

**336th Annual Sessions
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
July 27 – 31, 2016
Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA
Friday, July 29, 2016 – Evening Session**

Worship

The 336th Annual Sessions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends reconvened Friday evening at 6:25 pm in Seegers Union Building of Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA. The announced theme of our 2016 Sessions is “Be Transformed!” At the appointed hour, we settled into Meeting for Togetherness lead by Hannah Mayer. Everyone was asked to join hands in a game of 123 connect, looking to connect with someone they don’t already know. Ben Camp then asked us to prepare ourselves for our business by settling into silence. He asked how the settling helped to transform our space? He then changed the space by dimming the lights, while playing a selection from Bach’s cello suite. Finally, he closed by asking how does this change our core?

Welcome and Introductions

At about 6:40 pm, the Presiding Clerk Penny Colgan-Davis (Germantown MM) greeted us. Others at the table introduced themselves: Alternate Clerk Alison Anderson (Central Philadelphia MM), Alternate Clerk Tom Hoopes (Valley MM), Alternate Clerk Amy Kietzman (West Philadelphia Preparative Meeting), General Secretary Christie Duncan-Tessmer (Chestnut Hill MM), Elder- Jane Keller (Pennsdale MM), Elder- Chris Lucca (Yardley MM), Recording Clerk Anthony Taylor (Fallowfield MM), and Assistant Recording John Lavin (Birmingham MM). Becky Tallarico was our speech-to-text provider.

Undoing Racism Group (URG) Proposal

The URG Co-Clerks, Lucy Duncan (Green Street MM) and Noah White led the proposal discussion. The Presiding Clerk, Penny Colgan-Davis, first addressed the body with guidelines for conversations about race as a community, displayed on projector. The Clerk also informed the body that the proposal was being presented for the body to be aware of what was being requested by the URG, not for approval.

Lucy Duncan and Noah White, two of the three co-clerks of the URG, began by saying that perfection in this work is not attainable, explaining how the idea of perfection is a pillar of white supremacy. This is challenging and imperfect work.

Lucy discussed structure by using a metaphor of a caterpillar morphing into a butterfly, with the idea being that this is transformative work. The body was asked to turn to a neighbor and share

what they think PYM might look like in three years, regarding undoing racism. Lucy explained that the URG believed it could not work effectively within the present structure as a sprint or a collaborative. To plan ways in which URG could fit best into the PYM structure, a group of 30 F/friends from the URG drafted a proposal, which was read for the body. (Attached) The main goal of the group is to eliminate racism and white supremacy within the yearly meeting. Following the presentation, a letter from Jonathan Snipes, clerk of the Implementation Committee, explaining the committee's reasons for not approving the proposal was read. (Attached)

Responses:

A Friend asked what has the URG done thus far? Among other things, Lucy and Noah stated that four subgroups have been created: Support for Friends of Color; Accountability Subgroup; Connecting Communities of Color (action group, hosting attending Black Lives Matter in Philadelphia, Coalition for Real Justice), and Learning Communities. (Learning the impact of people most affected by social injustice). In addition, the group has led workshops at Annual Sessions and Continuing Sessions for the past two years, have offered workshops to monthly meetings and co-sponsored showing of the film "I'm Not Racist... Am I?" The Friend also asked what the URG is doing, or has done to address a personal concern that URG is aware of at the Friend's monthly meeting.

A Friend asked how has the group built in benchmarks and milestones, to gauge progress? The response was that an accountability sub-group was formed. It is a co-collaborative effort. The URG documents list goals and a vision that Friends can view on the PYM website.

A Friend expressed that there seems to be tension between the sense of meeting and the need to have a formalized process, to govern things, and move them along. There needs to be an understanding about how the proposed structure will help. Lucy responded by saying that mutual accountability structures need to be created within the yearly meeting to decentralize whiteness. Work done by Jeff Hitchcock (a consultant from NYYM) has guided much of the Undoing Racism Group's work.

