

PYM Annual Sessions

2024 Climate Witness Stewards Report at Annual Sessions 'Called to Healing'

Tuesday, 6/25

Grounding Queries:

As Friends, how are we led to be true to the testimonies of Integrity, Community, Equality, Stewardship?

Do we care enough about other races, ethnic groups, and cultures not as privileged as white Americans to make changes to our lives that can alter the trajectory of our imperiled future?

Do we care enough about young people and their lives in a climate altered world?

Their report included information about current climate consequences impacting people and our world, and included some actions we can take as individuals and friends, and had over a page of actions the Climate Witness Stewards had taken and resources they have. Check out their website- <https://www.pym.org/eco-justice-collaborative/>.

They have set the following among their benchmarks for further action:

By Annual Sessions 2025 (July), measure the carbon footprint of Yearly Meeting operations, gatherings, and facilities.

By December 2025, identify how the Yearly Meeting could be carbon net zero by 2030.

By 2030 or sooner, if at all possible, Monthly Meetings strive to reach 50% carbon reduction for members and Meeting houses.

With thanks to the dedicated Friends who have been working for years to educate and assist others to action. We celebrate the increased collaboration between PYM groups and between Monthly Meetings! We call on all people to work with great urgency to heal our relationship with our planet.

Respectfully submitted, Jackie Bonomo Clerk, Climate Witness Stewards

Nominating Council Report

Friends are needed to serve in a variety of roles. Nominating Council meets monthly via Zoom.

Friends approved nominations to Quaker Life Council, Administrative Council, Elders, Nominating Council, Climate Witness Stewards, and representatives to AFSC, FCNL, Friends Peace Teams, and FGC. Of note for Western Quarter is our Friend tonya thames taylor serving as a rep to AFSC. Friends also approved interim treasurer Tom Zemaitis of Moorestown Meeting continuing in the role as treasurer.

Budget

The budget for the fiscal year begins on October 1st, 2024. This is an operating budget. The operating budget consists of unrestricted revenue. The majority of the unrestricted revenue goes to staffing. The majority of the restricted budget comes from investments. Staff salaries are increased this year, as we anticipate 100% of the positions to be filled. Also, we are increasing salaries as we were paying less than other similar organizations and we are rectifying that. Budgets aim to include increases each year for inflation and cost of living adjustments.

Several Friends noted it would be important for us to keep that in mind as we make covenant commitments. PYM does not ask for increases expecting meetings to pay as able.

Addressing Racism Witness.

Addressing Racism is another corporate witness for PYM. Nikki Mosgrove shared that as an African American friend, she could see patterns of racism more easily than non- people of color. Some friends of color might feel pressured to stay silent. Pay attention to patterns of racism and interrupt them.

Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports are available at the yearly meeting website. They are informative and invigorating reading.

Gaza - A different future is possible: Quaker organizations share a vision for peace in Palestine and Israel

American Friends Service Committee, Canadian Friends Service Committee, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Quakers in Britain, Quaker Council on European Affairs, Quaker Peace and Social Witness, and Quaker United Nations Office created a joint statement published April 12 on the humanitarian crisis and ongoing war in Gaza. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has endorsed the document. All Monthly Meetings can join. Members of the Middle East Collaborative are available to be resources for meetings. The Joint statement lists actions needed by Israel, Hamas and armed Palestinian groups, Western governments and leaders, and what Friends can do.

Middle East Collaborative shared their resources -

<https://www.pym.org/middle-east-collaborative/>. Contact Sandy Rea, Central Philadelphia for help with resources or speakers, drsandyrea@hotmail.com.

PYM Lobbying Policy

A Sprint was formed to address the lobbying policy. It is to report at Continuing Sessions in November.

Five Strategic Directions

Report from the General Secretary and discussion among Friends on connecting meetings and communicating Quaker practices.

Resignation

Melissa Rycroft, presiding clerk, shared that Christie Duncan-Tessmer, PYM general secretary has tendered her resignation effective the end of July 2025.

It was good to worship, visit, and share with Friends from across PYM and from other YMs.

[Sessions Minutes](https://www.pym.org/sessions/minutes/) - <https://www.pym.org/sessions/minutes/>

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Wood, coordinator

Report of the Friends Home in Kennett for calendar year 2023 for Western Quarterly Meeting.

The mission of the organization continues to guide the board and staff of the Friends Home in Kennett:

Mission Statement: The Friends Home in Kennett is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality care in a homelike atmosphere for older men and women of modest means. We encourage independence and we respect the individuality and dignity of all in keeping with the values of the Religious Society of Friends.

Value Statement (added 2023)

Friends Home in Kennett has been home to seniors in our community for over 120 years. The way of living at Friends Home is guided by the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship. In these past 5 years, Friends Home of Kennett has expanded on these values by incorporating the Montessori philosophy of adapting our physical and intangible environments to encourage optimal independence for all our residents.

