

2021-01-17 Coordinator Report for WQM

Nominating Representatives - The treasurer spoke with me about the length of his service and approaching end of his current term. It may be time to convene a Nominating Committee to seek out a new treasurer for WQ. Hockessin MM approved Carol Bernard serving as their representative to Nominating.

Attended a number of PYM gatherings for worship, business, and support of MM and QMs. Included here are notes from the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business held in early December 2020. Share these via the blog, periodic e-mails to the newsletter list and to MM clerks and contacts as feels relevant.

2020-12-08 PYM MFB notes for WQM

Opening worship included a land acknowledgement. Queries were shared to help us discern our presence: why did I choose to come to these business sessions; what am I bringing to serve the community? how do I hope to be served by being here; what do I expect to take away with me?

Christie Duncan-Tessmer, the General Secretary, reported that financially the YM is okay, and that is a great thing in a year very unlike the usual. We exceeded the Annual Fund goal and covenants are soft. The Arch Street Meeting House executive direction is off to a great start with programs planned and happening, and grants received. Christie shared the following metaphor about the Yearly Meeting community: we are like the neurons in a nervous system—through our meetings, e-mails, event invitations, mindfulness sessions, Instagram posts, we receive, send, relay, and transport messages that keep us connected. This is our shared experience of God and is nourishment for ourselves and all those we connect with us even outside our faith community.

Terri Whiteford gave a **Nominating** report. There were four appointments and one release.

We approved Cathy Toner of Downingtown MM/Caln Quarter to Administrative Council; Robert Greene of Princeton MM/Burlington for Quaker Life Council; Keith Barch Schulykill/Caln as PYM Rep to FGC; Margery Rubin Medford/Haddonfield as PYM Rep to AFSC; Julia Carrigan of Mickleton/Salem Quarter was released from Admin Council.

Anthony Stover gave a report from **Quaker Life Council**.

Anthony lifted up the charge of the council: to tend to the health and integrity of our community, cultivate and deepen relationships, nurture our Meetings, and support work for corporate peace and justice. There are to be 15 appointed members (there are now 12; we like to have 2 be Young Friends.) QLC helps steward 9 collaboratives: Abolition of Nuclear Weapons; Anti-racism; First Contact; Eco-justice, India Friends; FWCC; Legislative Policy; Middle East; and Spiritual Formation. WE have received more state of the society reports in recent years from 16 to 60. We will start this process again soon. They help to connect us and to and know the involvement of Friends. The Ministry and Care subcommittee tends to our anti-racism work.

Jim Waddingtown reported for **Administrative Council**.

Recent work has included orienting five new members. Property committee has expanded. WE are reviewing committee charges. There are Sprints on Governance and Strategic Direction

from the reorganization of the YM with Roy Zatcoff as clerk; the Membership and Belonging Sprint includes all councils from YM. Finance committee has discussed what type of impact investing the YM should do (Reinvestment Fund). A joint orientation of new members of both councils led to valuing and wanting more joint-council meetings-- sees it as broadening impact and increasing spiritual depth; Admin Council appoints at large seats on Nominating Council. There are 5 vacancies and we are feeling the weight of these vacancies.

Our clerks, Jean-Marie and Frank Barch, reported on the **three concerns** shared out to Meetings in September, 2020. They heard from 18 Monthly Meetings and 2 Quarters on membership, ecojustice and the climate crisis, and anti-racism. Meetings and Collaboratives and the Yearly Meeting has engaged with these three issues for many years. Discerning our spiritual work on these moving forward needs more discernment. For Membership, many are unclear about the recent history of the concern and why some feel a need for an additional way to be a Friend. Several Meetings shared ideas for climate action. Actionable specifics beyond a minute are needed. With regards to Anti-racism concern, Meetings shared witness against racism, but it is not yet clear if there is support for PYM and Fellowship of Friends of African Descent minutes. Ministry and Care committee of Quaker Life Council is working to create a process to heal from racism within PYM, and to help us move towards being an anti-racist community. There will be Sprints formed for each concern. Please share names with the clerks of those you recommend to serve on any of the Sprints. These three concerns will be on the Yearly Meeting agenda in March and will be informed by the work of the Sprints.