A Friend expressed concern, based on disappointment over the direction that the group has taken, feeling that the proposal is steeped in fear. This Friend also asked if the objectives of the group are not redundant to what Friends are fundamentally about.

A Friend asked the body to take a moment to breathe. Then, the Friend illuminated a metaphor about white blood cells and red blood cells within the body working together. However, if the cells do not work together, the body is not functional and the result is "dis-ease." Another Friend asked if appointing elders is a part of the proposal? The answer was 'yes.' Another Friend felt that the proposed structure creates a parallel structure and that the URG should function as a

part of the Quaker Life Council. Another Friend expressed how that he had a problem with point #6, of the proposal, which seems to suggest that the group is only accountable to itself.

A Friend asked how it might be possible to decentralize whiteness in a body that is more than 90% white? The Friend also wondered that, if we are going in the right direction, there would be some joy in the process. The Friend expressed that form follows function and that we should joyously move forward together.

A Friend expressed having heard the proposal as an offering to bring “watchers” to the body, to help keep the body on track. The Friend asked why we don’t just give it a try, in the spirit of experimentation, and see where it goes. Another Friend asked for clarity about what seems to be a hierarchical nature of the proposed structure. The response was that it is a relational body, not a supervisory body.

In closing, the Presiding Clerk summarized with a few highlights:

- Need mutual accountability;
- Undoing racism group is a resource body;
- Structures are needed to ensure that everyone’s needs are met.

Friends General Conference (FGC) Report

FGC’s report was given by Elizabeth Piersol-Schmidt (West Philadelphia Preparative Meeting), Traci Hjelt-Sullivan (Green Street MM) and Frank Barch (Schuylkill MM). FGC will continue the Ministry on Racism Program. QuakerBooks is now housed at Pendle Hill, and online sales are doing better than ever. This fall, FGC will kick off its Spiritual Deepening Program which will include a program of online courses to help with Quaker education for Friends and Attenders. Friends were asked to embrace this new opportunity in the Fall, 2016.

Friends were encouraged to become representatives, participate and engage with FGC! Then, Elizabeth Piersol-Schmidt related how her deep and empowering experiences over the years of serving at FGC have helped in learning many skills around clerking and how to fully participate in meeting for business, being fully grounded, handling the pain of hard decisions, but all the while listening to God for guidance.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Report

The FWCC report was given by Vanessa Julye (Central Philadelphia MM) and Amy Duckett Wagner (Fallsington MM). Vanessa and Amy opened with a video about FWCC’s global meeting, held in Pisac, Peru. Due to shortness of time, a PowerPoint presentation was not presented in its entirety. However, the presentation can be found on the FWCC website (fwccamericas.org). Vanessa and Amy shared from their experiences at the Global Meeting, and briefly shared thoughts about the forthcoming World Quaker Day, 2016.

Friends were also reminded that the Nominating Council has places open for FWCC representatives and to see the Council if anyone feels led to participate in FWCC. There are many different ways to get involved: World Quaker Day (October 2, 2016); Traveling Ministry Corps is now taking applications (check the website); [Voices of Friends](#) for those looking for a new religious community but don't know about Quakers; Section meeting in 2017 for FWCC North America will be held in Pittsburgh, PA, in March 2017.

FWCC submitted the following summary of the group's activities at the global meeting:

Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, Changing Lives: FWCC's Global Meeting in Peru. Conference Theme: Living the Transformation: Creation Waits with Eager Longing for the Revealing of God's Children (Romans 8:19)

380 Friends
37 Countries
77 Yearly Meetings
90 Young Adult Friends
33% Native Spanish Speaking Friends

The days began at 7:15 am with early morning activities, then came periods for worship led by programmed and unprogrammed Friends, business, consultation groups, and our international "Home Groups." Music played a big part in the program and lifted us spiritually to new levels as Friends sang together frequently. Each day, participants went to the morning worship session, met with their Home Group, and the Consultation Group which focused on Growing Vital Monthly Meetings & Outreach. Days ended with evening workshops, presentations and evening worship.

