

Minutes 21 January 2024 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
at Hockessin Monthly Meeting and [via Zoom](#)

Opening Worship

Responses to the 12th query:

London Grove -

Conflict by hatred is fear of having something taken away from us. It also comes from a lack of understanding between people. We can invite everyone to the table and include different people to engage in our world. We all have a purpose in life. Quakerism entreats us to have everyone join us at the table to promote understanding. A young person has lost friends because of the conflict in the Middle East. She is Lebanese and had all her friends pull away from her once the conflict started. This action is very hurtful as this young friend has no radical ideas nor does she harbor hatred for her friends because of their backgrounds and their beliefs. She is heartbroken and is struggling.

Newark-

The twelfth query was considered by Aliza Appel, Ginny Bailey, Annemarie Carr, Lily Grosso, Diane Kesler, Maggie Ladd, Richard Ladd, Ariana Langford, Mike McDowell, Sally Milbury-Steen, Treba Thompson, Trebs Thompson, and Wayne Thompson.

A Friend remarked, "I ask myself, very much, whether to jump to witness and civic responsibility action when these issues arise. But in the second half of the Covid pandemic, these things got quieter. I think there are things we can do to address these things now, though. I realize there is a lot of inaction. And I've been thinking about how I could tackle these things."

Another Friend commented: "We all struggle with how to do this, while bogged down with day-to-day activities. I feel very restricted in what I can do now, but I try to do what I can helping people of color and other sexual orientations. A lot of us go out of our way to walk with other faiths too. We have an outsized involvement for our size."

These responses reminded another Friend of Dorothy Day's message that "we need to do that what we can with great love."

A Friend added that "Whenever I feel I haven't done enough, I remember how I interact with others. I never know what a stranger might need. I try to give something of my essence. I interact with my black, gay neighbor, telling him, when I grew up, I didn't know I was white, because of the

restrictions against Jews. We've discussed the many injustices in history. My neighbor didn't know there were other, white, people like him. We know that one person can have a big effect."

We can do a pretty good job at staying on top of the issues. It's helpful to look at different news sources to get all sides of a story. If you don't know what's going on, you can't act. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) gives us a lot of information. We do a good job staying on top of it as a meeting, and we hope we will continue to do so.

In a final response, a Friend said, "The spirit of caring has taken a huge personal blow, in recent years. A class of Friends at Crosslands, where I live, put on a 'Festival of Lights' recognizing other traditions. There have been many positive developments because a small door was opened. Love of others reminds us of the gift we are given. 'God of all people, we pray for peace today and every day.'"

West Grove -

The Twelfth Query on Witness and Civic Responsibility was read. We are fortunate that we do not see the amount of evil that is common elsewhere. We support organizations that help all rather than limiting their services to certain groups. The COVID pandemic changed many community activities that have not returned to their former level.

New Garden

The 12th Query was read on Witness & Civic Responsibility.

As a very small Meeting we can best address injustice with financial backing.

Our country is facing some serious threats to our democracy. We miss hearing from "The League of Women Voters" & we wonder why they aren't covered by the media & the press the way they used to be.

We search for politicians who possess honesty & integrity and also have the courage of their convictions.

We also need to remember to be kind to others & respect their opinions even when we disagree with them.

When we marvel at the beauty of nature we are reminded of our responsibility as good Stewart's of the earth & work to reduce climate change.

As Americans, it is our civic responsibility to VOTE.

Monthly Meeting updates -

Mill Creek - will hold a spring fair in late April 27 from 4-7pm; We are small but active and have a regular attendance.

Kennett - We have reactivated our childrens RE and free play times; we have a new website, new communications systems, and new welcoming brochures; We are renewing our connections and outreach with Fairville Friends School; starting to join in more social programs with the Kennett Square community. We are looking for a paid childcare person.

Fallowfield - we are meeting; we do a lot via Zoom; plan to meet regularly in person in April; lots of laughter when we meet, however we meet; we've put a new roof on the shed.

Newark - working with ***Naqeef Shrawari*** (sp?) in an interfaith effort to help with refugees

Hockessin - joining virtually is an option when requested; we have paid childcare and an active adult religious education; we just updated our website; we went through a long process to determine the disposition of former caretaker house; we work with Wilmington MM to provide some support for Family Promise; we also provide some support for La Comunidad Hispana and Friendship House.

West Grove - we hope to have a history talk in April, the date and topic to come

London Grove - we have a vibrant children's religious education program under Kim Brosnan Myers and Margaret Walton; Penn Oak memorial process has been a spiritual awakening and outreach opportunity for many;

New Garden - 20 people came for our Christmas Social and tree work is being done

Centre - we had a great Christmas program; arbor work needed on old trees; in February we are starting a Quakerism 101 series.

Treasurer's Report - given by Bob Frye for our treasurer Karen Conlan. The attached report was received with gratitude.

Addressing Racism Collaborative - Susanna Davison

As the WQ representative I was in touch with Monthly Meeting clerks for a survey on education and activities addressing racism; the next sessions theme is "call to healing" March 8-10; it will be a hybrid event; 3 levels of healing: personal, family or MM, and the broader community; what racial justice issues are in front of your meetings that you are working on?