This lifestyle is reflected in our day-to-day operations by including residents with the planning and preparation of meals, developing the social calendar, and finding opportunities for our staff and residents to both benefit and give back to the Kennett Square community. Friends Home has been able to offer our residents numerous opportunities utilizing the community right outside our doors. Friends Home in Kennett strives to maintain an environment for both our staff and residents inspired by the words of Maya Angelo "People will forget what you said but they will never forget how you made them feel."

Board Update:

Three board members termed out at the end of 2023 Shirley Annand, Deb Brumbaugh our clerk, and Tom Brosius, our treasurer. Their service was commended with a small reception. The board added 3 new members in 2023: Barbara Harrison, Regina Reidenberg, and Brent Thompson. Teal Rickerman is our new clerk for 2024 and David Park is the treasurer.

The 5-year strategic plan was developed and implemented by the board in 2022. A copy of the plan is available upon request. The board continues with succession planning and member recruitment. A capital campaign for the Friends Home Elevator was put in process in 2023.

Capital Improvements

The renovation of Maiden Lane, an administrative building, was initiated last year and completed in 2023.

The elevator project construction began in 2023. As of 12/31/2023, \$585,965.00 from 114 donors, including 10 monthly meetings, and 2 foundations. Presently, we are at \$833,251 from 136 donors, including 11 meetings and 6 foundations. Total cost is projected at \$850,000.

The HVAC system in the Friends Home was put in in 2005 and after a thorough inspection it was determined a new system is needed. We will be working with engineers to determine the most cost-effective way to achieve this.

The completion of the art/garden room is being carried over to 2024 due to management staffing issues that I need to correct before taking on additional projects.

Operations:

Staffing

We were able to fill the management roles in Linden Hall this past year with seasoned dedicated employees. Janet McNemar is the new NHA and Carol Derr is our new DON. Both have extensive service in senior living and have been wonderful additions to our management staff.

Hilary Boucher also joined our management team as the Director of Clinical Life. She also has extensive experience and brings a new level of energy and creativity to the role. We did need to use agency staff in 2023 but with the increase in staff salaries the use was trending down and a goal for 2024 is complete elimination.

Resident Life

The Friends Home has an integral relationship with the Senior Center, YMCA, Longwood Gardens, Rotary Club, library, and several local schools in our community. Our volunteer program was also able to re-open this year. The Friends Home residents were also able to volunteer their time in the community at the local After the Bell program and with the annual backpack contribution program run by the Longwood Rotary.

The Montessori program continues to grow in both interest and implementation. We have presented our program to other Quaker communities and the FSA. Our Gold Certification was delayed due to the facilitator's illness then resignation last summer. We plan on obtaining the certification in 2024. I wanted to wait for both Hilary to become certified and the holidays to pass before we pursue the process.

The Friends Home is a member of the International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) and with their guidance our program has goals and inspirations to lead us to meet our resident's health and wellness needs. I spoke at the ICAA's annual conference in California this past year discussing how we blended our Health and Wellness program with our Montessori culture

Finances:

Our average census for Friends Home in 2023 was 37.3 below budgeted census of 38.5. The average census for Linden Hall was 18.5 which was above budgeted census of 17. Our investment account, valued at \$9,039,657 million at year end, continues to provide support to the Home. The Spending Rule from the Investment Account allows a 3% budgeted spending allocation, which we utilized. Grants and budgeted funds have also enabled Friends Home to provide financial support to residents, which in 2023 totaled just over \$97,774.

Progress with 2023 GOALS: (in red)

1. Obtain Montessori Certification-begin presenting our programming to local and national communities. **Did present Montessor program at ICAA conference but do not have Gold certification by end of 2023**
2. Pursue Friends Home conversion to Assisted Living licensure. **I am signed up to get my AL administrator license the beginning of 2024**
3. Begin construction of 2nd elevator **achieved**
4. Celebrate our 125th anniversary with a community wide event **Done and it was a lovely well attended event**

Goals for 2024

1. Obtain my AL administrator License as a first step
2. Pursue HVAC replacement plans
3. Eliminate use of agency staffing
4. Obtain Montessori Certification

Thank you:

We continue to be thankful for the support and concern of the Monthly Meetings and individuals of Western Quarterly Meeting. Even though Friends Home is no longer owned and managed by Western Quarter, we still benefit from the "care relationship" with the Quarter. Thank you!

**Sincerely,
Christine McDonald, ED**

2024-07-21 Coordinator Report

Historic Properties Updates:

I have talked with Steve Balderston a few times since mid-June. We were able to meet at Westtown School to talk in person about the Colora Meetinghouse property. For several reasons taking ownership of the property is not something Steve is able to do. He is happy to continue to be the main person providing some maintenance and care for the property. He understands he is best suited for that as Colora is at a distance from the rest of Western Quarter's meetings. Steve and I plan to meet in-person again towards the end of August. I will pursue with him the details on insurance information, average expenses for mowing, etc, and whether there is a map of the burial plots. This will enable Western Quarter to better plan for the expenses involved with care of the meeting. I have not directly broached with Steve the potential that WQ may want to sell the property at some point.

