

Report on FUM personnel policy

Ithaca Meeting

Last month [2016; exact date unknown], in anticipation of a request from New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM), we began to explore our relationship (through NYYM) to Friends United Meeting (FUM). We learned about FUM's personnel policy that forbids the hiring of sexually active LGBT persons and Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's minute recommending an action in protest of that policy. We heard about the issue from the perspective of our NYYM and FUM representatives. We used our time together to gather information. **This month**, we received the anticipated request. Deb Wood, of NYYM's Nurture Coordinating Committee, asked us to consider Brooklyn's minute, which has also been approved by New York Quarterly Meeting.

Clerk shared a graphic chart to help us further understand the configuration and relationship between the parties involved in the discussion. To begin the discussion, Steve Mohlke read four (of six) queries from Christopher Sammond. Clerk clarified the particulars of the situation, including what is done with our monetary support to NYYM. Clerk read aloud Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's recent minute regarding Friends United Meeting's personnel policy. Friends shared a variety of perspectives, thoughts and questions about and beyond the issue of uniting with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

Clerk clarified the following question: Are we called to respond only to the withholding of funds and unite (or not) with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's Minute or are we called to respond to the larger issues raised by FUM's policy?

Clerk recognized the need to make a safe space within our meeting for the larger discussion about FUM and the implications of its policy with a wish that this larger discussion can and will take place. We answered the question asked by Deb Wood of NYYM's Nurture Coordinating Committee as follows:

Ithaca Monthly Meeting [IMM] appreciates Brooklyn Meeting for highlighting this important issue. IMM supports LGBTQ F(f)riends; LGBTQ members are an integral part of our meeting and we marry couples under the meeting's care. Despite FUM's having a personnel policy we believe to be hurtful and discriminatory, we also value our relationship with and the work of FUM. Therefore, Friends did not feel called to unite with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's Minute.

Steve Mohlke, clerk