoming events, Meeting-sponsored projects, book reviews, etc. Articles and pictures are welcome. The deadline for the newsletter is the Sunday of the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. Please e-mail your material in Word or text format to morningsidequakermeeting@gmail.com by the end of that day. Past issues of the newsletter are archived at www.morningsidemeeting.org.

Reflection:

*“Wholeness does not mean perfection;
it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life.”*

Parker Palmer

**Morningside Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
Minutes of the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
September 6, 2020**

Silent worship

“The collective project of our species is to engage in its own conscious evolution beyond individual identity, difference, and nationhood. Its success can best be measured by how well we care for, protect, and value one another’s lives. Such basic aspects of community take place in the tenth world of the most present and should exist at the core of our species nature.”

Carol Becker, THINKING IN PLACE

The meeting began at 12:45 p.m.

After silent worship, the Clerk read a passage from Carol Becker, THINKING IN PLACE.

There are no reports today from Peace and Social Concerns, Meeting with Children, the Nominating Committee, the Hospitality Committee, or the Library Committee. There is no report from the Clerk.

1. Treasurer’s report was presented by Stephen McDonnell.
Friends accept the report, the report is attached.
Friends approve the Finance Committee’s recommendation to pay the last two quarters of this year’s covenant contribution to the New York Yearly Meeting at the current time, to help NYYM meet its payroll.
2. Ministry and Counsel’s report was presented by Ed Elder.
Friends accept the report, the report is attached.
Friends approve the request of Karen Taborn to be released from service on Ministry and Counsel.
3. Communications Committee report presented by Bryan Oettel.
Friends accept the report, the report is attached.
4. Report from the ad hoc committee on reopening for in-person worship, presented by Jason McGill.
Friends accept the report, the report is attached.

Friends were asked to offer guidance by email on the three questions posed in the report.

5. Additional business

Concern from Dave, Nancy, and Liberty Britton about the controversy at Brooklyn Friends School, presented by Dave Britton. They ask that the meeting endorse the following proposed minute:

Proposed Minute for New York Quarterly Meeting:

Friends are concerned to support the healing and conflict transformation that Brooklyn Friends School so dearly needs at this time. We lovingly elder the Friends who have been appointed by the New York Quarterly Meeting to the Brooklyn Friends School governing board of Trustees to act immediately to accept and implement the proposal¹ brought forward at the BFS Care Relationship Committee meeting of 9/2/2020 by Alice Pope, Nancy Black and Benjamin Warnke, all former BFS Trustees with long and deep roots in the Quaker traditions of the school. The proposal calls for withdrawal of the NLRB petition to decertify (on grounds of religious freedom) the recognized faculty and staff union, the appointment of an arbitrator to facilitate resolution of a contract for the current school year, and initiation of an ongoing process of deepening communication among faculty, staff and administration to transform adversarial perspectives to collaborative ones for the good of the whole school community. We note that our appointees to Boards of other organizations (including BFS) have a duty of accountability to the Quarter to act in accord with the sense of the Quarterly Meeting, and we understand that any appointed Friends who feel they cannot in good conscience take such action may and should lay down their appointments.

Discussion followed.

Friends agree to hold the matter over and convene a called meeting for worship with a concern for business next First Day, September 13, at the rise of meeting.

¹ See pp. 8-9.

Friends agree to let the concerns raised rest with the clerk to pursue during the week, for consideration next week.

6. Announcements: Peace and Social Concerns will meet on September 13th, directly following the called meeting for worship with a concern for business.

The meeting closed with a period of silent worship, ending at 2:15 p.m.

Present: Bernard Winter, Jane Alexandre, Stephen McDonnell, Richie Robles, Dan Seeger, Tom

Goodridge, Charlotte Ehrman, Richard Schmidt, Robert Renwick, Edward Elder, Charlene Ray, Pamela Wood, Peter May, Tita Beal Anntares, Sally Campbell, Megan Maurer, Dave Britton, Nancy Britton, David Fletcher, Marjorie Johnson, Angel Tueros, Ronald Rieder, Ernestine Buscemi, Joseph Maguey Soto, Nathan Shroyer, Helen Garay Toppins, Kathy Stackhouse, SY Bowland, Charles Sirey, Joy Ambler, Joyce Richardson, David Evans, Bryan Oettel, Scott Blumenthal, Jason McGill, Katherine Alford, Liberty Britton, Jason McGill, Carly Rogers

Treasurer's Report

Our Checking Account Balance as of 9/2/20 was: \$47,896.08.