PYM has had sessions on race and ecojustice, we are familiar with the

intersection of race, poverty, and environmental degradation; this is one spur for exploration of solar panels at London Grove; I ask that monthly meetings share news of their work towards racial justice to PYM and ARC; there is a list of resources at the ARC page -

<https://www.pym.org/addressing-racism-collaborative/>

Contact Susanna via her e-mail – shrdavison@me.com

Pennsgrove Annual Report

Bob Frye gave the attached report.

He added that they took advantage of interest rates for high yield CDs and moved some assets to help boost finances through higher interest earnings.

Historical Property Report

The committee met twice since Western Quarter's last meeting for business. We were joined at the end of November by Steve Balderston, a trustee for Colora Meetinghouse. Steve shared his love for, connection to, and care of the Colora meetinghouse property. Western Quarter would work with Steve if it takes on a care relationship of the property as West Grove Monthly Meeting has requested.

Steve and the Historic Property Committee assigned several tasks such as verifying deeds, conducting a property survey, updating the insurance policy, and compiling a recent history and future budget for maintenance costs.

The likelihood of a civic group taking responsibility for the property is slim. Several have been approached over the years, and none have had the interest and/or ability to take on a property that is outside of the "town" and has no modern amenities.

Western Quarter now has copies of two deeds from Friends Fiduciary and keys to the meetinghouse.

The committee wants to explore with Steve his vision for the meetinghouse property.

At this time the Historic Property recommends to Western Quarterly Meeting that we continue to explore what spiritual and legal relationship we will have with the Colora Meetinghouse property.

The committee also encourages monthly meetings to locate property deeds and place a copy on file with Friends Historical Library. The coordinator will nudge meetings about this in the coming months.

In discussion Newark Friends shared that they are not in a position to buy or have sole responsibility for London Britain Meetinghouse.

DRAFT Minute of Appreciation for Friends Home in Kennett

Western Quarter minutes its appreciation for the hospitality Friends Home extended to us as we gathered there on 15 October, 2023. The support of staff in advance of the day and on the day ensured a warm welcome and smooth running of programs for Western Quarter Friends that met in-person and online for worship, business, and fellowship. We note especially the work of Christine McDonald, Brenten Megee, and Michael Nguyen and that this extra hospitality occurred in the midst of Friends Home's anniversary celebrations.

Friends approved.

DRAFT Minute of Appreciation for Newark Friends Meeting

Western Quarterly Minutes appreciation of Newark Friends Meeting's role in hosting Western Quarter at Friends Home in Kennett on 15 October, 2023. Hosting at Friends Home added an additional level of coordination, outreach, and work. Newark Friends were undaunted and the 40 plus people who gathered mostly in person enjoyed the spiritual and practical fruits of Newark's labors: the childrens and adult programs were engaging, and there was delicious homemade coffee cake, plenty of coffee and juice, a spread of sandwiches and snacks for lunch. Diane Kesler led the lively children's program and Kenyan Friend Jemimah Collins engaged the adults. Newark Meeting's efforts created a supportive atmosphere for Western Quarter's worship and work, as well as the opportunity to connect with Friends at Friends Home and for Western Quarter to get a glimpse of life there.

Friends Approved.

Coordinator Report

In addition to the usual duties of website, correspondence, newsletter, sorting through archival material, and supporting committee work, I

attended the PYM gathering *Child Safety in Meetings: Best Practices*. There were no new recommendations from sessions in recent years. Best practice continues to be to have more than one adult on hand, to have background checks for staff working with children, and to have clear policies and communication protocols if there are difficult conversations that need to be had or when information needs to be reported to social services or authorities. On 27 January I will attend the PYM Governance and Stewardship Thread at Arch Street Meetinghouse. The sessions will focus on burial ground, greening, and risk management. I encourage other WQ Friends to attend as I can not be in all of the simultaneous sessions.

In the coming months I also hope to coordinate with a small group from Support Committee an evaluation and review of the coordinator role. This will be both a job performance review, and an opportunity to consider how the job could or needs to change in light of the desire to minimize or zero out reserves spending from the budget in the coming years.

Nominating also needs to check on the clerk position, and to identify a recording clerk.

Work has begun on program preparations for the next Western Quarterly Meeting to be hosted by West Grove Monthly Meeting. We will flip our usual schedule and will open with meeting for worship with attention to business in the morning and will have a program by historian and author [Dr. Faith Mitchell](#) following lunch fellowship. Dr. Mitchell will present on the African American community in the New Garden area at the turn of the 20th century and the connections the community had to area Friends. She will likely have copies of her recent work *Emma's Postcard Album, a Window of Black Life under Jim Crow* available. Several of Dr. Mitchell's ancestors were from the area.

New Business - Friends Home has raised over \$650,000 towards their goal of \$750,000 for the elevator fund!

Friends Home in Kennett's board is also looking for someone interested in serving on its finance committee. Please be in touch with Dave Park at Kennett Meeting if interested.

Closing Worship

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Wood, coordinator