

Present: Annie Bancroft, Nathaniel Corwin, Ann Davidson, Chris de Roller, Pierre Douyon, Cheshire Frager, Irma Guthrie, Lu Harper, David Herendeen, Sarah Miller, Emily Provance, Tom Rothschild, Christopher Sammond, Clair Simon

1. Opening Worship. Worship began at 9:53 am
2. Check-In. Clerk Irma Guthrie invited friends to share something new & good in their life.
3. Agenda Review. The Clerk reviewed the agenda.
4. Reports from Committees
  - a. Committee on Conflict Transformation. Pierre Douyon reported for the committee, which has been discerning a redesign of the workshops, so the committee can be more proactive in terms of the needs of the YM. They will do a workshop for FGC Gathering in July 2016 and one at Powell House in October 2016. The committee has received positive feedback for its workshops and video, and is continuing to reach out to meetings.
  - b. Advancement: (Update on Current Status) Christopher Sammond reported that there is great interest and energy within the YM for advancement and outreach accompanied by a diminishing willingness to serve on committees. At a called session that had only 3 people attending, the members of the Advancement committee present were clear that it should be laid down. This could only be done by a recommendation from MCC to the body of the YM. Christopher had already had a conversation with Robin Whitely about clerking the committee, she had been in discernment at the time of the meeting. Communications committee is working on developing the YM website to create opportunities for people to become involved without "being on a committee." Robin and Arlene Johnson would be interested in serving as coordinators of a Working Group around Advancement and Outreach. Recently PYM laid down all their standing committees and are organizing how they do things differently.
  - c. Ministry and Pastoral Care. Emily Provance noted that the Stevens Fund is small, and the committee wishes resources were larger to assist retired ministers and their families. The committee is considering ways to mentor younger Friends. She noted that similar discussions are occurring in Young Adult Concerns Committee and the Youth Committee.
  - d. Spiritual Nurture Working Group. Lu Harper reported on the Tending the Garden retreats for meetings and at Powell House.
  - e. Intervisitation Group. No report.
  - f. Task Group on Racism. No report.
  - g. Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions. No report
  - h. Committee on Sufferings. No report

5. Discussion of Proposed New Initiatives from MCC Committees for 2017 budget. Irma Guthrie reported on a letter from Matt Scanlon requesting suggestions for new initiatives, and mentioned the budget that has already been given to SNWG for their initiative. Friends held the question in worship.

A friend noted that she has recently been approached by teens and young adult Friends outside the YM structure (some not connected to a monthly meeting) who have expressed a sense of having something to say related to ministry and being unheard; to connect life-filled groups that are outside of the structure of the YM with YM resources. Needs were expressed to understand the process of personal discernment; ways to learn about YM business meeting process. There is a need for building ongoing relationships from both sides of the generational bridge. This could involve a broad range of conversations across the YM structure. JYM could provide a way in through planned participation in a YM business session. Some SNWG Tending the Garden retreats might be helpful. There is a common perception among some groups of Friends that the YM is run by a group of people who don't want communication and are not open to input. What are the ways we shut down others? Friends noted the connection with the discussion from last night around "Yearly Meeting Friends" and "Monthly Meeting Friends."

Irma reminded us that the budget committee is looking for concrete proposals that can be connected with budgets.

A friend reminded us that what we now call "discernment" originally referred to "What does God want us to do?"

Do we want a team of Friends of mixed ages to travel to groups? We could ask for funding for travel.

6. Some Thinking Around the Question Asked at Summer Sessions: "What do we as Ministry and Counsel do when members of our community experience situations where they feel unsafe, unheard and invisible?" Is this our task?

Could we have individuals with gifts of listening available at sessions? Could Conflict Transformation committee members be available? At one time, that committee was charged with responding to conflicts during sessions. There is also a "Committee of Four" that has responsibility for responding with individuals at sessions. It might be useful to have a well-identified and publicized procedure or a go-to person that discerns best group or groups to refer individuals to.

Healing Center is perceived as focused on energy work or physical work, although there are almost always people who have gifts of listening in the Healing Center. A friend noted that most Quaker gatherings have a clearly identified pastoral team available. It was suggested that the Committee on Ministry & Pastoral Care be invited to consider taking up a charge for identifying such a group. Emily Provance volunteered to contact other Quaker groups to get more information about how they have set up such teams.

It will be important to know the boundaries of what a pastoral care team or the Conflict Transformation Committee or the "Committee of Four" or other available trained professionals can do.