We received approximately \$7075 from our Spring/Summer Appeal, with two rounds of email solicitations. These generous contributions are above and beyond our monthly consistent contributions from Friends and attenders.

Our Peace and Social Concerns budgeted and scheduled commitments through August, 2020 have been sent out, as has our second quarter covenant contribution to New York Yearly Meeting.

There are complications in our banking due to the pandemic, getting the current Treasurer as a signatory on the account, and complications in regards to making deposits in person and online banking, but the Finance Committee and the former Treasurer have been working together with the current Treasurer on "work arounds" to complete our banking tasks as a unified Committee.

Action Item: The Finance Committee recommends paying the last two quarters of this year's covenant contribution to New York Yearly Meeting at the current time to help NYYM meet its payroll.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen McDonnell, Treasurer

Ministry and Counsel Committee

1. Ministry and Counsel had been meeting weekly on Tuesday mornings at 10 until mid-August, when it began to meet every other week; our next meeting is scheduled for September 15. The first part of the meeting is open to anyone with a concern, the second part deals with more confidential matters. Please let Ed know you would like to attend so he can send you the link.
2. We are especially grateful for the support of our communications committee in its continued presence in our zoom meetings and assistance with its features. Our recent experience using break out groups to raise concerns about a return to in-person meetings was particularly fruitful.
3. An ad hoc working group to consider logistics of returning to in-person meetings has been formed. This group includes Jane Alexandre, Jason McGill, Megan Mauer, Katherine Alford, and Sally Campbell.
4. Karen Taborn has requested to be released from service on M&C and we recommend that the meeting approve her request.

5. Moving with Spirit continues with on-line gatherings the first Sunday of the month. Anyone interested in attending should contact Jane Alexandre.
6. Bible Study is meeting on Zoom on September 12 at 10 am; contact Jerry Reisig if you would like to be added to the group.
7. The Racial Justice Group will be reconvening this fall.
8. We continue to reach out to Friends who might be feeling more isolated than usual and helping (when possible) to connect them to Meeting for Worship.
9. The dates for our Fall retreat at Stony Point are October 23, 24, 25. We encourage everyone who is comfortable to attend in person but are also hoping to offer a zoom option. Registration details will be available mid-September.
10. Currently Ministry & Counsel has 9 clearness and support committees.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Ray, pro tem clerk

Communications Committee Report

The Committee met biweekly in July and August with meeting clerk Jane Alexandre in attendance and will continue to do so.

1. General: We continue to update the website with the clerk's message and to email the clerk's message and the invitation to worship to the community each week.
2. Virtual meeting for worship: We continue to focus on maintaining a smooth Zoom experience and a satisfying on line meeting for worship, including creating breakout rooms for post-meeting fellowship and worship sharing.
3. Social Media: Facebook postings were suspended in July in solidarity with the advertiser boycott. We continue to look for sources of new content.
4. Website: Because the website continues to experience outages and other technical problems, we are going to transfer it to a different platform and work on updating it to meet our current needs. We will make a presentation in the near future and look forward to Friends' input. As we work on this transfer, we will be sensitive to a number of issues: cost, ease of maintenance, Friends' concerns over privacy, security, and corporate control, and how we want to represent ourselves to the world.

Report to Morningside Meeting from the Ad Hoc Committee on In-Person Worship

1. The Ad Hoc Committee met for the first time on September 1, 2020. Current members include Jane Alexandre, Katherine Alford, Sally Campbell, Megan Maurer, and Jason McGill
2. The Committee reconsidered a summary of the logistical information we currently have from Riverside Church. This summary is the same one the Meeting received in the Clerk's letter to the Meeting on August 22.
3. The Committee asked Jason McGill, of the Worship Space Committee, to forward several additional questions to Riverside seeking greater detail on its plans to support social distancing and for its facility cleaning regimen as it re-opens. An updated summary of Riverside's plans is attached to this report.
4. The Committee reflected on the charge laid before it by the Committee on Ministry and Counsel, which tasked the Ad Hoc Committee with supporting the Meeting as it prepares to return to in-person worship in some form:
As we begin to think about a possible return to in-person worship, we are reminded that what drew us to and has held us at Morningside is the quality of the spiritual life in the meeting. How do we hold that concern center, keeping and nurturing our spiritual life through all of the practical developments and issues?
5. In the spirit of that guidance, we offer the following queries. We have faith that solutions and answers to logistical matters will come more easily if we center ourselves in nurturing a community unified with the Spirit.
6. Having considered the above queries, the Committee asks for the Meeting's guidance on these questions:
 - What do people who are in person need in order to feel in community with people on screen, and vice versa?
 - How can we help welcome and include all attending?
 - How are we as a Meeting thinking of continuing the strength of our connection with each other?
 - How do we retain and build the integrity of the worship in our community?
7. The Meeting will decide when it is ready to resume in-person worship at Riverside; the Ad Hoc Committee's role is to support that decision.
8. The Ad Hoc Committee's next meeting is not scheduled but will take place shortly after the September Meeting for Business.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason McGill, Clerk

