



340th Annual Sessions

Held by Zoom video conference

Opening Program, Wednesday, July 29, 2020

Jonathan Rhoads, Alternate Clerk, serving as Presiding Clerk

Worship Acting clerk Jonathan Rhoads introduced himself and we settled into worship. Boone acknowledged that the land on which we are meeting is recognized as the homeland of the Leni Lenape people.

Introductions: When worship ended, Olivia Brangan had us create a word cloud with our locations and explained all the tech matters. Clerk asked clerks group, elders, pastoral care team members, visitors and first-time attenders to introduce themselves. He then called on Melissa Rycroft, clerk of Nominating Council.

Epistle Committee: Melissa presented the following names to make up this year's epistle committee: Anthony Stover, Germantown Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Quarter; Yelena Forrester, Chester Monthly Meeting, Chester Quarter; and Joan Broadfield, Chester Monthly Meeting, Chester Quarter. We were in unity with this list.

Minutes to this point were accepted in unity.

Clerk introduced our speaker for this evening, Marcelle Martin.

Jim Herr, Recording Clerk



340th Annual Sessions

Held by Zoom video conference

Business Meeting, Saturday, August 1, 2020

Jonathan Rhoads, Alternate Clerk, serving as Presiding Clerk

Introductions: Clerk asked clerks group, elders, pastoral care team members, visitors and first-time attenders to introduce themselves. Visitors included Bobby Trice from FCNL, BYM; and Tom Roberts, Western YM. Christie Duncan Tessmer clarified the procedures for Zoom. We settled into worship for a few minutes. Jonatan then called on Andrew Anderson, treasurer.

Budget: Andrew Anderson told us that he and Linell McCurry, associate secretary for business and finances, did extra work this year—including a Zoom plenary session to allow people to ask questions, and an article they wrote to put everything into perspective.

He started with a slide presentation, to give us an overview. This included a subtle request for contributions. Andrew then read some of the article “PYM’s Budget: Planning Our Work & Working our Plan” that appeared in the Summer issue of *PYM News Flash*. He told us that, with a great deal of work, PYM has joined Friends Fiduciary Corporation in creation of a 1-million-dollar Investment Reinvestment Fund. Linell told us that we received a PPP loan from the government, which was spent as anticipated—8 weeks of payroll. The major piece of our income comes from support from Meetings (covenant) which is projected to reduce by 1% in 2021. Christie explained to us that every 3 years there is a review of staff salaries to make sure everything is fair and equitable, which happened last year. The Admin Council did benchmarks this year for the senior level employees. The pension plan is 96% funded and, because of positive moves in the stock market, we received a break on assessment. And a healthy cushion was added to the budget for health care costs.

A Friend asked about the benchmarking for salaries. Linell explained that there is an outside agency to provide information and comparisons with other non-profit organizations in Philadelphia with similar sized budgets. In response to a question about equity screens in our process for benchmarking wages, Christie responded that currently equity is assessed in the review of the pattern of changes that are required only. She shared with Friends that a next step of the ongoing work on the staff handbook that can be addressed and stated that she welcomed input, resources and tools. Christie announced that Oskar Castro will join our organization as Director of Human Resources and Inclusion in September.

Jonathan explained that in this video conference format, we need to look primarily for objections as we seek approval. He asked us to electronically raise our hands and found approval for the budget.

Nominating Council: Melissa Rycroft expressed appreciation for the flexibility to make it possible to meet electronically. She then showed us a list of members of the Council and thanked them all for their hard work this year.

Melissa then turned it over to Elizabeth Bayardi, recording clerk of the Council, to present the proposed individuals for presiding clerk, which she explained is now presumed to be a job that takes 12 hours per month. There is now a two-year term for presiding clerk and rising clerk. Nominees Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch and Frank Barch are nominated to serve as co-clerks in the single position of clerk. Meeting approved.

Elizabeth then told us Melissa Rycroft is nominated to be rising clerk, and explained that she has done a wonderful job as clerk of Nominating Council. Meeting approved this nomination.

Melissa then gave us Andrew Anderson as nominee for treasurer, which was approved. The recording clerks, Jim Herr and Kri Burkander were nominated and approved as recording clerks for two more years. James Waddington was nominated and approved as clerk of Administrative Council for a 3-year term. Anthony Stover was nominated to move from acting clerk of Quaker Life Council to formal clerk with a term through 2023. This nomination was approved.