Even amidst the challenges of international travel, participants felt peaceful, safe, and having never felt closer to Friends, and closer to God.

Amy Duckett Wagner, Fallsington Friends Meeting
Clerk, Outreach

We adjourned, intending to reconvene at 10:00 am in the morning.

Submitted by,
Recording Clerk Anthony Taylor (Fallowfield MM)
Recording Clerk, John Lavin (Birmingham MM)
Presiding Clerk, Penny Colgan-Davis (Germantown MM)

Proposed Structure and Leadership for the Undoing Racism Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

History of the URG group

In January, 2015 at a Called Meeting of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, the body came to unity on the following minute of action:

“Friends tested and affirmed the work of our clerks and our elders, since being tasked during Annual Sessions in July 2014, to help discern a way forward in addressing many ‘-isms’ including-racism, sexism, genderism and classism. Friends also heartily affirmed that as a Yearly Meeting we:

- Commit to increase our consciousness as Friends about the intersection of privilege and race in our culture and spiritual community. We know our knowledge is often limited by our own experiences and that we have much to learn from each other and from outside resources.
- Commit to move forward with our entire community. The yearly meeting is the community of all our individual Friends and monthly meetings and this work needs to be done with the involvement of all of us.
- Commit to integrate this work into what we do in an ongoing way at the yearly meeting level. We want this work to become part of the fabric of what we do whenever we get together as yearly meeting members and attenders.”

The Undoing Racism Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is a group that arose at annual sessions in 2014 in response to this urgent call to live out our testimonies and faith more fully by addressing racism in our midst as a yearly meeting. A group of about 30 PhYM members began meeting, created a plan and has taken leadership in moving forward the work committed to in the above minute and to address PhYM’s query (put forward at annual sessions in 2015), “What is God calling Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Quakers to do next to address racism and white supremacy in the Religious Society of Friends and beyond?” We have offered leadership on this query by providing learning opportunities, guidance and workshops during Yearly Meeting sessions, training to clerks and elders, and in developing other pathways forward for the yearly meeting.

Our charge and structure

We believe and our experience has shown that an elemental aspect of undoing racism is decentering whiteness. To do this effectively it makes sense to place the Undoing Racism group, as the sole body within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting comprised of significant numbers of Friends of color in leadership along with white Friends who have been engaged in sustained study and practice of ending racism in a position that facilitates accountability and forward movement. In order for PhYM to fully live out its commitment to end racism in our midst, it will be essential for the body to confer with and understand that unless we are actively resisting it, a majority white body will perpetuate racism. We believe it is essential that the Undoing Racism group be placed within PhYM in such a way that it has the authority to hold the yearly meeting accountable for its stated aims.

The Undoing Racism Group (URG) requires a structure and governance that does not fit into any current category, or under any of the three councils of the new PhYM structure. Therefore, we, the ad hoc governance group and the URG clerks, recommend the following:

1. Undoing Racism Group is an autonomous group (not under any of the existing PhYM councils) of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Friends serving the yearly meeting in its calling to address racism and end white supremacy.
2. Using Friends process, whenever it is discerned that new clerks are needed, a naming group within the Undoing Racism Group will be formed to nominate Undoing Racism clerks and URG will come together for a meeting for worship with attention to business to discern how the Spirit is leading us in this matter.
3. Undoing Racism Group will meet as called (approximately monthly) and will form working groups, subgroups, sprints and collaboratives as needed/as the Spirit moves.
4. Two of the three appointed co-clerks will identify as Friends of color or of mixed race.
5. The URG group (through an appointed nominating committee) will appoint representatives to serve as members of each of the 3 councils; Quaker Life, Administrative and Nominating. The URG co-clerks will confer and consult with the councils as needed. We will give these names to the nominating committee

with the expectation that they will be affirmed.