Summary of Riverside Church Logistics, Policies, and Options

1. When will Riverside Church re-open?

- Riverside Church will re-open for the use of its tenants, including Morningside, on September 13.
- The Riverside congregation will NOT return on September 13. All Riverside Church worship services will be held *online only* until a yet-to-be-determined date, but at the very least until January 2021.

2. When does Morningside have to return to in-person worship?

- There is no date by which we must return—the decision is up to us as a Meeting. Once we have reconvened, each Member and Attender will decide whether they are comfortable returning to the Church or wish to continue worshipping via Zoom.
- It may help Friends to know (or be reminded) that the Meeting's rent at Riverside is covered by the New York Quarterly Meeting. The Quarterly Meeting will also cover any additional expenses required to allow us to worship in-person during this time. More about this at #7 below.

3. What COVID-related policies and practices will the Church have in place to support social distancing and related practices?

- As noted above, the Riverside congregation will NOT be in the building. This will greatly reduce the number of people present on Sundays.
- Everyone entering Riverside must submit to a temperature check and complete a brief health questionnaire at the security desk.
- People must wear masks at all times while in the building; the mask must cover the nose and mouth.
- Food is not allowed in the building.
- There are 6-foot distancing floor markers in the Claremont Avenue entrance hallway.
- There is signage defining maximum capacity for each elevator, although elevator usage and spacing will be self-managed by elevator riders.
 - Friends should recall that only two of the four elevators serve the 12th and 13th floors.

4. How will Riverside manage bathroom access and usage?

- There are signs encouraging people to maintain 6-foot distances
- All bathroom access is self-managed
- As noted above, the Church presently expects very limited numbers of people to be present in the building on Sundays.

5. What cleaning protocols will the Church have in place?

- Riverside has developed a comprehensive cleaning regimen. Staff have told us that:
- The Church has purchased fogging and cleaning machines for use in all areas of the building;
- 12T and 13T will be scheduled for comprehensive cleaning on Saturday evenings;
- The buildings and grounds team will clean and disinfect high-touch public spaces twice daily, including doorknobs, elevator buttons, handrails, light switches, bathrooms, water fountains, foyer and lobby spaces. Cleaning will be done using CDC and NYC DOH approved cleaning products;
- Inspection frequency and intermittent checks will increase to include checking and refilling hand sanitizer, soap dispensers and paper towel and toilet paper dispensers.
- Riverside has retrofitted toilets with lids;
- The church can provide masks and hand sanitizer. It can also provide wipes, bottles of sanitizer and disinfectant so that individuals can wipe down and disinfect surfaces as they use them.

6. How will social distancing for worship in 12T be managed?

- The Church will set up the chairs for us to ensure they are placed 6-feet apart.
- There are no floor markers or other guides for distancing in 12T or 13T. We may place our own tape markers if we wish but need to remove them after Worship each week.

7. Will we be able to hold hybrid worship—so people can worship by Zoom or in-person at Riverside and see each other?

- Yes. The Ad Hoc Committee will work with Riverside to get technology and other resources in place to make this possible.
- Morningside will need to create a new committee to be charged with the ongoing management of that weekly Zoom component of our Meeting for Worship. This will include setting up and dismantling the equipment every week, which will mean that members of this new committee will need to plan to attend Meeting in person at Riverside.
- The Quarterly Meeting will cover any expenses on this front.
- The Quarterly Meeting General Manager recently visited 12T with a consultant helping the Quarterly Meeting plan for reconvening. The consultant was confident that Morningside can hold hybrid worship in 12T with little technological difficulty.

8. What ventilation is available in 12T and 13T?

- Some windows can be opened in both rooms, but not in the bathroom on 12T. Riverside staff will open windows for us to prevent damage.
- The rooms are also on a cooling system for the tower, which will provide air circulation.

9. Are there outdoor spaces at Riverside we can use for worship during temperate weather?

- No. While Riverside Park is across the street, Church property (chairs, tables, etc.) may not be used in the Park.

A Proposal to resolve the current conflict at Brooklyn Friends School
over the establishment of the BFS Colleagues Union.

