

WITNESS COORDINATING COMMITTEE

January 26, 2013, Coordinating Weekend at Powell House

Present: Helen Garay Toppins, Black Concerns, Barrington Dunbar and Prisons; Paddy Lane, Earthcare Working Group; Robin Alpern, EAQWER; Sue Clark, EAQWER; Jens Braun, BQEF; Mary Eagleson, clerk; Judy Meikle, at large; Lyle Jenks, William Penn House; Jeff Hitchcock, NYYM clerk (present for afternoon session)

Regrets: Newton Garver, at large; Fred Doneit, Earthcare Working Group; Naomi Paz Greenberg, Conscientious Objection to Paying for War; Pamela Wood, AFSC; Nadine Hoover, Friends Peace Teams; Andy von Salis, Conscientious Objection to Paying for War; Susan Wolf, Indian Affairs Committee; Karen Reixach, Jonathan Collett, FCNL rep; Shirley Way, AVP and Prisons; Diane Keefe, FCNL rep; Susan Weisfeld, World Ministries Committee; Fred Dettmer, NYS Council of Churches, Torture Awareness; Patricia Chernoff, Earthcare Witness.

1. Mary Eagleson reviewed the agenda for the morning session.
2. We approved the appointment of **Judy Meikle as assistant clerk**.
3. We approved spending \$20 for the babysitter required this weekend.
4. We were allocated \$7,200 from the NYYM **operating budget**. We reserve \$2,400 to send out appeals for the Sharing Fund. We discussed whether to keep contributions to independent organizations in the operating budget, or move them to the Sharing Fund, where they could receive more funds. We approved continuing to pay annual dues (approximately \$600 total) out of the operating budget to the following: National Religious Campaign against Torture; Quaker Earthcare Witness, NY Council of Churches, and NJ Council of Churches. Mary will confirm the exact amount of dues for each organization.

We have budgeted \$1000 from operating funds for travel by appointees to other Quaker organizations such as AFSC.

We will increase WCC's operating budget allocation, for the committee's own travel expenses, etc., to \$1000.

This makes a total of \$6000 for the WCC budget for operating funds. This is \$1200 less than our allocation. From this amount, we will give \$250 each to Friends Peace Teams, National Coalition for a Peace Tax Fund, AFSC New York office and FCNL. This leaves a contingency fund of \$200.

We agreed that all other donations (BQEF, William Penn House, and Rural and Migrant Ministries) will receive funds from the Sharing Fund endowment interest. From now on, only organizations with an active representative who can make current appeals will be included on our

list of contributions from the operating Fund. There is currently no representative to the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. The clerk will seek a nomination to this position.

We will ask Nominating Committee to appoint Jane Simkin (Poplar Ridge) as our representative to Rural and Migrant Ministries. We encourage Jane to present information to the Yearly Meeting about RMM, since many Friends are unfamiliar with the work of this organization.

5. Our goal for the **Sharing Fund** in 2012 was \$55,000. We received approximately \$20,000 from the endowment income from the Sharing Fund, plus about \$44,000 from contributions and trust funds, for a total of about \$64,000. These figures are preliminary.

For 2013, we approve setting a goal of \$60,000 for contributions from individuals and Monthly Meetings.

Appeals to the Witness Activities Fund have greatly increased. We wish to fund these applications, partially as a way for the YM to demonstrate support for concerns and witness rising up in Monthly Meetings.

Mary reviewed the requests for Sharing Funds from each of the WCC constituents. We approved the following Sharing fund allocations for 2013:

AVP: 9% (\$5,400)

Barrington Dunbar Committee: 24% (\$14,400)

Black Concerns Committee: 10% (\$6,000)

Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War: 3% (\$1,800)

European-Americans Working to End Racism: 1% (\$600)

Indian Affairs: 18% (\$10,800)

Meeting the Minimum Needs of All: 0%

NYYM Representatives to other Quaker bodies: 0% (for this year only, because carry-over is available)

Peace Concerns: 0% (There is no Peace Concerns Committee currently, nor a Peace Concerns Coordinator. There is carry-over to fund peace witness activities as approved by the WCC.)

Prisons: 10% (\$6,000)

Quaker Earthcare Witness: 0% (There is carry-over to fund this year's expenses.)

RSWR: 6% (\$3,600)

Torture Awareness Working Group: 0%

World Ministries: 7% (\$4,200)

Witness Activities Fund: 12% (\$7,200)

6. We approved contributing \$500 each to BQEF, William Penn House, and Rural and Migrant Ministries from interest from the Sharing Fund endowment.