Conflict Transformation committee is currently charged with supporting meetings; Conflict Transformation committee is discerning how to respond when approached by individuals as opposed to meetings.

We need to speak with Sessions and Liaison committees to find out more about what has already been set up, how to develop a coordinated response and how to let the broader YM know what is available at sessions.

7. Support for YACC Conference in June. Emily Provance reported on the "Quaker Party" event planned for June 17-19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in New York city. The Quaker Party is intended to enable YAF from New York, New England, Philadelphia, and Baltimore Yearly Meetings to gather together, to connect with other YAF, to further explore Quakerism as a faith, to become aware of opportunities for witness and service, and to do all of these things in a joyful, low-pressure context. In addition, the hope is to have people present from all 4 YMs, FGC, FUM, FWCC to listen. Childcare & meals will be provided. NY Quarterly meeting will sponsor, covering costs for janitor, security, and childcare, with each monthly meeting in the Quarter asked to provide meals. There is a line in the budget for travel scholarship for friends within NYYM; other YMs are being asked to budget for travel scholarships as well. Friends were asked to identify contacts (under the age of 45). Committees and working groups will be asked to identify 45 minute sessions they could provide – with a focus on interesting content – a formal request will be forthcoming. There was going to be a formal request for financial support from MCC – but it will be forthcoming from Liaison instead (unspent funds from 2015/2016 budget that can be made use of for this purpose).
8. Our morning meeting closed with a period of worship at 12:01 pm.



1. Afternoon session began with a period of worship at 2:15 pm
2. Continued worship around Advancement/Outreach: after continued worship, Friends approved the following minute:

Friends are clear to suspend the Advancement committee for now; to follow up with Trustees, General Services &/or Sessions about the appropriate location of the administration of the three funds; to consider what additional parts of the Advancement committee's charge may need to be redistributed; to encourage formation of the task group; to ask the task group to report to MCC; and to consider ways in which MCC might encourage the work of the task group. Friends approved.

A friend suggested that a notice in Spark might be one way to reach out to Friends interested in the work of the task group.

3. Clarification of Proposed Change to Section G and H of Faith and Practice Approved at Fall Sessions. At Fall sessions, the coordinating committee approved the proposed change to Faith & Practice but wanted to discern longer about the paragraph referring to representatives:

*Each monthly or executive meeting may appoint representatives for terms of three years, during the spring quarter of the year. If a named representative cannot attend a yearly meeting Session, the appointing meeting may name an alternate and notify the yearly meeting office.*

Friends were clear to recommend removing the paragraph from the proposed change F&P. We will bring the entire proposed change to Spring Sessions.

4. Further Discussion in Response to the letter from M4D Steering Committee Regarding Caring for Those in our Meetings Living with Mental Illness. (Please see minute 4 from Fall Session Minutes)

Friends suggested:

- Don't try to treat this as a pastoral care problem to be handled by well-meaning friends without professional expertise.
- Encourage local meetings to create a list of local professional expertise and relevant resources.
- At one time there was a list of Quaker mental health professionals within the YM for meetings to consult with about resources. It was suggested that we might reach out to one or two professionals to identify likely "red flags" and write up a suggested protocol for meetings. Tom

Rothschild will contact John Scardina and Jim Mandala (sp?).

- Conflict Transformation has focused on empowering M&C to work with individuals who were derailing the meeting.
- Meetings need to be empowered to be strong to serve the community; they may not be able to serve the individual in the process.
- There are also age-related concerns where ARCH can be of assistance.
- It is important to see the whole individual and not the “problem.”
- Deepening the meeting’s worshipping community may be part of the response.

5. Laying Down the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel: Are we ready to do this? What functions will be lost with this action that M4D are not addressing?

- Nurturing emerging gifts of ministry (gifts series have informally served that function—classic proactive pastoral care)
- Recording ministers (this has been addressed by the latest revision of F&P)
- Role of recorded ministers in what is now MCC

Friends were clear to bring the proposal to lay down the YMMC to the YM body at Spring Sessions.

6. Brooklyn Meeting has approved recording one of their members, Beth Kelly, who is a hospital chaplain. MCC needs to appoint a committee. David Herendeen expressed a willingness to serve. Tom Rothschild will speak to Beth about any thoughts she has about the makeup of the committee. We will follow up at Spring Sessions.

7. Friends approved the minutes.

8. The meeting closed with a period of worship at 4:04 pm