

Meeting for Worship Sundays 11:00 A.M. Riverside Church Tower Room 20T
(advance registration required)
and online via Zoom – link provided on request
Please contact: morningsidequakermeeting@gmail.com

Members of Ministry and Counsel who are present at meeting for worship will identify themselves at the rise (conclusion) of meeting.

They welcome your questions on any matter related to Quakerism in general and Morningside in particular.

Welcome to Quaker Meeting for Worship at Morningside

Thank you for joining us. If you are new to Quaker worship or to Morningside, we hope you will find this brief introduction to be of use. Our weekly worship adheres to the following pattern:

Worship

Unprogrammed Quaker worship follows from our belief that each of us is capable of a direct, unmediated experience of the Eternal Presence. It is characterized by a deep and expectant silence, during which each worshipper aims to free her/himself from the distractions of daily life. This “centering down” allows us to be more fully alive to the Spirit. Occasionally, out of this silence, one or more individuals may be led to rise and share a message discerned to be intended for all those gathered. Messages that do arise are not intended to provoke discussion, but further inward reflection. Hence, it is our custom to follow each message with a period of silence. Meeting for worship begins at 11 a.m. as worshippers begin to settle into the Silence. Its conclusion at noon is signaled when the meeting’s host for the week welcomes all those present.

Afterwords

Worship continues with a period called Afterwords, which provides an opportunity for us to build community by sharing messages of a more personal nature: joys, sorrows, and brief reflections that did not rise to the level of being shared during the main portion of worship. We ask that messages be kept brief, and that a worshipful atmosphere be maintained by allowing silence between messages, rather than lapsing into conversation.

Introductions

Following Afterwords, the meeting’s host will invite members of the Morningside Ministry and Counsel Committee who are present to introduce themselves. They welcome your questions about Quakerism in general and Morningside in particular.

Welcome

At this point, visitors, newcomers, and those who are returning after a prolonged absence will be invited to introduce themselves, in order that they may be greeted more fully during our Fellowship Hour.

Announcements Friends are invited to make announcements about events of interest to the community.

Fellowship

All are welcome to remain on line, or in person, for a brief period of informal chat.

Morningside Monthly Meeting – A Brief Introduction:

From our origins as an informal worship group meeting on the campus of Columbia University in the winter of 1957-58, Morningside grew into a preparatory meeting under the care of New York Quarterly Meeting (1960), then blossomed into a monthly meeting in 1973, and finally became fully self-supporting in 1990. In July of 2002, we moved from the Columbia campus to the tower of Riverside Church, and have been “permanently” at home on the twelfth floor since 2007. For most of our history, we have maintained a fairly constant number of members (55-60), despite the coming and going of individuals inherent in our relatively transient, urban setting.

Unencumbered by the need to attend to the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of a physical home, we are free to devote our resources to outreach, and to concerns for peace and social justice. A significant portion of our annual budget is distributed, via our Peace and Social Concerns Committee, to a variety of organizations who work to improve the quality of life of those whom they serve. We tend to focus on small organizations, for whom our modest contributions will make a noticeable difference, and on organizations that serve the local community, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Our lack of a Meetinghouse has presented particular challenges as we have labored together to create a loving community. We have met those challenges by establishing spiritual nurture groups, conducting mid-week meetings in each other’s homes, holding periodic retreats, and forming discussion groups on a wide variety of topics. It is believed that Morningside was the first Meeting anywhere to take a same-sex marriage under its care with the marriage of John Bohne and William McCann on May 30, 1987. Other meetings had held “Ceremonies of Commitment” for same-sex couples, but Morningside was the first to affirm the right of all couples to name their relationships as they choose. Support committees for those among us who are facing personal difficulties – or are embarking on new personal, professional, or spiritual journeys – are regularly established by our Committee on Ministry and Counsel. While attendance at our First Day School has fluctuated over the years, we are always prepared to welcome children, and work together to find ways to introduce them to a life lived in the Light, in accordance with the Quaker testimonies of equality, simplicity, integrity, and peace. In these and other ways, we have sought to earn our reputation as a caring and welcoming community.

More about Morningside:

Morningside Meeting, Learning, and Support

Please email the meeting at morningsidequakermeeting@gmail.com if you are interested in learning more about Morningside, and/or wish to be contacted by a member of the Committee on Ministry and Counsel.

Peace and Social Concerns Speakers/Discussions

The Morningside Peace and Social Concerns Committee meets as a blended in person/online meeting on the second Sunday of each month, at 1 p.m., and often arranges for speakers to address matters of concern to the committee and the community at large on the third Sunday of each month. All are welcome to attend both meetings and discussions. Announcements about upcoming speakers are made at the rise (conclusion) of meeting for worship.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

On the first Sunday of each month, we gather in a spirit of worship to attend to the temporal concerns of the Meeting. All are welcome to participate, whether in person or on line, and to learn more about the Quaker decision-making process – which is based on discernment of Spirit-led action and not on debate, discussion, or majority rule.

More about Quakerism

Faith and Practice

Faith and Practice, the book of discipline of the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) offers an understanding of the groundings of the faith and how it is borne out in practice, including our history and information on the structures of NYYM Quaker meetings. It is available online at <https://www.nyym.org/sites/default/files/NYYM-Faith&Practice.pdf>