
An invitation to Beyond Meeting for Business: Creating Equity Centered Meetings

**Westtown Monthly Meeting is inviting Western and Concord
Quarter Meeting Clerks to join us in:**

- Transforming Meeting for Worship for Business practice by expanding our equity-centered meeting design and facilitation skills
 - Providing mutual support and accompaniment in this shared journey to a more open and equitable faith community
 - Inviting a more diverse faith community to gather in our Meeting Houses
 - Heightening awareness and sensitivity to the importance of equity centered working relationships with community partners.
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Background: Westtown Monthly Meeting is called to action by the anti-racism work of PYM and by Vanessa Julye's equity and inclusion appeal to review Quaker practices. Our Meeting, like most in Concord Quarter, is a modest size with very little diversity. As we opened the conversations with Friends and attenders of color or those with non-binary gender identities, we have learned that while we aspire to be welcoming, our practices leave some feeling they need to “leave part of who they are at the door.”

While hard to hear, we recognize that it is time to look at how we organize and conduct our committees, our Meetings for Business and our involvement in public facing justice work. Re-examining how we do business is a first step. Meetings in Concord and Western Quarter, especially those with social justice ministries, also envision an expanded and inclusive Quaker community which works actively with local partners in seeking justice.

Our objective and goals: In very practical terms, this program seeks to broaden and adapt our facilitation/clerking skills and meeting design practices to be equity centered. You are invited to participate in a 12-month program to provide 1) visioning around our aspirations to be Meetings

which prioritize equity; 2) equity-centered meeting design and facilitation training; and 3) the formation of a peer support network which recognizes that this level of growth requires encouragement and on-going spiritual grounding to be successful.

Sequence:

Early fall Registration. Deadline October 30, 2022

Late fall/early winter In-take interviews with registrants. Consultations with experienced Quaker clerks.

February/March Workshop design and final planning and logistics

April Workshop on equity-centered meeting design and facilitation training

May to July Three facilitated peer support network meetings (perhaps in the form of a Quarter level Working Group). Session 1 – Focus on first steps within each Meeting’s own practices, assess together how we have been able to shift and adapt our traditional meeting design and facilitation practices within the Meeting. Session 2 - Focus on our work with our community partners. Session 3 - Explore our challenges and where our experiments have taken us, where we might go next, who will take leadership and how we might share with others in PYM.

August 2023 to April 2024 Monthly peer support gatherings for reflection and learning.

Intended outcomes: By learning and applying these skills and practices, we hope to authentically create a more hospitable context for the inclusion of diverse attenders and members in our Monthly meetings. Our second goal is to strengthen our capacity to work with communities of color and other marginalized people in our social justice ministries. We are committed to engage in real, tangible measures to transform the communities in which we live. We see that our Meetings seek to collaborate and support migrant justice, criminal justice reform, refugee integration, and climate justice, among other concerns. We seek to model meeting practices which are respectful and pro-actively address equity.

Who should apply: Clerks of Concord and Western Quarters Monthly Meetings as well as clerks from Monthly Meeting committees and Quarter Working Groups (up to 30 participants). You can [register by completing this form](#).

Coordination This program is overseen by the Peace and Justice Committee of Westtown Monthly Meeting. Professional facilitation and training will be provided by *Fellowship for Diversity in Negotiation, Mediation & Conflict Resolution* with additional DEI advising from *IDEAS Generation*. The location for the training and the 3 facilitated conversations will be scheduled in the fall. If your Meeting would like to host, please contact Paula

(kline.paula@gmail.com)

Costs and Funding The program is funded by the Shoemaker fund. There is no charge for the training or the peer support facilitation. The intention is to host workshops and the 3 follow up meetings in person. The peer support groups will be held virtually. Adjustments will be made according to health conditions. Travel expenses are not covered for participants.