6. There will be a support and accountability group formed, consisting primarily of Friends of Color with allies who have demonstrated their capacity in undoing racism, named by URG, to lovingly and faithfully hold Yearly Meeting as a whole and the presiding and alternate clerks in particular accountable in the area/s of addressing racism and ending white supremacy.
7. We ground our work in the Spirit. URG, itself, is an open group. Any active participant in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting community is welcome to participate and be active in our meetings for worship with attention to business, as well as the subgroups, working groups, sprints or collaboratives that form. Indeed, we hope that as has been true from the beginning, members of the councils and the clerk's table will consider themselves members of URG. However, URG co-clerks and appointed sub-group clerks (or their designees) are the official representatives for the Undoing Racism Group and have a critical role in communicating across the yearly meeting.
8. Until it is no longer necessary URG will annually name someone to be on the sessions planning committee, the Faith and Practice rewriting committee, and work with the clerks to make sure that there is at least one aspect of addressing racism and white supremacy on the agenda at sessions. The support and accountability group of Friends of Color and allies will periodically assess our progress. They will hold the responsibility to discern if and when we may be ready to lay the Undoing Racism Group down.
9. At least one of the Undoing Racism group co-clerks or their designee will regularly attend meetings of PhYM leadership (quarterly clerks, monthly meeting clerks, etc.) when they meet.
10. The Undoing Racism clerks or their designees will meet quarterly or as needed with PhYM clerks, alternate clerks, general secretary, and council clerks to consult on moving forward on addressing racism within PhYM.

Goals and objectives:

Our main goal is to eliminate racism and white supremacy in our yearly meeting, PhYM. We will do this by forming the Support and Accountably Group, consisting of Friends of Color and allies to hold the Yearly Meeting and our clerks accountable in a loving and faithful manner. We will also assist and advise the Yearly Meeting and the three councils in getting training in inclusion and diversity. We will write queries on addressing racism and white supremacy that any and all subgroups of the YM and Monthly Meetings could and should use regularly. We will advise in the writing/editing of job descriptions and search committees for all YM employees, presiding clerks, elders and leadership in general so that addressing racism is woven into all our work and roles. We will support Friends of Color in various ways including securing funding for an annual PhYM retreat for Friends of Color. We will form (and dissolve) working groups, subgroups, sprints and collaboratives as needed/as the Spirit moves us in our work.

(We forward this to the implementation committee with the recommendation that this will be included in the next version of the handbook and that it be presented at annual sessions and be circulated broadly.)

The PYM Implementation Committee expresses its deep appreciation to the Undoing Racism Group (URG) for the crucial work it has been doing to help our Yearly Meeting live out its corporate commitment to end racism and white supremacy. We encourage URG to continue to do this work. We see change happening in PYM, as the Yearly Meeting comes more and more under the weight of this concern, we are deeply grateful for this change.

Amy Kietzman met with us at our recent meeting where we reviewed the document you shared with us titled "Proposed Structure and Leadership for the Undoing Racism Group". This was a good opportunity to ask questions and talk about the goals and processes of URG and we appreciate the Amy's presence. Our sense is that the autonomous role proposed by URG for itself in the recent proposal is not in alignment with the expectation that the work of ending racism be the work of our entire community, nor with the manner of holding authority and accountability as envisioned in the Long Range Plan approved by PYM. This creates a conflict for a group that wants to exist within the structure of the Yearly Meeting.

Recognizing the important work already being done by URG, Implementation Committee feels lead to ask the question, "Are there things URG would like to do that it feels it is now prevented from doing in its present informal relationship to the Yearly Meeting?" We see and feel the crucial work being done by URG, for instance in 2016 Annual Sessions planning, and wonder if URG would be most effective continuing its work in this way, hopefully pulling more Friends into efforts to end racism and white supremacy in the Society of Friends and beyond.

Implementation Committee is happy to remain in appreciative dialog with URG, until Implementation Committee is laid down, most likely at the upcoming Annual Sessions.