Melissa then gave us groups of nominees from the attached list. Five names were given for Administrative Council, and were approved. Three people were nominated and approved for Quaker Life Council. Five people were approved for service as elders. Melissa then gave us lists of people nominated to serve PYM as representatives to outside organizations including FGC, FWCC, and FCNL. These were approved. She then gave us a list of affiliated organizations with PYM members on their boards and we accepted the list.

Melissa went through a list of releases: Chris Lucca, presiding clerk; Jonathan Rhoads, alternate clerk; Terri Whiteford, clerk of administrative council; Amy Taylor Brooks, clerk of Quaker Life Council; Melissa Rycroft, clerk of nominating council. She also read to us the list of people who have fulfilled their last terms and are, therefore, released. Melissa said it is particularly difficult to release all these people, and we accepted the list.

A Friend expressed great appreciation for the strength and gifts of the people brought forward by Nominating Council this year.

Admin Council: Terri Whiteford started off by expressing great appreciation for Melissa Rycroft in her role as clerk of Nominating Council. The vast majority of members of Nominating Council are appointed by the Quarters, but Administrative Council is responsible to bring at-large members. Today, Terri said they bring forth Suzanne Day to serve a term as one of the at-large seats. This was approved.

Terri then read the attached minute from the clerks group of great appreciation for the work of the staff to make this meeting so successful.

These minutes were read, corrected, and approved.

Jim Herr, Recording Clerk



340th Annual Sessions

Held by Zoom video conference

Business Meeting, Sunday, August 2, 2020

Jonathan Rhoads, Alternate Clerk, serving as Presiding Clerk

Jonathan Rhoads, presiding clerk, introduced elders, members of the pastoral care team and the clerks group, and welcomed visitors and first-time attenders with us this morning.

Christie Duncan-Tessmer, serving as General Secretary, reviewed the functions of our technology.

Yelena Forrester, Chester Meeting, read the epistle. A few comments were made to improve the clarity of the epistle, and with those edits incorporated, the revised epistle was approved.

Catherine Campbell shared a powerful epistle from the Young Adult Friends community, which reminded us of the importance of bringing our grief and anger into prayer.

Melinda Wenner Bradley introduced the youth programs staff and acknowledged their work this week. Crystal Hershey shared the epistle from the Children's Program, which welcomed children from three other yearly meetings as well as some younger Friends. Emerson Simmons and William Bradley shared the epistle from the Middle School Friends, which recounted their activities from this week and asked for adult support for youth activism regarding racism and immigration justice. Emaline Brangan shared the Young Friends epistle, which reminded us that Quakers have a complicated history with racism, and that white Quakers continue to benefit from white supremacy. The Young Friends also encouraged us to vote.

We received these epistles with gratitude. These minutes were approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kri Burkander, Recording Clerk



Plenary Session on Climate Change

Saturday, July 11, 2020 (Held by Zoom video conference)

Jonathan Rhoads, alternate clerk, serving as clerk

Worship: Acting clerk Jonathan Rhoads introduced himself and allowed elders and members of Pastoral Care Group to introduce themselves. We settled into worship.

Minutes Received: We were instructed in the possibility of a Yearly Meeting-wide witness, for which we may be preparing. A minute from the Eco-Justice Collaborative and a summary minute from the Clerks Group were read and received for consideration.



Minutes from PYM's recording clerk Kri Burkander – Saturday July 19

69 Friends gathered via Zoom this afternoon to discuss issues of membership, belonging, and commitment in our community. We expressed our appreciation for the Friends who gathered for a Threshing Session on Membership held on January 26, 2020 at Haddonfield Friends Meeting and received the report from that Gathering.

Quaker Life Council

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019-2020

This past year has been a challenging one for this council, with changes in clerkship, membership, and modes of communications. We serve as the stewards of yearly meeting activities, nurturing new initiatives and long-standing concerns, supporting corporate work in peace and justice, and lifting up individual monthly meetings as needed. Specifically, we help coordinate the work of the nine collaboratives that have arisen in recent years, including:

Abolition of Nuclear Arms,	Friends World Committee on Consultation,
Anti-Racism,	Legislative Policy (working closely with FCNL),
Eco-Justice,	Middle East, and
First Contact Reconciliation,	Spiritual Formation.

One big issue this year was the concept of a truth and reconciliation process (especially for Friends of Color experiencing trauma within the yearly meeting). It was laid before us a year ago at the 2019 Annual Sessions. We seasoned it over several months with the Quaker Life Council Ministry & Care Committee and the Clerks Group¹ to find that the need has been pre-empted by the higher priorities for self and community education as well as creative conflict resolution. Yet, the concept is a serious one and needs to be initiated when the time is right.

