

Quaker Life Council  
Threshing Session  
Minutes of Concern  
**30 July 2016**

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**Present:** Tom Hoopes, Lane Taylor, Cate Bregman, Gray Goodman, Robin Harper, Hollister Knowlton, Jim Herr, Deb Wood, Viv Hawkins, Holly Olson, Rick Dow, John Hayden, Michael West. Boris Simkovich, Amy Ward Brimmer,

15 Friends gathered at the PYM summer gathering on 30 July 2016, Saturday to share insights about how to address minutes of concern, traveling minutes, and letters of introduction.

When ready, the Quaker Life Council will pass on their insights to Quarterly clerks as well as put it on the PYM website.

### **Minutes of Concern**

Regarding minutes of concern, Friends considered the following questions:

- a. What is the procedure?
- b. Who does it?
- c. What have other Yearly Meetings done?

Members offered the following insights and suggestions:

1. Quaker Life Council should be under the weight of guiding the minutes of concern to an appropriate COLLABORATIVE or SPRINT if possible.
2. If the above option is not available, QLC needs to establish an alternative procedure.
3. Minutes of concern should be clear with a specific suggested action.
4. The body presenting the minute of concern should be willing to be under the weight of the minute (taking a leading role in whatever action is requested).
5. If a Quarter is not active, is a monthly meeting allowed to present a minute of concern to QLC?
6. Have a clearinghouse so that a Friend, monthly meeting, and/or quarterly meeting can find out what other bodies are presently working on.
7. Have a directory of past minutes of concern for reference

8. Who would determine to have a called meeting if a number of similar minutes of concern rise in a variety of Quarters?
9. Quarters should all have lists of emails for representatives of the monthly/preparative meetings to quickly pass on information from QLC and larger bodies.
10. There are a variety of expectations that different Monthly Meetings place upon individuals with minutes of concern. Is this appropriate or should there be a standard procedure?

### **Traveling Minutes for Religious Service and letters of introduction**

1. What should the submitter expect for support and time it takes for a response from PYM? How to advertise the ministry?
2. If there is travel for religious service outside of Yearly meeting, a minute of travel should go first to the monthly meeting, then the Quarterly meeting and then on to where?
3. There is a Collaborative for individual calls to ministry . QLC will work with the Collaborative for clarifying a procedure.
4. There are a variety of expectations that different Monthly Meetings place upon individuals with minutes for religious service
5. make sure the practices and procedures of QLC follow F and p

**The following lines are from the 15 July 2016 edition of PYM Faith and Practice p51 :**

Minutes of Travel for Religious Service As in the past, Friends today can find themselves under a sense of divine leading to travel in support of an important public witness or to nurture the religious life of Friends families and meetings. In carrying out such leadings, they find it useful to take with them a formal minute for religious service from their meeting.

A meeting should issue such a minute only after the concern has been laid before its committee on worship and ministry, a clearness committee, or such other group as the meeting may suggest and has been favorably recommended to the monthly meeting for approval. A minute for religious service, signed by the clerk, states clearly the nature, scope and duration of the proposed service and affirms the meeting's support of the Friend(s) concerned. The meeting issuing such a minute should consider whether it is under an obligation to ensure, insofar as possible, that the proposed service is not hampered by a lack of funds or other support.

A Friend who proposes to travel under religious concern may find, as have Friends in the past, that it is a source of strength and comfort to be joined by another Friend sympathetic to the concern and able to share counsel and encouragement.

A minute of travel for religious service, after being adopted by a monthly meeting, is usually

submitted for endorsement by the quarterly and yearly meetings, especially if the Friend expects to travel beyond the bounds of the yearly meeting.

Friends traveling with such minutes are customarily welcomed by those among whom they visit and invited to share their concerns with appropriate gatherings. It is also customary for minutes of travel for religious service to be signed at the conclusion of the gatherings by the person(s) presiding.

Upon the completion of the service proposed, a minute for religious service should be returned promptly with a verbal or written report to the meetings that had earlier reviewed the concern and minuted their support.

## **Letter of Introduction**

1. Presently, introduces the person by the clerk of the Monthly Meeting going to a particular meeting.

### **Faith and Practice p.51:**

Friends intending to travel benefit from obtaining a letter of introduction from their home meetings. Such letters usually state the fact of membership, give some account of the individual's participation and witness in the affairs of our religious society, and express such greetings as are deemed appropriate. Letters are signed by the clerk and duly noted in the minutes of the monthly, quarterly or yearly meeting. Since Friends travel for a wide variety of purposes, letters of introduction do not suggest specific obligations either on the visitor or on those visited and may be issued by the clerk without formal consideration by the meeting. Such letters are often endorsed by those visited and used to send greetings back to the visitor's home meeting.