In Peace, Jonathan R. Snipes, Clerk

PYM Implementation Committee"

**2016 Report to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
from PYM Representatives to the World Plenary Meeting of the
Friends World Committee for Consultation
Pisac, Peru, January 19-27, 2016**

The World Plenary Meeting of the Friends World Committee was held in Pisac, Peru in January 2016. 380 Friends attended, representing 37 countries and 77 yearly meetings, 8 independent monthly meetings, and 2 worship groups. We were delighted that 90 of those Friends were young adults. About 1/3 of the Friends present were native Spanish speakers, or indigenous people from countries where Spanish is the official language. Friends worshiped in multiple styles, experienced deep prayer and fellowship in their small groups, heard reports on FWCC work all over the world, and had many fruitful conversations regarding the Society of Friends.

The days began at 7:15 am with early morning activities, then had periods for worship, business, consultation groups, and home groups. Each morning, worship was led by Friends from a different part of the world and different Quaker traditions. Later we each met with our regular Home Group, and with the Consultation Group we chose that reflected our current concerns. Our days ended with evening workshops, presentations and worship each night.

Based on the theme, *Living the transformation: Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Romans 8:19)*, there were four Consultation Groups. In those, Quakers from around the world shared their concerns about engaging young people and newcomers in the Religious Society of Friends; about sustaining life on Earth, environmentally, justly and peacefully; and about preparing the structures of the Friends World Committee to support this work through the 21st century.

The Sustainability Consultation produced a minute, "Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth", that was approved during the business meeting. More information on the World Plenary Meeting in Peru can be found at fwcc.world/category/plenary-2016.

There were also opportunities to experience the beauty and history of our surroundings, in the mountains of Peru during their summer rainy season. The weather was warm and mostly sunny, with just enough rain to keep things green. The altitude in Pisac, about 9,700 feet, was a challenge for many of us, but we still enjoyed the area, and many of us took advantage of chances to visit Machu Picchu and other remarkable archaeological sites in the Sacred Valley area surrounding us.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was well represented at the meeting, with four official representatives, plus several members-at-large and volunteers. In addition, PYM member Gretchen Castle is the General Secretary in the World Office of FWCC in London, and therefore was charged with overseeing the organization of the conference as a whole. Our member Vanessa Julye was the official conference photographer. Some of her photos can be viewed as a slideshow at the link shown above. Also, Melinda Wenner Bradley was an inspiring speaker at a morning plenary worship led in English by Friends from the Section of the Americas. The text

of her talk, "Seed Pods and Stories: Making a Place for Children in Living the Transformation," is available on the Section of the Americas website (with a few other things) at http://fwccamericas.org/events/recent_events.shtml.

In the Section of the Americas, the new Traveling Ministry Corps is now accepting applications from those seeking to share their ministry and from meetings who desire to host a visitor. The Representative Engagement Program Group has been extremely helpful in accompanying the Representatives to be better ambassadors for their yearly meetings. The Section of the Americas partnered with QuakerSpeak in 2015-2016 to co-produce three videos which are great resources for seekers and Friends alike. To watch them, visit quakerspeak.com/friends-world-committee-for-consultation.

Lastly, FWCC recently announced that the Section Meeting in March 2017 will be held at the Gilmary Center in Pittsburgh, PA. Friends from all over the Americas will be gathering in light of the theme *Vivir La Paz - Living Peace (John 16:33)*. All Friends, even those not formally involved with the Friends World Committee, are invited to attend the Section Meeting. For more details, visit www.fwccamericas.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Vanessa Julye
Vicki Hain Poorman
Toby Riley
Sarah Robbins

Representatives of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to the World Plenary Meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation, January 19-27, 2016, Pisac, Peru.