We were blessed to hear staff reports from our Youth Religious Life, Care & Aging, Community Engagement, Events and Resources, and Young Adult Engagement Coordinators.² Our staff are carrying out a feast of activity, creativity, and good work! We also reviewed the business meeting guidelines developed by our Young Friends (high school age) and helped coordinate the threshing session on membership held at Haddonfield Friends Meeting in January. The report on this threshing session is included as a separate advance document for the 2020 Annual Sessions.

We considered and endorsed several important minutes of concern from various quarterly meetings, including Caln Quarterly Meeting and Harrisburg Friends Meeting's minutes on immigration, and Bucks and Concord Quarterly Meetings' on gun control. These minutes are included in Appendix A of this report.

¹ The Clerks Group is made up of the clerks of the three councils (Nominating, Quaker Life and Administrative), the Treasurer, the General Secretary, and the Presiding Clerk.

² Melinda Wenner Bradley, George Schaefer, Olivia Brangan, T.J. Jourian, and Meg Rose, respectively: contact information is available at pym.org/contacts.

We applauded the good work of our new Ministry & Care Committee as it condensed more than 50 State of the Meeting reports from monthly and quarterly meetings into one summary document for the entire yearly meeting. The report on the state of our yearly meeting from our Ministry & Care Committee is attached to this report in Appendix B.

We were able to make a significant financial contribution from our Strategic Project Reserve Fund to the Ujima Friends Peace Center to support their community outreach and education programs. We also endorsed the Poor Peoples Campaign on behalf of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Updates on the Ujima Friends Peace Center and the endorsement of the Poor People's Campaign are attached to this report in Appendix C and D, respectively.

Administratively, we created a liaison with the Granting Committee, activated the Ministry & Care Committee, got clarity on our stewardship of funds, clarified the roles and functions of our Program Committee, and added new members to several committees that lie under our care.

This work would not be possible without the devotion and care of PYM staff, especially Zachary Dutton, Associate Secretary for Program and Religious Life, and his various colleagues. We are deeply grateful for their faithful work through thick and thin.

As with many councils and committees, we cherish the time we have together to share our stories and fellowship as well as carry out Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's business. And we have learned to adjust from face-to-face meetings to Zoom-based meetings and conversations because of this year's Covid-19 pandemic. The current movement towards deeper racial justice affects us all and tests many of our current practices, assumptions, and attitudes.

Our major challenges continue to be communications (how come more people don't know what we are doing – and why don't we hear from them?), capacity (we need more members representing more local meetings), clarity of governance (who's on first?), and lack of time (too many topics get tabled for future meetings). We look forward soon to spending time on a self-evaluation process to determine if we are carrying out our mission as well as we should be on your behalf.

Find in Appendices E to H reports from our Program Committee, Youth Programs Advisory Committee, Sessions Coordinating Committee, and the Friends Counseling Service.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Stover, Clerk
Kate Bregman
Julia Carrigan
Margaret Dawson
Sue Dietz
Melanie Douty-Snipes

Steve Elkinton
Bryn Hammarstrom
Ayesha Imani
Susan Kight
Cathleen Marion
George Rubin

Appendix A – Minutes on Immigration and Gun Control

Caln Quarterly Meeting Minute of Concern on Immigration

All non-indigenous Americans in this country are either immigrants, descendants of immigrants, or descendants of those forcibly brought to this country. As did many of our ancestors, today's immigrants and refugees are fleeing persecution, extreme poverty, and/or violence in their home countries. As Friends, we believe in the equality, dignity, and worth of every person regardless of place of birth, religion, race, gender, sexual identity, or socio-economic status. We oppose discrimination in all forms and recognize a collective responsibility to support refugees and immigrants who relocate in our community. We call for an end to border militarization and for local, state, and national governments to develop humane immigration policies which respect the rights of dignity of all people. Using this minute, we request all meetings and individuals to contact legislators or pursue other actions that will address this issue and address the many root causes of people seeking refuge. We also request people to actively cooperate with existing groups already involved with immigration issues, and to carefully consider their own inner biases.

Haddonfield Minute of Concern on Immigration

Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting joins with people of good will everywhere in affirming the way of love. We denounce the normalization of hate and violence in society and within ourselves. We commit to working with others to build trust and understanding in our wider community.