In the firm conviction that the current conflict must be resolved through care and consideration from all sides and stakeholders, we offer a proposal that we believe harmonizes with Quaker process, Quaker values, and the urgent need to hear all voices. We have arrived at this proposal through discernment together in the hope that it can provide way forward. We believe that these recommendations require that all sides both give and gain, in mutual commitment to BFS's vibrant, enduring future. In making this proposal, we hope that it offers a pathway to strengthening the school's Quaker mission and identity. Indeed, we hope that Brooklyn Friends could serve as a model for Quaker schools nationwide.

Our proposal addresses our understanding that the Quaker spirit of the school's union negotiations have broken down over the past year. To repair and strengthen that spirit, we propose that each constituency thoughtfully reconsider its current demands in order to find unity.

We ask the BFS Leadership (Trustees and administration) to commit to the following:

- To recognize the right of BFS teachers and staff to form a union to engage in collective bargaining and all standard union practices, and to rescind their Petition to the National Labor Relations Board.

We ask the BFS Colleagues to commit to the following:

- To work affirmatively and proactively to ensure that parents, students, and community members who mobilized in support of the BFS union move forward with care for, and commitment to, the wellbeing of Brooklyn Friends School, mindful of the importance of turning away from past conflicts in order to restore respectful relationships among all parties.

We ask the BFS Leadership (Trustees and administration), and the BFS Colleagues, to commit to the following:

- To craft a joint statement, expressing specific commitments in moving forward to overcome this crisis and work together in a spirit of care for the BFS community;
- To establish a schedule of joint labor-management meetings, run using Quaker process, with a spirit of openness and transparent communication in order to deepen shared interests and to resolve disputes and challenges.

We believe that responsible employers can and should find paths to achieving shared goals and centering their values while elevating the voices of employees, both through union representation (should the employees choose to be unionized) and through ongoing clear, open communication. To that end, we ask both BFS Leadership and Colleagues to commit to an ongoing joint process to affirm a commitment to working to achieve shared interests, open communication, and an inclusive, positive relationship between the BFS Colleagues and BFS Leadership.

Having consulted with Friends familiar with both Quaker process and labor-management relations, we believe that there are several potentially fruitful options for moving beyond this painful situation, agreeing to an initial collective bargaining agreement, and establishing productive and fair relationships between management and staff at BFS. We ask that both school Leadership and the BFS Colleagues will make a commitment to one or more of the following approaches:

1. Mediation in order to achieve a first contract. There are many exceptional mediators available who can work collaboratively to help complete this initial negotiating process.

2. Joint training in interest-based bargaining in order to move from taking fixed positions, which can be adversarial and detrimental to collaboration, to identifying and supporting shared interests.
3. Consideration of a labor-management partnership. This approach requires mutual work and joint committees throughout the organization, to make sure that issues are identified early, communication is deep and frequent, and all stakeholders are participating in solving problems when and where they emerge. There are thoughtful and expert facilitators and consultants available who could guide this process.

We have consulted with Rebecca Givan, a faculty member in Labor Studies at Rutgers University with deep roots in the Brooklyn Quaker community, on these proposals. She would be willing to work on establishing a new working process that centers Quaker process and prioritizes moving forward with care and concern for the well being of our community. Paul Clark, Director of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at Penn State and a long time member of State College Friends Meeting, would also be willing to provide support in this process. There are also individuals within the broader Quaker community with expertise in conflict resolution and use of Quaker process who could be resources.

We offer to participate in all meetings between the two sides of this dispute as elder or clerk in the hope and expectation of the observation of Quaker process, adherence to Quaker principles and the loving resolution of this conflict. In so doing, we believe we can simultaneously protect the rights of BFS's workers to have a collective voice governed and guaranteed by the NLRB, while also greatly lessening the need to turn to the NLRB, just as Friends Seminary's history would attest.

We respectfully and tenderly offer this proposal for your discernment, in the spirit of the deep love we all share for our school, along with our faith in one another and the Light that connects us all. As a first step, we ask for separate meetings between ourselves and BFS Leadership, and also between ourselves and BFS Colleagues, to identify concerns as well as possible strategies to begin the essential work of healing. We send this letter out to the broader community as well – Quakers, current and former families and students, and all who know and love Brooklyn Friends School – so that all can participate by laying down the existing conflict, and holding this process in the Light.

Nancy Black, Brooklyn Meeting Member, former clerk of the BFS Board of Trustees
Alice Pope, Brooklyn Meeting Member, former clerk of the BFS Board of Trustees
Benjamin Warnke, Brooklyn Meeting Member, former clerk of the BFS Board of Trustees