

MINUTES/AGENDA - People of Color Worship & Reflection Group
Breakfast & Business Meeting
Held October 19, 2025
Morning Side Meeting House

Present: Linda Shirley (Treasurer), Helen Garay Toppins (Clerk), John Choe, Ernestine Buscemi

1. Quarterly Financial Report: As of September 30, 2025 we have \$ 4,929.26 in our Ridgewood Bank account. All expenses this month were made by donation, so there were no drawdowns from the account. (See attached bank statement.)

- \$29.80 remains from the NYQ Witness Fund allocated to the Translation Project.
- \$2,402.46 is left in our Quakerism Curriculum Fund
- \$2,497.00 is unallocated and discretionary

3. Community Guidelines. The Working Group's proposed Community Guidelines are approved. See attached.

4. Field Trip to Hudson River Museum: Smoke in Our Hair: exploring the nuanced layers of the past, present, and future within contemporary art by Native American, Alaska Native, First Nations, and Metis artists. Recently we visited the *Smoke in Our Hair* exhibit at the Hudson River Museum. It was an exploration of contemporary art by Native American, Alaska Native, and First Nations artists. The exhibit was thoughtful and inspiring exploring the themes of belonging, acceptance and loss.

5. Update on Faith & Practice Translation into Chinese: The Erikson Translations proposal was presented to the Witness Fund for a request for funds. This proposal is to translate the rest of the Faith section, along with Advices and Queries and a table of contents. Helen Garay Toppins will set up a meeting with Asian American Quakers to discuss any concerns regarding the translation work.

5. Update on Inclusive Faith and Practice Introduction project. Linda Shirley has drafted a rough first draft for the inclusive F&P introduction. We have our own funds to translate this introduction into Chinese as soon as it is finished.

7. Introduction to Quakerism Curriculum Update.

a. John Choe's report to the Quarter (and perhaps offer to Spark) on his QCUR experience supported by the Witness Fund grant under Each One Teach One is currently pending.

b. After today we are up to our fifth lesson of the POC Curriculum, Community part 1, which will be taught on November 9, 2025.

c. Linda Shirley has prepared five folder editions of the current edition of the curriculum which are being distributed to each of the NY Quarterly Meetings. The current edition has also been emailed to Monthly Meetings in New York Yearly Meeting and we will be sending it to Religious Education Clerks in other Yearly Meetings once we have additional feedback from NYYM Friends. The curriculum has now been uploaded to the POC website and will be regularly updated.

9. Future Field Trips: Next on our field trip list is the Studio Museum of Harlem, however they are currently under renovation. We will plan a whole day in Harlem.

11: Retreat: Ted Bongiovani has authorized use of Room 1 for a future retreat. Date to be determined. We will distribute invitations both personally, by mail, and email. The program will include games, activities, food, and music as possible. Among the possible business items for the agenda are elections of officers, steering committee and discussion on governance and membership.

Announcements:

- a. The Working Group has endorsed the statement: “Quakers Discern Genocide Is Occurring In Gaza And Urge Courageous Action” prepared by eight Quaker organizations from around the world. We also requested that New York Yearly Meeting endorse the statement.
- b. We are happy to report that John Choe’s case in Georgia has been dismissed and he has been completely vindicated. A report was published in the 9/21/25 Classic City News: News from the Metro Athens Crime Beat & More - “*Athens Judge Dismisses Case of Man Arrested for Reading Book in Car*” by Joe Johnson.
Visit: <https://www.classiccitynews.com/post/judge-dismisses> for all of the details.
- c. Nova Sturup is in urgent need of a kidney donor and financial support at this time. You can find the GoFundMe appeal at: <https://gofund.me/9a8e2148>. We urge everyone who can to help them in this critical time.
- d. DIWALI Celebration, Festival of Lights and Eco Friendly Celebration, October 25, 2025, PS 20/Bowne Playground, Union Street and Barclay Avenue, Flushing, Queens. 8:30 am TO 11:30 am - Garden Stewardship. 11:00 AM to 2:00 AM - Introduction to Diwali and Dolak Drumming. This is a combined event between Green Earth Urban Gardens and Flushing Interfaith Council.

- e. John Choe drafted a petition for those concerned with Quaker investments in Friends Fiduciary and profits generated by military contractors complicit in genocide: <https://www.change.org/friendsfiduciary>.
- f. New Sanctuary Coalition is meeting at Brooklyn Meeting House on Thursday evenings - 5-7 pm. There will be dinners, trainings, and other events. Please check for more information at nycquakers.org.

COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

(Approved at October 19, 2025)

We will affirm the importance and necessity of Friends of Color having safe spaces to share our lived experiences.

We will affirm ourselves as People of Color.

We will listen deeply and share deeply.

We will speak from our own feelings and thoughts, using “I” statements.

We will honor confidentiality as requested.