Bucks Quarterly Meeting Minute of Concern on Gun Control

Bucks Quarterly Meeting supports a Friends-led national protest against the private sale and possession of assault-style rifles and large-capacity gun magazines in the United States. This is rightly ordered and in alignment with our peace testimony, or opposition to physical violence, and with our support of efforts to reduce and eliminate armaments and militarism in our society. The protest should take place in our nation's capital at the earliest possible date that a well-organized one can be launched.

Friends of the Quarter also asked that the Quarter communicate its approval of this minute to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and that the Quarter request that Yearly Meeting assume responsibility for coordinating efforts with the appropriate local, national, and international organizations to achieve the Friends-led national protest proposed by Bucks Quarter in its minute.

Concord Quarterly Meeting Minute of Concern on Gun Control

Friends approved uniting around supporting the spirit of the Bucks Quarter Minute, but also asked for more concrete actions and/or a planning group to be formed to consider many potential actions, and to consider state-level actions in addition to national action. The Quarter recommends that PYM take up further discernment on this concern at either the March Continuing Sessions or another appropriate time as soon as can be organized.

Concord Quarter Friends also approved the following minute as a follow up:

Friends approved having an ad-hoc committee formed to represent the Quarter's minute at PYM's Continuing sessions in March.

In summary, Concord Quarter recommends that this issue be added to the agenda for the Continuing Sessions in March at which we will have an ad hoc committee available to answer any questions which may arise from our recommendation. While we do not specifically oppose a march on our nation's capital, we believe that other actions may be more effective in addressing the gun problem in this country.

Appendix B – Ministry & Care Committee Spiritual State of the Yearly Meeting Report 6th Month 2020

In this time of pandemic and strife in our nation, we will come together as members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends to do business, share fellowship and continue to seek how to walk in the world as people of faith. We are a varied fellowship made up of larger, vibrant meetings with engaged Friends and responsive active committees; smaller, active and strong meetings where members and attenders work together as a committee of the whole; and meetings both larger and smaller which strive to bring together the spiritual and material resources to respond to the call of these times. Some meetings appreciate an abundance of physical, spiritual and financial resources while others are concerned that they lack what they need to accomplish what they see as important. Some meetings are able to enjoy the benefits of paid staff to help carry administrative tasks, teach first day school or support programming for adults. In some of the smallest meetings, these tasks are accomplished by a few Friends and sometimes by the committee of the whole.

Although there are many differences in size, location, resources and needs, here are some common threads which unite us as Friends.

We engage the time, talent and treasure of the meeting to steward the schools and properties under our care and the spiritual lives of members, attenders and children:

Perhaps the most often recounted concern expressed by PYM meetings regarded the care of property. One meeting wondered if our need to focus on building, property and finances overwhelms our openness to our leadings as a faith community.

The many schools within our region are lovingly cared for (physically, financially and spiritually) by meeting members.

Adult First Day School takes a variety of different forms: discussing films and videos, reading together, having silent retreat time, speakers, spending time focusing on a query. The thread running through all these activities is the desire to know one another more deeply in that which is eternal and embrace our faith journey more fully.

Children's involvement in meeting for worship and provision for their spiritual development is considered a fundamental meeting function by many. Friends appreciate the presence of youth during a portion of Meeting for Worship, and several meetings regret not having adequate resources for vital, vibrant First Day School programming.

We absorb the impact of events in the wider community including especially the pandemic and the growing recognition of systemic racism and its multi-faceted impact on society:

Some meetings are fluent in technology; for some, it will always be a second language; and for still others, a language yet to be learned. Some meetings have an established foundation of electronic connection and have adapted to Zoom Meetings for Worship with relative ease. For other meetings, connection is associated with proximity, and the electronic communication required by the pandemic has been unsatisfactory. For still others, there is discomfort with, or lack of access to the necessary electronic resources to make this method of connection possible; in spite of pastoral care efforts, physical distancing has made the sense of community tenuous and hard to maintain in these times.

There are meetings in our fellowship for which the current imperative to social action has drawn from a deep well of study over the past several years; in these meetings, exploration of white supremacy, internalized racism and the need to move to anti-racist behavior has been ongoing. For other meetings, these topics are distant from their most pressing concerns. For still other meetings, there is a newly developing awareness of these issues and a desire to learn and understand more.

We struggle with conflict and its resolution in our communities:

Some meetings report loss of members because of difficulty handling conflict. Others wonder why we allow conflict to fester under the surface and pretend it is not there. Perhaps we are unwilling to address conflict because we lack the tools to do so effectively. We need to learn, understand and use our Quaker processes for effective conflict resolution.

