

MCC Minutes Spring Sessions 2018

Jephrey Aaron, Barbara Bleecker, Mary Pugh Clark, Roger Dreisbach-Williams, Joe Garren, Irene Goodman, Arlene Johnson, Kenn Harper, Lu Harper, David Herendeen, Beth Kelly, Hugo Lane, Elaine Learnard, Barbara Meli, Anne Pomeroy, Emily Provance, Charlene Ray, Ed Seliger, Kathy Slattery, Jillian Smith, Jennifer Swann

1. The meeting opened with worship.
2. Check-in: What are you taking away from the day?
3. Updates on MCC committee membership and NYYM structure:
As of this morning's Meeting for Business we have grown to include the Epistle Committee, Youth Committee and Powell House Committee. We welcomed the committees to our session.

We raised the concern about the increased time needed to handle the increased work. Liaison is aware of the need particularly for this Coordinating Committee. MCC asks Sessions Committee to consider creatively how there could be more time for Coordinating Committees at all sessions, starting after this Summer Sessions.

Friends suggested the possibility of an additional session in winter. We were reminded that when committee meetings are open and transparent, we gain depth and the meetings take more time.

4. Alternative Membership Pathways: Jennifer Swann reported for the Alternate Membership Pathways group. The proposal (attached) includes criteria for applying for membership in the yearly meeting via an alternate pathway. A suggested process outlined a flow starting with applying to Ministry and Pastoral Care. A clearness committee will be created, if approved the applicant will be assigned an elder for the first 2 years. The membership roles under the care of Ministry and Pastoral Care will be reviewed annually.

There was discussion about the length of membership in this pathway. Faith and practice states that membership requires participation in corporate worship and participation in the life of the meeting.

Friends supported transparency in naming elders. While the process delineates naming elders, and Friends who attend yearly meeting sessions are comfortable with the practice of elders holding the body, the yearly meeting as a whole has not reached unity on the practice of naming elders.

Ministry and Pastoral Care already has a large body of work, and it is a challenge to take on this work.

There is a sense we would like someone from the clearness committee to be the elder who is assigned to the applicant. Another suggestion was to include all members of the clearness committee.

Friends supported the process and recognize there may be more tweaks. We recognize that our future will require much creativity to meet future needs.

5. Report from Emily Provance: The clerk read Emily Provance's travel minute which was approved in Fall of 2016. This is the first time she has been asked to report back to the YM body. She reported on her time with the Samburu, specifically the school of the shepherds, which is a one-room school meeting at dusk under a tiny lightbulb. The bulb is not large enough to illuminate all of the children. She also spoke of a meeting of the World Council of Churches and work in Britain Yearly Meeting. Emily ministered to us about her travels. She spoke of the work at the margins: who is visible in a large room under the small light bulb and who is not. In Britain YM she met the staff at Woodbrooke and Britain YM. She gave a livestreamed talk: What Future for Quakers? She left us with the question: Can we increase who is seen, make more people seen as possibilities? She thanked us for our support.
6. Request to Record Rebecca Schillenback (Poplar Ridge): The clerk read a letter from Poplar Ridge MM noting their approval of the request to record Rebecca Schillenback's gifts in ministry. There was a request to bring the opportunity to serve on the committee to FS Spring Gathering. Ruth Ann Bradley will serve on the committee for Poplar Ridge MM and as someone familiar with the recording process. Kenn Harper will serve as a part of the naming committee. Kathy Slattery will discern about service on either the naming committee or the clearness committee. Rebecca will be bringing the Bible study to NYYM Summer Sessions thus giving the body an opportunity to hear her ministry.
7. Report from the Committee to Record Beth Kelly: David Herendeen reported for the committee. They have met several times and are clear to have at least one more session with Beth Kelly, her support committee and Brooklyn M&C. The report was received.
8. Report from the Committee to Record Fred Jensen: Kenn Harper reported that the committee has been formed. He read the report from Mary Klaus, clerk of the committee. Friends received the report.
9. First Reading of draft revised web publication on Recording Gifts in Ministry.

Friends were asked to provide feedback on the publication of on Recording Gifts in Ministry to the clerk. Final consideration will occur at Summer Sessions 2018.

10. Report from internal nominating committee re: Clerk of MCC beginning after Summer Sessions 2018 (and possibly recording clerk): Anne Pomeroy reported for the internal nominating committee. The committee identified some guiding principles (attached) including desired attributes of the clerk, the desire to have a fresh perspective and someone who will work to be inclusive to all. We identified that we can look both within MCC and outside MCC. We identified a strong need for succession planning, including a possible Assistant clerk.

We were asked to explore how to let the YM body know that MCC is seeking a CC clerk. We noted that Witness CC and General Services are also soon in need of a clerk.

Friends found inspiration from the list of desired attributes (attached) and felt a need to share them as well.

We are asked to hold our need for a clerk in prayer.

Friends moved into a period of worship.

