

Introducing Quaker Witness Day

In this new program, Quakers will tell us about their witness to the world, how their lives speak truth to power. The program will take place at Middle and Upper School Collection on Tuesday March 15, 2016.

Speakers and Topics

Planned Parenthood of New York City

For the past 16 years, I have led Planned Parenthood of New York City, an organization that provides sexual and reproductive health care and education services to New Yorkers. We serve everyone who needs us, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability to pay or immigration status. We provide inclusive, high quality, confidential, and non-judgmental care. Our services seek to affirm and empower each individual to make good, healthy decisions for her or his self and future. The overwhelming majority of our patients and students are young women. Women's rights are human rights and Planned Parenthood believes that to our core.

I believe that by enabling young women and men to make affirming decisions for themselves, we are expanding equality in our society. Working with organizations and schools in the city, we teach the importance of sexuality as integral to each person's identity and to affirm each person's place in the world - and by doing so, we grow a sense of community.

As a Quaker, I believe my work enables me to grow God in the world by fostering greater equality, compassion and personal integrity.

Joan Malin

Solitary Confinement and Segregated Housing Units

On any given day in New York State, there are about 4,500 men, women and children in solitary confinement. This experience is basically hidden from public view as decisions about solitary confinement and Segregated Housing Units are made within each correctional facility. Only recently have people been raising questions:

- What are solitary confinement and segregated housing units (SHU)?
- Why are people put in solitary and SHU and for how long?
- Who decides who is in solitary and SHU?
- Who is in solitary confinement?
- What actions are people taking?

Why as a Quaker have I and others become concerned about the use of these punishments?

Pamela Wood

Overcome Effects of Slavery and Racial Bias

I grew up during the modern civil rights movement when America made some progress toward moving African Americans out of the realm of second class citizen status and bestowing full citizenship rights upon them. Despite that progress the social, political and economic standing of African Americans has barely improved. I worked in special college admissions programs intended to correct some of the inequality African Americans and other people of color experience in elementary and secondary school. I believe that successful efforts to overcome the persistent racial bias in our country depends on the questions we ask to try to explain the racial climate we experience in our country today. Here are some of mine:

- What can current citizens of the United States do to overcome the effects of slavery and racial bias on our people?
- What is the role of African Americans in overcoming the effects of slavery and racial bias?
Is their responsibility different from White Americans?
- Can reparations to African Americans be fairly instituted in America?

Naceo Giles

The Power of Goodness

Nadine Hoover, from *Power of Goodness*, facilitates activities on how to create peaceful, conscientious friendships, with real-life stories of nonviolence or reconciliation and discussion on how they inform our lives here today.

The stories depict loving kindness that carries into the lives of readers, both young and old. They capture the excitement of action, joy of seeing from new perspectives and encouragement of small acts that make big differences, especially in situations where fairness and integrity are not readily apparent. The courage to act peacefully, especially when all one knows, remembers or hears about is war, is emboldened by a deep respect for the dignity of self, others and the Earth, in all our diversity.

You may read many stories at the website: Power-of-Goodness.info The stories come out of work in Russia, Chechnya, Ukraine, Indonesia, Nepal, Palestine, Israel, Kenya and other places around the world.

Nadine Hoover

Care for our Island Earth-The Global Voyage of the Hokule`a

I will speak about the Hokule`a, a Hawaiian voyaging canoe. Currently on a worldwide voyage whose mission is Malama Honua (Care for our Island Earth), it is calling attention to indigenous knowledge and sustainability practices generally, and will land in New York City on June 5. The Polynesian Voyaging Society has made it part of their core mission to honor the indigenous peoples of the places where she lands, those to whom our land primarily, spiritually belongs.

I'm a hula dancer with Na Lehua Melemele, a hui (group) in New York City, and that is the foundation of my interest. It is important to me to understand hula as part of its cultural and spiritual context, Hula is the only dance form that only accompanies words--it's a narrative art. So for me, this means learning about the places and time periods in the mele (songs) we dance, learning the language, and taking whatever opportunity I can to learn the `oli (chant) and the cultural protocols that hula springs from, and understanding what I'm dancing about

Amy Hundley

Do Our Lives Matter? Re-entering the Community After Prison

After years of trying to meld my sense of truth and fairness with my career in criminal justice, I come to you as a representative the American Friends Service Committee and someone with whom Quaker values resonate. Today, I welcome the opportunity to bring "***Do Our Lives Matter?***" to your Quaker Witness Day. In this workshop, we will look at the unique challenges faced by people re-entering the community after being in prison and the role people of good will can play in helping them reintegrate. You will be invited to see and celebrate that of God in all. You will be encouraged to bring your Quaker grounded sense of kindness and love to the work of healing broken individuals and communities. You will be asked to challenge your friends, families and others to look within and find that which will enable them to act in faith towards lasting peace and social justice.

Lewis Webb. Jr.

Quaker Witness in Tanzania: *Clean Water, AIDS and Education*

We will discuss the ways in which Brooklyn Friends School faculty partner with the Kisangura schools in rural Tanzania. Marna first visited in 2006; BFS faculty Kevin, Ellen Kahan and Kathleen Clinchy have visited in recent years. They aim to--

- partner with the school communities to repair their cisterns and build bio-sand filters to purify the water they collect
- develop a guardian teacher (advisory) program to better support the sponsored students who have lost one or both parents to AIDS
- partner with their technology department to establish better communication between BFS & Kisangura and help strengthen their academic program
- introduce BFS and Kisangura Middle School students to each other's cultures through a drawing exchange

We will also discuss the involvement of New York Quakers with the Kisangura schools beginning in 1999.

As a Quaker I believe my work in Tanzania promotes global community, equality, and the rightful sharing of the world's resources. It also fosters a greater understanding of the world's truths and humanity's goodness.

~ Marna Herrity

Marna Herrity and Kevin Cooney

Being an Ally to Native People: The Doctrine of Discovery and other issues

What leads me as a Quaker to be an ally to Native People, particularly the Haudenosaunee and our other Native neighbors? I see that we all bring a deeply spiritual perspective to the three concerns I hold foremost: ***Care for Mother Earth***, the source of all life. ***Peace on Earth***, without which we will ultimately annihilate all human life, perhaps all forms of life on Earth. ***Ending racism***, necessary to make possible a just world, one in which I would wish future generations to live. Quakers and Native People continue to find ways to work on these issues with mutual support and respect.

I will discuss the Doctrine of Christian Discovery, foundation of the racist and genocidal policies towards Native Peoples since the arrival of European discoverers and settlers, and other current issues.

Tom Rothschild