If you have questions about this report, please contact:

Vanessa Julye
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Amy Duckett Wagner



Amy Duckett Wagner



FWCC International Meeting: Pisac, Peru



Amy Duckett Wagner





“Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, Changing Lives: FWCC’s Global Meeting in Peru ”

Living the Transformation: Creation Waits
with Eager Longing for the Revealing of
God’s Children

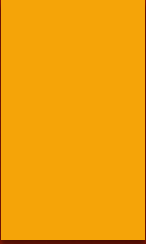
Romans 8:19



Friends World Committee for Consultation Conference

- ▶ 380 Friends
- ▶ 37 Countries
- ▶ 77 Yearly Meetings
- ▶ 90 Young Adult Friends
- ▶ 33% Native Spanish Speaking Friends



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- ▶ "The days began at 7:15 am with early morning activities then came periods for worship led by programmed and unprogrammed Friends, business, consultation groups, and our international "Home Groups." Music played a big part in the program and lifted us spiritually to new levels as Friends sang together frequently. Each day, I went to the morning worship session, met with my Home Group, and the Consultation Group 4 which focused on Growing Vital Monthly Meetings & Outreach. Our days ended with evening workshops, presentations and evening worship every night. "

"LIVING THE TRANSFORMATION"

"VIVIR LA TRANSFORMACION"



Amy Duckett Wagner

Friends World Committee for Consultation's Mission:

- ▶ Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.



Amy Dyer Wagner

¿Qué se requiere para tener
una sociedad religiosa de los
Amigos vital y creciente?

What is needed to have an
Religious Society of Friends that
is vital and growing?







Amy Duckett Wagner





Any Duck



JUNTA MENSUAL
DE LA
CIUDAD DE MEXICO
LA CASA DE LOS
AMIGOS
NACIONAL SALUDAR MUNDIAL
DE MEXICO LIVING CHRISTIAN

PSYC
PERU

Loving greetings
saludos cariñosos
salutations affectueuses
from
Rugby Local Meeting
(Britain)

Canadian Yearly Meeting
Un peuple de Dieu en un seul cœur
A small family in a vast land

Greetings
Dear Friends

GREETINGS FROM
CAMBRIDGE JESUS FINE
MEETING

GREETINGS
IRELAND Y.M.

Peru
2016
La Paz, Bolivia
Los Andes

GREETINGS FROM
MONTREAL FRIENDS MEETING
MONTREAL QUEBEC
PERU January 2016

Greetings
Peru
FRIENDS MEETING
Peru January 2016

NEW ZEALAND
Greetings
from
the
Friends
Meeting
in
the
South
Island

GREETINGS
from
the
Friends
Meeting
in
the
South
Island

Community Peace
Equality

Philadelphia
Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
2016

Greetings
from
the
Friends
Meeting
in
the
South
Island

DEAR TO CALLE DE
UNION TEXAS
GREETINGS
from
the
Friends
Meeting
in
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South
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GREETINGS
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in
the
South
Island

Albuquerque Friends Meeting
2016

Loving Greetings from
Friends in
Philadelphia Pennsylvania
World Plenary Meeting
Pisac, Peru
January 19-27, 2016

GREETINGS
from
the
Friends
Meeting
in
the
South
Island

Friends

GREETINGS
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Friends
Meeting
in
the
South
Island

from
VICTORIA
Regional Meeting
AUSTRALIA

Virginia United States

PERU





CENTRO QOSQO DE ARTE N
CUSCO PERU



Amy Duckett Wagner



Amy Duckett Wagner



FWCC International Meeting: Pisac, Peru 2016

“Even amidst the challenges of international travel, I felt peace, safety, and have never felt closer to Friends, and closer to God.”



FWCC International Meeting: Pisac, Peru 2016

Living the Transformation
Next Steps...

1. Restructuring

↳ more involved in Monthly Meetings

2. Build solidarity with local people

3. Support Quakers in politics and international work

4. Practise what we preach

5. We do only so much on our own

→ form alliances to have more impact

6. Invest ethically in regard to environmental issues

7. D



Amy Duckett Wagner

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- ▶ Source of statistics: Friends World Committee for Consultation
 - ▶ PowerPoint by Amy Duckett Wagner, Outreach Clerk, Fallsington Monthly Meeting, Fallsington, Pennsylvania. February, 2016.
 - ▶ Photo credit to Amy Duckett Wagner, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Vanessa Julye, Yani Zamora. Melanie Douty Snipes & Louise Salinas.