

## **JOB DESCRIPTION:**

### **GENERAL SECRETARY of New York Yearly Meeting**

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Must be a member of the Religious Society of Friends and be or become a member of a meeting within NYYM.
2. Have understanding of and experience with the dynamics of Friends' Meetings.
3. Be able to speak to a personal spiritual journey and vision. Have the ability and willingness to work with Friends who have diverse interpretations of Quaker faith and practice and at the same time maintain personal integrity and spiritual grounding. Through example and encouragement, nurture and release others' gifts in ministry.
4. Have strong abilities in management, collaboration, facilitation, and team-building.
5. Have skill and experience in development, fund-raising, budgeting, and the financial dynamics of spirit-led organizations.
6. Be knowledgeable about the use of information technology to enhance effectiveness, teamwork, and communications.
7. Possess strong skills in conflict resolution, interpersonal relations, and organizational effectiveness.
8. Possess strong skills in writing and speaking.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

New York Yearly Meeting recently undertook a process of spiritual discernment to better focus our priorities and leadings. By listening carefully to the monthly meetings, we came to understand that the center of the yearly meeting is not the staff office in Manhattan, but in every monthly meeting and worship group spread over several states. To grow the yearly meeting we must grow, enrich, and support our distributed "center"—the monthly meetings.

This concept holds the essential challenge for the General Secretary. The job requires a strategy for building a faith community across considerable distances, as well as across a fairly wide range of theologies, practices, histories, and expectations. The main elements of that strategy are education, spiritual deepening, intervisitation, attention to children and young adults, public witness, and accountable management of our resources.

#### **1. Educate members in faith and practice**

We envision a yearly meeting deeply grounded in the practice of our faith. All members of the yearly meeting are called to work toward this primary goal. The General Secretary should offer

leadership, vision, collaboration, and example.

## **2. Support the vitality of monthly meetings**

Meetings often need assistance with the practicalities of running a meeting, such as meetinghouse maintenance, fund-raising, and advancement. There are committees within the yearly meeting to help in these areas. The General Secretary needs to keep these committees abreast of what is happening in the monthly meetings, and to coordinate staff efforts to support this work.

## **3. Gather the yearly meeting into one body**

We are many, yet we seek to be one. The General Secretary is charged with working toward that vision. To that end:

- Visit as many monthly and regional meetings and worship groups as possible, with the goal of understanding concerns, providing whatever support is needed, and offering ministry. Seek and nurture spiritual gifts in individuals; teach meetings to provide such nurturing to their members.
- As it is impossible for one person to visit so many meetings with useful frequency, coordinate closely with Field Secretaries in their visitation to extend connections among meetings and between meetings and the yearly meeting office.
- Collaborate with committees and groups that already have a mission of visitation to reach all monthly meetings. Support a culture of visitation within staff and volunteers.
- Be present and available at NYYM-wide gatherings: Spring, Summer, and Fall Sessions and Meetings for Discernment. When appropriate, report to the body on the condition of the yearly meeting.
- Coordinate with Yearly Meeting Clerk to discern the state of the Yearly Meeting and its constituent worship communities and to address concerns.

## **4. Nurture all generations: Children, youth, young adults, and all their elders**

The monthly meetings have asked for help in integrating our children, youth, and young adults into the fabric of our faith community, where they can experience and reflect on our spiritual practices, make friends, and grow into adults. At the same time, many of us are aging into a need for accommodation and assistance. The General Secretary will work with the Field staff in creating programs, coordinating their work, maintaining spiritual grounding, and building teams of volunteers.

## **5. Amplify our witness to the wider world**

It is a NYYM priority to be an active presence in the broader society for Friends' faith, values, ministry, and witness. The General Secretary works with the yearly meeting Clerk and others to craft public statements about urgent concerns. The General Secretary also may represent the yearly meeting in some larger Quaker organizations (FGC, FUM, FWCC, etc.) as led and as time allows.

## **6. Build an organization that is spirit-led, accountable, and transparent**

The General Secretary is responsible for ensuring the good running of the office and staff headquartered in the 15th Street Meetinghouse in Manhattan. This includes participation in

ensuring the financial health and transparency of the yearly meeting's operations.

- Supervise the Field staff and the Assistant Secretary (who in turn supervises the office staff). Help staff plan, set growth goals, maintain spiritual grounding, and find room for creativity and innovation. Evaluate direct reports annually.
- Work with the clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, Financial Services Committee, Development Committee, and Trustees to ensure the healthy financial operation of the yearly meeting. Attend planning sessions such as Budget Saturday and Coordinating Committee Weekend.
- Help the Communications Director create the Year in Review.
- Take an active role in development of funding sources, including, fundraising programs, grant-writing, solicitation from individuals, and so on.
- Work closely with the Yearly Meeting Clerk, providing and receiving counsel and support.
- Be an example of a balanced, spiritually grounded member of staff. The demands on the General Secretary can be overwhelming, and not all needs can be met. Maintain a schedule that allows time at home, personal retreats, physical health, and growth. Past General Secretaries have established support committees to help with guidance and moderation.