We strive to support and enhance community, increase inclusion and improve communication.

Ironically the pandemic has provided both imperative and opportunity to gather differently. For some meetings this has resulted in greater inclusion, allowing members at a distance to be part of the worship. Meetings express concern about web presence as well as about social media and its impact on meeting members, although Friends see web presence to be helpful both as a tool of communication among those already part of the meeting community and also as an outreach tool. Once the social distancing has been relaxed and we are able to go back to meeting in physical proximity, several meetings recognize that they may profit from maintaining some electronic communication, given the geographic dispersal of meeting members.

Food and fellowship are part of the essential glue holding our communities together. Themed Potlucks, Spiritual Friendship circles, friendly 8s, snacks after meeting, special meals and celebrations all serve to bring us together in community.

We embody our faith in our meetings and in the world:

Meetings claiming involvement with the yearly meeting are few. We often see the Monthly Meeting as an entity unto itself. Several Quarters, however, are active and provide a broader community for meeting members to engage. Several meetings have members who are committed in engagement

across the Quaker Alphabet and who share their experiences with the meeting. Many meetings are active in the wider community, both secular and inter-faith. Attention to the many schools under our care, providing space for community service organizations and donations of time, talent and financial resources are valued activities.

Concerns are broad in scope. Many meeting members are deeply engaged in bringing their faith into action with involvement in social justice activities at the local, national and international level. Some Friends wonder if this translates into meeting activism. They ask how we assess our community involvement and whether the work must be undertaken by the meeting as a whole or if the meeting's support for the work of individuals counts.

We yearn

- to enrich the spiritual health of our current and potential members and attenders and find ways for growth without proselytizing
- to better understand how to combat racism.
- to know and respect Quaker process and practice.
- to understand how best to prepare for worship
- to know how to balance the needs and desires of the individual with the needs and desires of the many.
- to create reliably deep worship in which all can participate and by which all can be nourished.
- to remain flexible to new input and maintain the centrality of silence
- to satisfy the desire for deeper connection, both spiritually and emotionally and deepen fellowship
- to express mutual respect for each other and for our decision-making process.

Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch, Clerk, on behalf of Ministry & Care of QLC

Appendix C – Update on the Ujima Friends Peace Center

Ujima Friends Peace Center is a Quaker worship community consisting primarily of Friends of African descent. Last year, our Quaker Life Council granted Ujima Friends fifteen thousand dollars to help with their rent and repeated the grant this year. It is the least that could be done to embody the truth that Ujima Friends Peace Center is part of our wider yearly meeting community. A story about Ujima Friends was published on the PYM website.

Members of the Ujima Friends Peace Center are happy to come out and share its "good news" to Friends throughout the PYM area. To arrange for someone to speak to your meeting, please contact Ujima Friends at admin@ujimafriends.org. Ujima is excited about how it is growing in terms of attenders applying for membership who have not been a part of the Quaker tradition. What is most exciting is how intergenerational Ujima has become with the growth of young members wanting to be a part of our community.

The Ujima grocery share continues to serve on average 100 families in the North Philadelphia community each month. We now have added a clothing share as well. What has been especially gratifying is the number of volunteers we have each month, which exposes even more folks to our faith. On average we have 15 to 20 volunteers each month. Most exciting, Ujima has partnered with the Sankofa Artisans Circle in a project that includes about 20 women from the wider black community. We are making reusable menstrual pads to fight period poverty. These reusable pads are environmentally friendly and culturally synchronistic. This effort comes out of our commitment to fight "period" poverty and the violence faced by African girls who are being denied educational opportunities on a monthly basis because of their menstrual periods. Women meet at the Ujima Center on Tuesday, 10:00. Sewing machines for this project were purchased with a grant from Friends Foundation on Aging for another Ujima project.

Throughout the year, Ujima has been the site of community meetings including being the site for a family mediation, a gathering for Black Quakers across PYM, and several community meetings in partnership with various community organizations.

This year's summer Freedom School served 40 young people including children from 5-12, high school students, and college interns. The social action focus this year was raising awareness around lead-based paint and its impact on black and brown children in our city.

We continue to hold our tenant rights classes each week as we help to fight the violence of homelessness and evictions.

The Spirit continues to move among Ujima Friends. We are continuing to enjoy Her presence and are just trying to remain faithful.

Appendix D – Endorsements of the poor People’s Campaign

In 1968, the Poor People's Campaign (PPC) was first named as a key concern of Friends in America. American Friends Service Committee's (AFSC) Associate Executive Secretary, Stephen Cary, remarked that the PPC “...has made poverty in America visible, and never again will it be possible to pretend that it is not real.”