11. Representative still needed from MCC to Sessions Committee: Roger Dreisbach Williams and Pierre Douyon are willing to serve. We approved both as our representatives to Sessions Committee. Note from clerk: after our coordinating committee meeting, Roger deferred to Pierre, so I have informed Sessions Committee that Pierre will be our rep.
12. Announcements:
 - a. The Conflict Transformation Committee is sponsoring 2 three day trainings in the Restorative Justice Practice of Peacemaking Circles. April 20-22 in Rochester and April 24-26 in the NYC area. Friends are encouraged to attend if possible. Contact Karen Reixach for registration info.
 - b. Please prepare committee advanced reports by May 1st.
 - c. Please prepare committee 2019 budget requests so we can approve them at Summer Sessions—Please send them to me by July 1st so I can circulate to Friends before Summer Sessions.

Membership Under the Care of New York Yearly Meeting

Criteria for Applying

- Friend is actively involved in New York Yearly Meeting business, committees, communities, events, or sessions;
- Friend's life circumstances make it difficult or impossible to regularly attend or find home at a Monthly Meeting (people in remote locations, caregivers, incarcerated Friends, etc.); **or** Friend feels as though New York Yearly Meeting is their spiritual home;
- Friend is able to give resources of time and/or money to the work of the Yearly Meeting or the entities therein (committees, Powell House, Sessions, etc.);
- Friend is committed to enter wholeheartedly into the spiritual and corporate activities of the Society and willingly assumes responsibility for both service and support as the way opens.

Process at Coordinating Committee Level

1. The Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee under Ministry Coordinating Committee will consider requests for membership under the care of New York Yearly Meeting.
2. The Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee will create and manage a database of diverse Friends in the Yearly Meeting who are willing and able to serve on Clearness Committees for prospective members and as elders for new members. This list will be refreshed and amended at least annually.
3. The Committee, or a designated sub-committee, will consider application letters and appoint a Clearness Committee of at least three people for each applicant. When selecting clearness committee members, attention will be paid to geography, needs of the applicant, diversity and inclusiveness, and representation from multiple bodies within New York Yearly Meeting.
4. The Clearness Committee reports back to Ministry and Pastoral Care with its recommendation for consideration of approval or other action. On approval, the Clerk advises the clerk of MCC and the Yearly Meeting offices.
5. The Ministry and Pastoral Care committee welcomes the new member appropriately and matches them with an elder from the database. This elder is responsible for support, advice, and oversight of the new member for at least two years.
6. Ministry and Pastoral Care with the help of elders will assess the membership rolls under their care annually.

Process for Prospective Members

1. A membership application letter will be written by Friend seeking membership, addressed to the clerk of Ministry and Pastoral Care. The letter should include:
 - a. why membership under the care of NYYM is sought at this time
 - b. why this process was selected by the applicant instead of applying through a Monthly Meeting
 - c. how applicant is in unity with Quaker or NYYM principles and testimonies
 - d. ways that the applicant anticipates involvement in the Yearly Meeting
 - e. whether applicant is interested in being a member in perpetuity or for a set period of time
2. Ministry and Pastoral Care, or an appointed sub-committee, responds to the applicant and appoints a clearness committee
3. The clearness committee meets with the applicant per clearness committee process
4. The clearness committee eventually reports back to Ministry and Pastoral Care with their recommendation for consideration of approval or other action. On approval, the Clerk advises the clerk of MCC and the Yearly Meeting offices.
5. On final approval, the new member is welcomed appropriately and is matched with an elder who is responsible for support, advice and oversight of the new member for at least two years.
6. Members under the care of NYYM are expected to maintain contact with their elder and communicate with them regularly for the first two years of membership. New member will submit an annual “check-in” letter if possible to Ministry and Pastoral Care to let them know what has been going on for the past year, whether they need specific support, or if they would like to adjust their membership status.

Guiding Principles:

1. Attributes of MCC Clerk
 - a. Grounded in Quaker process
 - b. Has a deep spiritual practice/centeredness
 - c. Good administrative skills
 - d. Someone who knows or will put the effort into knowing the yearly meeting as a body
 - e. Sense of humor
 - f. Has time to serve
 - i. Thursday midmorning for liaison calls
 - ii. Meeting for Discernment Steering Committee
 - iii. Leadings and Priorities Working group
 - iv. Time available to serve and do the work
 - g. Someone who comes to sessions and can be present at Coordinating committee meetings and to know the business before the body
 - h. Deep listening skills and the ability to read the body
 - i. Who can work creatively and collaboratively with the recording clerk
 - j. Someone who listens to all voices and those voices not present
 - k. Someone who understands the need to actively support ministry and gifts of ministry
 - l. Someone who understands and can cultivate the future leadership of the yearly meeting
 - m. Someone who can utilize electronic and social media
 - n. Agility
 - o. Ability to work with a body to deepen its spiritual presence
 - p. Someone whose ministry is being a minister to the ministers
2. We agreed we could look both within and outside of MCC
3. We recognize a desire to have someone who has a fresh perspective and who will work to be inclusive of all
4. We need to do succession planning: thinking about an assistant clerk of MCC