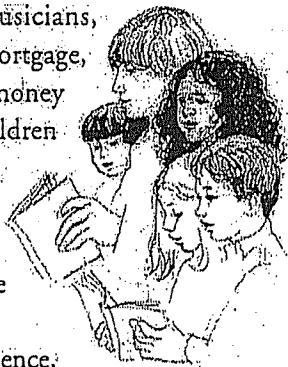


can, Hispanic, Caribbean, New Yorkers; we are skinny; plump, a bit wobbly, athletes, academics, blind, farsighted, smokers, nonsmokers, exuberant, left-handed, shy, comfortable, and a bit rustic. Some of us are quite funny; others are not. Many of us cook delicious food, and our best times are often over a potluck meal.

If you're curious about us, come to a Friends' meeting sometime. To prepare, we avoid squabbles and upsetting stories in the mass media. Many read inspirational or meditational literature beforehand. We wear to meeting the clothes we work in. Save your cash: with no pastor, musicians, singing, ceremonies, or mortgage, we have no collection of money in meeting. Bring your children too: Most Friends' meetings have special programs for them and have them join us for parts of the meetings for worship.

With up to an hour of silence, we have only our own discipline to fall on: our thoughts, meditations, thanks, and prayers. At first, the quiet may seem hard to bear, but it is also peaceful. With others worshipping there—especially so the more we get acquainted—we can feel the love and power within and amongst us teaching us to be wide awake to what fosters good and diminishes evil and then do something about it. There is plenty within and around us to get angry and gloomy about, of course. But our worship gently asks us to see God alive in each of us and to live and worship knowing and seeing this.

One Friends' meeting in Manhattan, one in Brooklyn, some in New York state, and many in the rest of the country and in other countries, sing hymns, hear a sermon, and may have some ceremo-



nies in addition to periods of silence. We call these programmed meetings, and those of us who attend understand the form of worship to prepare us for the same disciplines of mind and body.

We meet Sundays (other times, too) at:

◆ **BROOKLYN**

110 Schermerhorn Street at Boerum Place
11 A.M.–12 noon
(Any express subway to Jay Street-Borough Hall; buses to downtown Brooklyn)

◆ **FLUSHING**

137-16 Northern Blvd. east of Main Street
11 A.M.–12 noon
(Flushing line IRT #7 subway, or buses in Queens, to Main Street)

◆ **MANHATTAN**

15 Rutherford Place (221 East 15th Street, between 2nd & 3rd Avenues)
9:30–10:30 A.M. and 11 A.M.–12 noon
Programmed meeting 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays 9:30–10:30 A.M.
(Subways to Union Square; 14th Street-Canarsie L subway to 3rd Avenue; buses to 14th Street)

◆ **MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS—Manhattan**

Riverside Church (120th Street & Riverside Drive)
Use Claremont entrance—10th floor tower room (7th Avenue IRT #1 train to 116th Street; Broadway or 125th Street buses)
11 A.M.–12 noon

◆ **STATEN ISLAND**

128 Buel Avenue near Hylan Blvd.
2nd and 4th Sundays
11 A.M.–12 noon
(Hylan Blvd. bus to Buel Avenue)

For information about other metropolitan or out-of-town Friends' meetings, please call the NYYM office at 1-212-673-5750.

Lucy Sikes, Brooklyn, drawings, 5/97

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**THERE ARE
QUAKERS
LIVING IN
NEW
YORK
CITY???**





YES, we've been living here for 340 years. We're not only on the Quaker Oats boxes.

We call ourselves Friends from the name in England in the 1600s, 'The Friends of Truth,' and from Jesus having called his disciples his friends. We call our group the Religious Society of Friends.

There are Quaker carpenters, teachers, computer experts, plumbers, politicians, police, writers, business people, artists, telephone operators, astronomers, musicians, stock traders, needle workers, social workers, doctors, lawyers, and everything in between. In the country, there are a lot of Quaker farmers.

Two to a hundred fifty of us spend an hour together once or more each week in silence. We are comfortable to sit together quietly. Sometimes we pray, give thanks, think about what we have done or what has happened to us. Many of us think about others and pray for healing for them, for ourselves, and for our relationships with them. Some of us wait, as we call it, for inward direction or strength to do something alone or together about what deeply concerns us. You should know, however, that in our meetings for worship anyone may speak, when the spirit or occasion insists, about the hopes or insights he or she has, for we are ministering to and learning from each other. Spoken words in meeting may be poetic or halting, they may comfort, and they may be pointed, prophetic, and disturbing. Our stillness in meeting may force us to listen to others and to know our fears, doubts, where we fail, our common humanity and divinity, humor, strength, Christ, and

God. This knowledge is chiefly what has freed Friends to do the things we've done and is a source of whatever integrity we have.

What do we do? Friends try to live peaceably in our communities and stop war. Some have refused military service. Some decline to pay war taxes. We're for persuasion, not punishment. Some mediate disputes, encourage good relations around the world, teach nonviolence, or seek to end the causes of violence. Some counsel men and women troubled by the military and who cannot kill others or stomach the authoritarianism, deceit, or training the military promotes. We oppose military training in schools. Some Friends work with prisoners to help them to change. Others teach school or volunteer in hospitals. Volunteers run a night shelter in Manhattan and serve meals to the community in Brooklyn. Friends have set up a house in Manhattan for 50 people with AIDS who have nowhere else to live. We are responsible for three schools in New York City, one for children with learning disabilities.

We try to be honest and sober, diligent in our work, followers of conscience, simple in our manners of living, and decent and fair with our friends, families, neighbors, landlords, tenants, and people we work with. We feel we should always tell the truth, in or out of a courtroom, and, consequently, do not take oaths. We tend to be rather modest in appearance, manner, and accounts of our accomplishments, sometimes drawing little attention to ourselves. We make a lot of mistakes and keep on trying.

We are outspoken about the world's troubles and their causes, including our own responsibility for them: our religion can be unsettling. Worship together and private prayer encour-



age us to see things differently and change our habits and ideas. When others share our concerns, we can find support and work on them together.

Because we have buildings, membership, and concerns in common, we must meet to consider these. We unite on what seems right to do rather than vote or reach a consensus of opinion. Periods of prayer or quiet worship occur during these meetings. We decide some matters quickly; others take us months or years to come to unity on. About some things we have never agreed, and controversies have continued somewhat bitterly. Participants in our worship meetings are welcome to attend our business meetings as well.

Some of us have rejected churches that hold to unreasonable, nonsensical, or anti-scientific ideas and attitudes. Some have left groups that have compassion only for certain people, misuse authority, or have hierarchies or in other ways promote inequality because of social status, physical differences and abilities; or sexual orientation. Because many of us are not sure that the words we use describe faith and truth perfectly, we do not insist that others use them. We know that everyone has lived differently, and therefore everyone's words, inner life, and faith must differ. Many of us consider ourselves Christian; others understand Friends' Christian beginnings but disagree with Christianity. We accept that there are many ways to know our places in the universe and to live justly and compassionately.

We are single, married, divorced, widowed; we are parents, gay, children, straight, bisexual, old, middle-aged, young; we are European, Asian, Afri-