

Ministry Coordinating Committee  
Spring Sessions 2014  
Minutes

Present: Lucinda Antrim, Beverley Archibald, Mary Pugh Clark, Roger Dreisbach-Williams, Elizabeth Edminster, John Edminster, Carolyn Emerson, Charlie Flint, Irma Guthrie, Lu Harper, David Herendeen, Mia Kissel Hewitt, Elaine Learnard, Sarah Miller, Anne Pomeroy, Tom Rothschild, Ed Seligman

1. Meeting began with a period of Opening Worship.
2. Sharing. Friends shared their name & meeting & what they might have been doing if they weren't here.
3. Agenda Review. Clerk Irma Guthrie reviewed the agenda.
4. Statement from the Clerk. At Fall Sessions, Irma incorrectly stated on the floor that the apology was a first reading. Irma asks Friends to help her out by calling problems to her attention if they emerge.
5. Presentation of the Definition of Worship Groups for a Second Reading: Faith and Practice Committee. Carolyn Emerson read a revised version of the Definition, to be brought before Business Meeting on Sunday for approval. The final paragraph was revised as follows:

A worship group may hold property and/or financial assets, and may receive and disburse funds on behalf of its attenders. It may choose a clerk, a treasurer & others to serve as needed, conduct business of its own & prepare business to be forwarded to the meeting under whose care it operates.

Friends approved the revision, and approved forwarding it to Meeting for Business tomorrow.

6. Presentation of First Reading of Advancement Handbook page. Mia Kissil-Hewitt introduced the report of the Advancement Committee. Irma Guthrie reviewed the Handbook changes that were approved by MCC at Fall Sessions. The revised page will come to Meeting for business for a first reading tomorrow.
7. Presentation of the First Draft of the SOS Report. Irma Guthrie read the first draft of the State of Society report.

Friends made suggestions to be forwarded to the State of Society Committee.

8. Updates on the Follow-up to the Apology: Responses to the Queries: Next Steps?

Irma Guthrie reported that 4 meetings and 7 individuals responded to the Apology & the

Queries. No more queries are going to go out at present. Friends suggested that meetings be encouraged in ongoing discussion, sending out the 6 queries again. Friends also suggested working with Steve Davison to create an online forum where meetings' responses may be shared.

9. Report from the Committee to Record Margaret Webb in the Ministry: Mia Kissel-Hewitt.

The committee consists of Annie Bancroft, Gabi Savory Bailey & Mia Kissel-Hewitt, with Regina Haag serving as an advisor. Mia Kissel-Hewitt reported that the Committee has continued to work, although the whole committee has not been able to meet together with Margaret since the Fall, when the committee met at Farmington. Mia reported that the committee is currently not in unity about next steps in the process. Mia will try to convene the committee on a conference call in the near future.

Friends asked what we can do to help the committee move forward and asked whether it would be helpful to add to the committee someone who lives closer to Farmington. Ministry Coordinating Committee is holding the process in prayer. We hold the work the committee has done to date and Margaret's abilities highly. We offer our support in encouraging the process to move forward, acknowledging that we're asking the committee to do work about which the Yearly Meeting is not united. MCC was asked to find someone from Farmington-Scipio who might serve as a backup should a member of the committee feel the need to ask to be released. The following names arose: Kathy Slattery, Steve Mohlke, A. J. [Poplar Ridge]. Irma Guthrie will ask Friends whether they might be able to serve.

10. Report from Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee: Anne Pomeroy.

Anne Pomeroy read the Epistle from the recent Pastors & Elders gathering at Powell House.

[Epistle attached]

David Herendeen reported that individual Friends have been contacted to see if they are interested in continuing in or beginning intervisitation under the auspices of the Intervisitation Group. Vonn New, Nat Corwin, & Carol Holmes are willing to continue; Carolyn Emerson & Anne Pomeroy have agreed to serve. Friends approved the appointments.