Announcements - PYM will hold a virtual Continuing Session on March 27. Annual Session will be July 27-August 1. A virtual or in-person format has not yet been determined. Youth and Family programs are happening!

Upcoming Thread Gatherings - January 23 Addressing Anti-Blackness In and Beyond the Monthly Meeting

February 6 - The Seasons in the Life of a Meeting

Feb 27 Truth and Transformation in Community

March 6 Building Community and Philanthropy

Caln Quarter Membership Development - Wisdom from Growing Meetings

The Caln Quarter Membership Development Team asked three panelists, each from a different Monthly Meeting to share their experiences and learnings of growing their meeting. Their reflections were organized around the following five queries:

How does your Meeting make itself known in the community?

How does your meeting help new attenders get connected to the meeting?

How do you convert a curious visitor to a returning attender?

How would you describe the meeting's assets relative to youth and adult offerings, both activities and spiritual programs?

The three panelists were Brad Sheeks of Newtown MM, a suburban meeting; Arlene Johnson of Chatham-Summit MM, a suburban meeting in New Jersey; and Vicki Smith of Old Chatham MM, a rural meeting in upstate New York.

The three Meetings did not do exactly the same things, but it was clear there were similar approaches. Meetings need to find the ways in which Friends worship and the activities

and expression of the Meeting's spiritual life resonate with the local communities. Outreach actions must all fall in the comfort zone of meeting members. Here are some of the common elements to their outreach:

- It entails a thoughtful assessment and intentional, consistent efforts aimed at being as inclusive as possible.
- The Meeting supports this work in multiple ways: religious education programs nurture all, not just seekers and visitors. The appeal of the meeting house impacts all who are present.
- There are frequent connections to the local community whether through open invitations to meeting programs or articles in the paper or on the web about meeting events. Events may be clearly Quaker - a sustainability program for World Quaker Day or a blood drive for the Red Cross.
- Newcomers see evidence of vitality, expressed in the adult and youth activities and by the physical appearance of the property. Orientation materials are on hand, discussion groups are lifted up.
- Someone follows up with each newcomer, offering specific avenues to plugin.
- These meetings started by focusing on a couple of initiatives and built their "system" brick by brick, as opposed to implementing a master plan at the outset.
- Ways keeping connected during covid may well continue after the pandemic, such as featuring updates from particular members in the newsletter, and online discussions.

Notes about the three Meetings and from each presenter are available, as is a link to a recording of the session. If you are interested in receiving these, please e-mail Deb at coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org.

The next program in Caln Quarter's Membership Development will likely be on a Saturday in February. Stay tuned for e-mail notice. A participant asked about material for newcomers who want to get acquainted with Quakerism. Here are a few suggestions.

Letters to a Fellow Seeker: A Short Introduction to the Quaker Way by Steve Chase
(available from FGC)

Milestones on the Path by Alex Miller (available from Amazon)

What to Expect in Quaker Meeting for Worship, a QuakerSpeak DVD

The Caln Quarter Membership Development Series working team is John Hayden, Janet Lamborn, Larry MacKenzie, and Irene Oleksiw.

2021 WQ Meetings

18 April host Kendal - 3rd Query

18 July host Newark - with Concord Quarter - 6th Query

17 October host Hockessin - 9th Query

Prepared updated **Friends Support** grants

Parents Morning Off - a joint Western and Concord Youth Event was held 21 November. The turnout was smaller than usual - 3 youth; one there for the first time from Salem Quarter. Two adults who work with youth programming for Salem Quarter joined to see what we offered. All had

a great time. The two repeat youth participants spent several minutes sharing what they loved about past in-person gatherings. There were 8 participants altogether for the online gathering.

Outreach-Connection

Delivered 8 poinsettia plants to Friends Home from Westtown School Dining Room.

Worshipped with Centre, London Grove, Hockessin, and Crosslands since October gathering.

Enjoy and value reading newsletters and minutes from Hockessin and West Grove Meetings. It would be wonderful to receive minutes from other Meetings if they are so led and able.

I have contacted the new coordinators for the Family Project Outreach led by Hockessin Meeting to see how they might share and invite participation from others in the Quarter. They value Centre Meeting's hosting of one of their nights.

Newsletters

Almost completed the process of preparing newsletters available on the website for a records transfer to Friends Historical Library. (October 2013-Winter 2020.)

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Wood