

**FIFTEENTH STREET MONTHLY MEETING
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003

Telephone (212) 475-0466

fifteenthstreetny@yahoo.com

<http://fifteenth.quaker.org/>

18 October 2020

Dear Friends,

Over the past 3 months the meeting has continued to meet primarily through zoom. We held Meeting for Worship each first day at 11:00 AM on zoom with First Day School at 10:00 AM. On second and Fourth first days we held bible study on zoom at 9:30. Our Peace Vigil at the Washington Square Arch, which has occurred for over 30 years, on the first first day of the month has resumed meeting in July, August, September and October. We have also held a Silent Vigil for Healing and Social Justice each Wednesday in the courtyard at 15th Street.

We held Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on September 13 and October 11, traditionally we do not meet in August. We had no changes to our membership in this quarter. We continued the Jubilee year along with NYQM. In September we asked our Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice to develop queries for the meeting on racial justice. There was moving ministry given on this query. The committee also read a beautiful statement on racial justice that was adopted by the meeting. At this meeting, we also established an Ad Hoc Committee on the 13th Amendment that is working with other monthly, quarterly, regional, yearly Quaker meetings as well as other Quaker and non Quaker organizations to add a new amendment to the US Constitution to address the 13th Amendment minute approved by 15th Street, NYQM and NYYM. The committee will also track the progress of US Congressional support. In October we concluded our jubilee year with a query on forgiveness. We also heard a semi-annual report from a Friend travelling in the Ministry about the work she has been doing and how it has changed during covid.

At a Called Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on October 5, Friends discussed two topics, reopening the Meetinghouse and the ongoing situation at Brooklyn Friends School. Friends approved the following minutes.

2020.10.03 Friends consider reopening the meetinghouse and if the meeting will use zoom technology for a blended meeting. Friends agree that at this time we do not have enough experience and information about blended meetings to make a long term decision about the meeting at this time. Friends agree that the meeting should come back in stages. The first stage would include an outdoor in person meeting held at 9:30 am without a zoom component. The meeting should look into having outdoor heaters in order to facilitate this meeting during the colder months. The meeting would also have an 11:00 am meeting that is primarily held on zoom. The zoom meeting could be supplemented with a few Friends in the meetinghouse courtyard with a laptop for zooming. Friends will spend time discerning how these meetings will occur and will revisit the issue in the spring. The meeting also asks the property committee to continue to work with the acoustic consultant & the historic renovation architect to work out the technology issues for longer term installation.

2020.10.04 Friends hear an update on the situation at Brooklyn Friends School through an email from Alice Pope to the clerk of NYQM. Friends express a deep sense of care and love for all people involved with the School and hold everyone in the light. While we are not privy to the details of the negotiation, we want to reaffirm the two deeply held Quaker values of respect for the individual, and the respect for individuals to bargain collectively. Friends note that Quaker decision making process and values are not in conflict with collective bargaining and that attempts to represent our values should be comprehensive. We are united in prayer that whatever the outcome it fully respects the equality of all members of the BFS community. One Friend stands aside.

On September 9, the meeting hosted an opening reception for the Masked NYC exhibit in the outer courtyard at the meetinghouse. The exhibit displayed 40 portraits of individuals wearing masks. The portraits were hung on the fences starting by the Black Lives Mural on the Penington House Wall and continued around the corner to the end of the fence at the corner of 16th Street. 40 people came to the outdoor socially distanced opening and many more visited the exhibit. The exhibit was a great chance for the meeting to work with Penington House and Friends Seminary as an outward expression of our Quaker Values.

In Friendship,

Glenn Josey
Clerk, Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting