

20210117Morningside Report

Morningside Monthly Meeting Report to the New York Quarterly Meeting January 17, 2021

1. Morningside Monthly Meeting has been holding meeting for worship each first day at 11 a.m. On November 22nd, we began meeting in blended worship, with some Friends attending via zoom, while others gather in person in Riverside Church and join the meeting on zoom. Meeting for Children is not convening at this time.
2. Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business was held via zoom on November 1st; and in a blended meeting via zoom and in-person at Riverside Church on December 6th and January 3rd.
3. Bible study continues to meet on the second Seventh day of each month at 1 p.m., via zoom.
4. Moving with Spirit continues to meet on the first First Day of each month at 10 a.m. via zoom.
5. The Racial Justice Study Group met November 22nd, and will resume meeting on January 24th.
6. Morningside Meeting's Fall Retreat was held October 23rd-25th via zoom: "seeking to create the beloved community".
7. The State of Society meeting was held December 27th, when Morningside Friends gathered to consider the queries posed by NYYM.
8. Morningside Meeting has for some time nurtured for a Racial Justice Study Group. Open to all at Morningside, it has focused us on interrogating and understanding the ways that white supremacy and structural racism have permeated and driven all aspects of life and history in the United States.

The Racial Justice Study Group continues to be an active part of our Meeting. But a prophetic voice is urging Morningside to look inward as well. This voice resonates across our weekly Meeting for Worship, in the individual witness of many of us at Morningside, and in the Meeting's 2020 fall retreat that focused on building the beloved community. This voice asks us to consider how white supremacy and structural racism affect and infect relationships and practices in our own Meeting; how we betray our faith as Quakers by not recognizing and acknowledging the effects of racism in the relationships and practices in our Meeting; how our faith as Quakers calls us to be more fearless and loving in addressing and remedying the racism in our relationships and practices; and how we as a Meeting can take our own "next steps" toward the healing and trust promised in the Yearly Meeting's *Apology to Afro-Descendants* in 2013.

Morningside Ministry and Counsel has proposed, as a *first* step in deepening Morningside Meeting's commitment to pursuing anti-racist principles and practices, a year-long exploration of New York Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*. The exploration will be focused with queries on how *Faith and Practice* might challenge the Meeting to be more aware of and committed to dismantling racism within Morningside, *and* how implicit or explicit racial bias might underpin some structures laid out in *Faith and Practice*, which guides much of how Morningside operates. The overarching goal of this work is to deepen Morningside's commitment to building a beloved learning community. This monthly exploration is scheduled to begin in February, 2021.

9. On December 6, 2020, Morningside Meeting approved the following minute at Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. The minute was sent to Governor Cuomo, and is now forwarded to this meeting of the New York Quarter.

Morningside Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends urges Governor Cuomo to be compassionate and to exercise his power of clemency in this time when cases of COVID are increasing. Releasing those who are incarcerated who have shown growth and change, especially the elderly, those with health conditions that make them vulnerable to COVID and those serving very long sentences would cut down on cases. As Friends, we believe and have experienced the power of God's love to bring about change. We urge the Governor to recognize the changes these men and women have made and to release them from prison.

Jane Alexandre
Clerk
Morningside Monthly Meeting