Dan Tracy and I have been in contact about the iron fence marking the right of way at Fallowfield Orthodox Burial Ground. The iron fence had fallen apart and become quite unsightly. Folks from the church cleared it up and will install a partial wooden fence to mark the right away. Mowing should be able to resume in the near future.

I am almost finished sorting the boxes of records from the WQ office renovation many years ago. I try not to let the history lover in me get too drawn into reading some of the documents, and stick to keeping what is required and what would be unique to WQ.

Most of my visits to monthly meetings have been around hosting quarterly meeting. I have visited New Garden and Kendal meetings. Visiting meetings and Friends is one of my favorite aspects of the coordinator tasks.

I was pulled away from work with Western Quarter this past year during a few times when my commitments to PYM's Middle East Collaborative were especially busy. I foresee that happening upon occasion in the coming year and will submit adjusted hours. (MEC has been asked to provide 1-2 members to attend AFSC meetings.)

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Wood

A Minute Concerning the Conflict in Gaza and the Broader Middle East

We mourn for all the lives lost on all sides in this conflict and lament with anyone who is suffering.

As Quakers who seek alternatives to violence, we pray that a lasting ceasefire will be realized along with the return of all hostages and other innocents to their homes and families.

We urge all sides in the conflict to make safe the conditions for the protection of civilians and for humanitarian aid to be delivered to them to ease their suffering.

As Quakers, we believe no matter the obstacles set against a solution to intractable problems, that “Way will open.”

Therefore we implore all sides in this conflict to lay aside their hurt and anger and to seek a “Way” for both Israelis and Palestinians to live with each other, providing each other with clear borders, with political independence, with religious liberty, with economic opportunity, to live as human beings with dignity and rights.

London Grove Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

2024-04-07 approved with changes suggested; changes shared 2024-05-05

Minute Approved by Newark Friends Meeting on 12 May 2024

Newark Friends Meeting wishes to acknowledge the deep harms done to indigenous peoples of North America by those of European descent, and especially by the United States Federal Government. We acknowledge that the Religious Society of Friends also participated in practices of oppression of tribal culture, and as Quakers, we have a responsibility to redress inequities. We minute our support of the Rancheria Nisenan Tribe in their efforts to be re-recognized as a tribe by the US government and to regain a portion of their native land. It is appalling that they are not recognized as a tribe because they have no land when their land was illegally taken away from them in the past. Newark Friends wholeheartedly support their efforts to reclaim their identity and their name. Individual members and attenders have already provided financial support to the California Heritage: Indigenous Research Program (CHRP), the nonprofit raising the funds for the purchase of land currently known as Sierra Friends Center. We also minute our financial support with a donation of \$250.00.

Western Quarterly Meeting minutes it's thanks for the care and welcome West Grove Monthly Meeting provided Friends when we gathered at their meetinghouse on First Day, April 21, 2024. West Grove Meeting did a spectacular job! With a break from tradition we began with meeting for worship with attention to business. Friends were efficient and attentive to the issues before us. Worship brought forth a memory of the importance of going to Quarterly Meeting: to meet other Friends. Many years ago a young friend discovered at a quarterly meeting gathering that a school friend was a Quaker, too. Then, in our present moment we witnessed some of the children discover their school friends were Quakers, too! The inclusion of intergenerational worship was a wonderful support for families with children. There were at least 9 children present for worship. Tiffany was an awesome presence with the kids outside. Heather's husband treated everyone to amazing smoked beef brisket. Lunch was a wonderful hit. We had a presentation from Dr. Faith Mitchell. Her ancestors grew up in the area and worked for several Quaker families. She shared what the experiences were of those ancestors, several employees and graduates of Lincoln University. It was a bright presentation since not all the blinds came down, we hope you were able to get them up.

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www.westernquarterquakers.org

Kennett Friends Meetinghouse
125 W. Sickle Street
610-444-1012



Proposed Host Cycle
Western Quarterly Meeting

2025	1 st month	Fallowfield
2025	4 th month	Mill Creek
2025	7 th month*	Centre
2025	10th month	London Grove
2026	1 st month	Newark
2026	4 th month	Hockessin
2026	7 th month*	Kendal
2026	10th month	West Grove
2027	1 st month	Kennett
2027	4 th month	Fallowfield

*Joint Quarter with a meeting or team from Concord Quarter

Trying to make sure we have someplace with air conditioning for summer.

Trying to spread the Joint Quarter hosts.

The Host Meeting does not have to be the Host Location. (Anyone is welcome to host at Friends Home.)