

Witness Coordinating Committee

(2013)

Purposes & Objectives

The Witness Section comprises those committees and representatives to Quaker bodies which try to make visible the traditional testimonies and newer concerns of Friends in ways that extend beyond the Society of Friends. Its work attempts to express beliefs in action. The Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC) functions as an enabling body of the section.

The Sharing Fund, a coordinated annual giving appeal under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee, assembles funds for the use of committees whose primary functions are in the area of projects of outreach sponsored by New York Yearly Meeting. The Witness Coordinating Committee establishes goals for the Sharing Fund based on the recommendation of its constituent committees and exercises general oversight of the fund.

Committees

- Alternatives to Violence Project
- American Friends Service Committee
- Committee for the Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development
- Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War
- Friends Committee for Black Concerns
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Indian Affairs Committee
- Prisons Committee
- World Ministries Committee

Resource persons

- Meeting the Minimum Needs of All
- Peace Concerns Coordinator
- Right Sharing of World Resources

Representatives

- American Friends Service Committee
- Bolivian Quaker Education Fund
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Friends Peace Teams
- Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund,
- National Religious Campaign against Torture
- New Jersey Council of Churches
- New York State Council of Churches
- Quaker Earthcare Witness
- Rural and Migrant Ministry
- William Penn House

Functions & Activities

The Witness Coordinating Committee supports and oversees the work of committees of the Witness Section, as well as their relations with others in the Yearly Meeting. It considers concerns brought by individual Friends, monthly and regional meetings, and other groups within and outside the Society of Friends. It fosters communication among those with related concerns and tries to help in clarifying issues and in facilitating their presentation to Friends. (See guidelines on presenting minutes.)

The Witness Activities Fund is administered by Witness Coordinating Committee in accord with the guidelines that appear below.

Witness Coordinating Committee appoints task groups and working groups as needed. Recent examples of working groups carrying out the work of witness include EAQWER and Earthcare Working Group.

Organization & Method of Appointment

The Witness Coordinating Committee is composed of one representative from each of the groups forming the Witness Section and between nine and twelve members at large. The members at large are appointed by the Yearly Meeting for three-year terms, one-third being named each year, upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee.

The clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee serves on the Liaison Committee, and the clerk or a named designee serves on the Sessions Committee.

Meeting Times & Places

Witness Coordinating Committee meets during spring, summer and fall Yearly Meeting sessions, at the coordinating committee weekend at Powell House, and other times as needed.

Finances

Expenses of the coordinating committee are provided for in the Operating Budget, as are administrative expenses of the Witness Section committees. Program expenditures of the Witness committees are provided for in the Sharing Fund. The committee administers the Witness Activities Fund, a participant in the Sharing Fund.

Guidelines for Witness Activities Fund Grant Process

1. Funds shall be applied to projects that advance Friends' testimonies.
2. Proposals may be submitted by New York Yearly Meeting committees, individual Friends, or monthly meetings. Funds are not to be applied to projects appropriate to other Yearly Meeting committees or to ongoing administrative expenses. Whenever possible, proposals should have been reviewed by and come with the recommendation of a monthly meeting.
3. Proposals should be as specific and concise as possible with reference to purposes, means of accomplishment, the period in which the project is to be completed, potential for subsequent benefits, complete budget including any other funds on hand or expected.
4. A final report shall be provided within two months of scheduled project

completion, emphasizing results and information suitable for publication. Interim reports should be scheduled where appropriate.

5. Proposals will be received by the Witness Coordinating Committee clerk or the clerk's designee,
6. and approved by the Witness Coordinating Committee.
7. A letter inviting proposals for the current fiscal year will be distributed to monthly meetings and yearly meeting committees in January or early February. Applications received by WCC by the end of March will be considered at spring sessions. Any applications received after this deadline will be considered the following year, at spring sessions. If there is particular urgency, the WCC may consider applications received after the deadline on a case by case basis.
8. If the funds available for grants are not sufficient to cover all the requests, priority will be given to projects which have not previously been awarded grants.