

General Secretary's Announcement of Plans to Leave the Position

The following was shared by our General Secretary as part of a report on staffing from the Personnel Committee during Summer Sessions 2016:

This is something of a testimony, though it's a hard one to give.

In the middle of the night in mid-March, I had the clearest, most direct, and powerful experience of the Divine that I have had for many years. What I heard was that I needed to resign. And I was told to give a year's notice at this summer session.

I spent two months meeting with the committee from my monthly meeting in care of my ministry, testing this leading, and holding it in prayer. While it was a shock, I settled into the rightness of it, and my committee and I were clear in this leading. I then told my Supervisory Committee, and the Personnel Committee.

I raised the issue with them that after 12 years with someone inhabiting this position, with only small tweaks to the job description, that it would be a very good time for the yearly meeting to reassess its staffing structure. This concern arises out of the fact that I have been working for the last year and a half with the Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary (SCGS) to try to make this position more sustainable—for me while I am in it, and for an eventual successor. As the yearly meeting has expanded programs over the years, both my position and that of the Associate Secretary have grown more and more untenable. The work for each position has grown to where it's very hard for one person to do it well. Both Personnel and the SCGS were in agreement with the need for a review of our staffing structure, and Personnel will be bringing that concern to General Services Coordinating Committee this week.

A lot of my focus over the next year will be to do what I can to sustain the crucial growing edges of our community; to help us to not lose momentum. I will also be supporting the elements of our life and structure which without intentional support might falter or wither, to help as needed in the staffing structure review, and to do all I can to ensure an orderly transition to the next person serving you in this capacity.

I need to make two things clear: I am not leaving this position due to any sense of negativity or dissatisfaction. And some Friends have already asked if I am leaving for another job. I am not. I do not know what is next. I had a clear sense of being called into this work, and now I have an equally clear sense that I am being called out of it.

Being so warmly and lovingly greeted by so many of you as we all arrived here at summer sessions did not make this any easier. All the years of being supported by your love and prayers, your support, and in many cases, your hospitality as I traveled, brings home to me just how much I am leaving. I thank you all for all of that support, from the bottom of my heart.