

Ministry Coordinating Committee

Advance Report, 2013

Ministry Coordinating Committee has been blessed to continue the work of fostering and supporting vital ministry across the Yearly Meeting. Much of the work of the section is done in the constituent committees. We remain a place that their work is shared and at times seasoned. The individual committee reports will provide details on much of that work. As a committee MCC continued to explore the issue of recording gifts in the ministry. The following excerpt from our report at Spring Sessions describes our work in this area.

MCC provided a number of opportunities for Friends across the Yearly Meeting to think about and discuss this practice. In June of last year each Monthly Meeting was sent a short history of recording gifts as well as a number of queries about ministry and an invitation to join us at summer sessions for a threshing session. The threshing session on Wednesday morning of summer sessions 2012 was well attended and we heard many Friends speak.

Our fears related to equality, hierarchy, lifting people over one another. They spoke to a concern about our ability to do personal and corporate discernment. They spoke to our faithfulness in worship and in carrying out leadings. Our hopes for recording focused on the importance of supporting ministry. Recording is one form of support. There was recognition of the diversity of our gifts and that the community is served by the diversity God has given the body. Corporate forms of support nurture all in the meeting community.

We heard the call to build up the Life of our existing practices of recording names of Friends with gifts in the ministry and of the Yearly Meeting endorsing the Minutes of Friends traveling under a concern. And, we were challenged to be open to new ways to name, to recognize, to support and to offer loving and engaged oversight and accountability to Friends with a broad range of gifts in ministry.

MCC hosted an interest group on gifts in the ministry at summer sessions. We also sponsored a Powell House retreat in September that continued and expanded our discussion of ministry and support of ministry in many of its forms including eldership, healing & vocal/pastoral ministry. The November 2012 issue of Spark was on the theme of ministry and included more discussions of recording gifts as one of a number of ways of recognizing, naming and cultivating gifts in ministry in our meetings. This issue also included an extensive list of resources on ministry.

The Yearly Meeting is not in unity about discontinuing this practice. Indeed, we have seen renewed interest within our Yearly Meeting in recognizing and providing support and accountability to a wider array of gifts in ministry. We are seeing new life, growing edges and vital ministry in meetings that choose not to record as well as those who find value in the practice. MCC will continue to listen to Friends on this issue. We invite you to speak to us privately about your experiences, and more importantly, we invite all to accompany one another as we continue to discern how we are being led to a place of love where all the gifts we are given are utilized, recognized and supported.

In addition to this important work on recording gifts in the ministry MCC continues to hear from Monthly Meeting across the YM about the Apology to Afro-Descendants. We've been pleased with the number of meetings that have labored with this document and have responded to our requests for feedback. The work in this area continues. MCC has also continued to update and revise the portions of the NYYM website in our care. We hope to accurately describe the powerful experiences of our worship and community as well as be true to the rich diversity that our YM embraces.