7. We appointed Lyle Jenks and Jens Braun to consider our practice of allocating a percentage of the Sharing Fund to each committee, and to bring a **recommendation for a more efficient system** to our meeting at Spring Sessions.

8. F. Peter Phillips, clerk of the **Committee on Conflict Transformation** under Ministry Coordinating Committee, reported that CCT is available to committees of the YM struggling with obstacles or difficulties among the committee members. Peter shared brochures with information and contact details. He thanked WCC for support from the Peace Concerns Fund. A report from CCT members who attended a Practical Peacebuilding workshop in January 2013 is attached.

CCT has held a number of workshops for Monthly and Regional Meetings, and more are scheduled.

CCT would like to film the workshop that will be held at 15th Street Meeting, and post snippets on the NYYM website to help educate Friends about principles of conflict transformation. This could be a powerful resource not only for Quakers but also for other groups. The committee requests \$1000 from the Witness Activities Fund for this project, which will cost a total of \$9,500.

9. We have received **applications to the Witness Activities Fund** from the following: \$1000 for CCT; Old Chatham MM, \$150 for its monthly film series, which draws as many as 40 viewers from the community; \$500 for Christopher Sammond, General Secretary, for his travel to investigate the spiritual dimensions of extractive industries, during his upcoming sabbatical. We have a balance of \$2163 in the Witness Activities Fund; we approve the above 3 requests, leaving \$513 remaining.

10. Nadine Hoover (Alfred Meeting) requested that **Conscience Studio** be allowed to use Bayview as a venue during Summer Sessions. We approved that Mary will bring the request to Sessions Committee tomorrow.

[The following was not read or approved as a minute: **Greta Mickey's trip to Tbilisi:** Friends revisited the decision made during our meeting by conference call on December 13, 2012, to accept Greta Mickey's application to the Peace Concerns line for travel to Tbilisi in March 2013.

Mary Eagleson will follow up on our concerns about a rightly ordered relationship with Tbilisi by writing to Greta's care committee, asking for more clarity.]

Robin Alpern, recording clerk

Attachment: CCT report on Practical Peacebuilding workshop

Committee on Conflict Transformation

Report from members attending Practical Peacebuilding workshop
January 2013

“Practical Peacebuilding: Skills and Spiritual Practices for Conflict Transformation” was offered by Candler School of Theology and General Theological Seminary on January 9-12, 2013, in New York City. With keynote speakers Bernard Lafayette and Mark McDonald, Anglican bishop in Canada, the workshop was led by Luther Smith and Ellen Ott Marshall, both from Candler. The program’s goals were to help participants learn to “unearth hidden tensions and address their causes; facilitate dialogue, understanding and healing; and deepen their understanding of God’s presence in this work.”

With scholarship help from the workshop organizers and from the Peace Concerns Fund administered by Witness Coordinating Committee, four members of the Committee on Conflict Transformation were able to participate in the workshop, along with 24 people from different denominations around the country, who brought a wide range of experience, development, and expectations.

The workshop’s perspective reinforced the committee’s understanding of the importance of helping Friends and meetings develop skills for engaging conflict as a catalyst for constructive change. As Ellen Ott Marshall expressed it, “God is present in sites of conflict and working toward healing, understanding, justice, and peace. In this theological understanding, the facilitator is not just facilitating a process, but also responding to and participating with the movement of God as One whose work is repairing the world, renewing creation.”

The theoretical framework and material presented were interesting and well presented. While both presenters were very engaging with their different styles, we wished the didactic learning had been augmented with more chances for experiential learning. The one role play we did was useful--and we wanted more! As one committee member reflected later, “While the lectures and

PowerPoint presentations were enlightening, they remain theoretical until put to actual practice!!” This experience reminds us that different learning styles require different teaching styles, which will inform our future workshops.

We wished for opportunities for gathering the wisdom in the room, rather than hearing primarily from the presenters. We worked in small groups a few times, making us hunger for more community building within the diverse group.

The committee members are grateful for the opportunity to attend the workshop, and for the powerful possibilities for synthesizing conflict transformation work with Quaker faith and practice and other training, and trust that the committee’s work--and the Yearly Meeting--will benefit from the experience.

Heather M. Cook, Chatham-Summit

Robert Martin, Poughkeepsie

Judy Meikle, Wilton

Larry White, Morningside