11. Announcement of NYYM Prayer List Steward: John Edminster has agreed to steward the NYYM Prayer list and has begun that work. John invites Friends to subscribe to the prayer list and to encourage Friends asking for prayer to contact John. Requests for prayer can be as private as Friends need. John has asked for an oversight committee for this work. Friends support John's service and will hold his work under MCC's care & oversight.

## 12. Report from Meeting for Discernment

Sarah Miller reported from the committee meeting of Meeting for Discernment that concerns were raised about where the support & nurturing of elders should rightly fall in the YM committee structure. Meeting for Discernment expressed concern that Friends who are asked to elder for the Meetings for Discernment are not equally experienced. The clerk of MfD asked for direct communication with whoever is concerned with the support of elders.

Anne Pomeroy noted that Spiritual Nurture Working Group has sponsored two gatherings of NEYM & NYYM elders to date and are looking at sponsoring other gatherings and retreats for elders of all ranges of experience. Mary Kay Glazer has also offered retreats on eldership. SNWG reports to MCC, and MCC is clear that the support of eldership, like the support of ministry, should fall to MCC.

13. Responding to a need to bring some revisions forward for approval before the YM office reprints Faith & Practice, the Committee to revise Faith & Practice recommended several editorial changes replacing "Representative Meeting" with "the three sessions, Fall, Spring & Summer" or similar language, and replacing "Yearly Meeting on Ministry & Counsel" with "Ministry Coordinating Committee."

Friends were clear that the proposed revisions would require two readings at Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions, because the changes are fundamental to the structure of the Yearly Meeting and the Yearly Meeting on Ministry & Counsel has only been suspended temporarily. We can currently make the editorial change from "Coordinating Committee on Ministry & Counsel" to "Ministry Coordinating Committee" because this change in the name of the committee has been approved by Yearly Meeting. We will bring this discussion back to a future session.

14. The meeting closed after a period of Worship.

3/27/2014

Dear Friends,

We write to you, sisters and brothers, as fellow members of New York and New England Yearly Meetings. We have a story to share about new Life.

With a concern for the life and ministry of our pastoral meetings, we gathered at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY, from March 24 through 27, 2014.

We affirm to the rest of our yearly meetings the Life, Love, Truth, and Hope in our pastoral meetings. What was once a time for pastors to gather and support each other in their ministry grew in recent years into a retreat for pastors and the elders who supported them. This retreat has now become an opportunity for pastors, elders, and members of ministry & counsel to worship and grow together in the work of nurturing their meetings. We are continuing our journey into an emerging common vision, a shared ministry.

In our time together, we were blessed with music and laughter. We were reminded of the mutual nature of the service of pastors, elders, and ministry & counsel as together we liberate the life of the Spirit in our meetings. We are learning to be clear with one another about our expectations, boundaries, and roles in this work. We are blessed with deepened awareness of the circles of support that surround us.

Our two yearly meetings share a story of separating and coming back together. We find this in the condition of our local meetings as well. In these days, we experienced in a new way being *members one of another*. We are re-memorizing ourselves as part of one Body whose individual cells - our local worshipping communities - must be carefully nourished in order for the whole Body to thrive. We embraced mutual accountability for our work together, recognizing its power to enhance the gifts that each of us share.

In sessions facilitated by Colin Saxton of Friends United Meeting, we were led to look anew at what we are doing here - our purpose, vision, and common goals as pastoral meetings with our unique histories, gifts and contexts. We reaffirm the strength available to us in relationship with our wider bodies - our quarterly, regional, and yearly meetings, and our worldwide community of Friends.

We are stepping forward in faith to be yoked together, learning to carry our work in new and life-giving ways, with deepened intention and deepened commitment. We return to our home meetings with a sense of fresh empowerment, equipped with practical tools and resources to support a vital ministry of the whole. We recognize that we face many

challenges. We are bringing home the invitation to overcome insularity and isolation, and to become true partners in nourishing the life of our meetings and our ministry as Friends in the world.

In the Life in which we have gathered,

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