52 years later, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) recognizes that we need to work together as a community to continue to make poverty and all the injustices that contribute to it more visible. As part of that process, PYM's Quaker Life Council recently minuted an endorsement of the PPC, as has PYM's Young Adult Friends community, Trenton Meeting of Friends and Haddonfield Quarter. PYM has also offered youth programming (described later in this story) around this initiative and will continue to support the community's energy on addressing the causes and consequences of poverty in America today.

Quaker Life Council (QLC) Minute

Given the historical connection that Quakers have had to the Poor People’s Campaign and the continued need for a moral call toward economic, racial and environmental justice in the United States, Quaker Life Council endorses the 2020 Poor People’s Campaign on behalf of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. It encourages PYM monthly meetings to do the same. Find out more about the [2020 Poor People’s Campaign](#).

Young Adult Friends (YAF) Minute

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Young Adult Friends support the 2020 Poor People’s Campaign: a National Call for Moral Revival (PPC). There are several principles of the campaign that speak to us. We realize that there is a right way and a wrong way to lead in religious communities, we know what side we’re on and we are excited to shift the moral narrative promoted by the religious right. We agree and recognize that everyone has the right to live a life, not in economic and environmental turmoil, but equitable communities. We are in the spirit of realizing the Peaceable Kingdom is here on Earth, and by supporting the PPC, we keep the choice to stand in solidarity with communities and to keep our morals.

Both the QLC and the YAF community have been inviting monthly meetings to endorse the campaign. Trenton Meeting of Friends has posted an endorsement on its website, and the Long Range Vision Committee of Haddonfield Quarter passed a minute in support of the Poor People’s Campaign this June.

Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting Endorsement

On May 26, 2020, the Long Range Vision Committee of Haddonfield Quarter (NJ) minuted its support for the Poor People's Campaign, noting the campaign's efforts to address systemic racism, poverty and inequality, ecological devastation, and the war economy and militarism. The Campaign also challenges the use of moral justifications in support of anti-poor policies, calling for five principles embedded in the US Constitution including Establishing Justice, Ensuring Domestic Tranquility, Providing for the Common Defense, Promoting the General Welfare and Securing the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.

The Long Range Vision Committee also encourages monthly meetings within the Quarter to adopt their own minutes of support for the Campaign.

Trenton Friends Meeting Endorsement

Trenton MM has enthusiastically approved a Minute in support of the 2020 Poor People's Campaign, echoing the leadership of the Quaker Life Council and in response to your recent email.

"Given the historic connection that Quakers have had to the Poor People's Campaign and the continued need for a moral call toward economic, racial and environmental justice in the United States, Trenton Meeting of Friends in Trenton, New Jersey endorses the 2020 Poor People's Campaign and encourages other Monthly Meetings in our Quarter and beyond to do the same."

PYM Youth Programs' work with Sophia Burns on the PPC

As part of its partnership with AFSC on this issue, our Middle School Friends and Young Friends recently hosted Sophia Burns, a fellow at American Friends Service Committee working on the PA Poor People's Campaign. Sophia led workshops on how the PPC struggle relates to youth, their lives, and their home communities. As part of the programs, PYM youth were invited to organize their own friends and families to attend a virtual June 20th Moral March on Washington.

The PYM community has embraced this work with a sense of spiritual commitment to the well-being of all people. We'll be bringing representation to actions occurring in Philadelphia and will work with American Friends Service Committee staff to support local community organizing efforts around the Poor People's Campaign (PPC) as opportunities arise.

Appendix E – Program Committee Report

The Program Committee (Pro Comm) serves the Quaker Life Council (QLC) to steward the QLC finances, discern and support collaboratives, sprints, and other QLC programs not yet specifically assigned. Pro Comm may also engage in other work and witness organizations within or in close association with PYM.

On behalf of QLC, Pro Comm has respectfully granted all funding requests submitted from the Collaboratives. We are grateful for their pivotal work and for the dutiful interceding of the Community Engagement Coordinator Olivia Brangan for giving continuous clarity and support. A joyous moment this year was gifting the Ujima Peace Center \$15,000 towards its community ministry.

Currently we have nine collaboratives: First Contact Reconciliation, Middle East, Spiritual Formation, FWCC (Friends World Committee for Consultation), Nuclear Disarmament, FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation), Eco-Justice, India Friends, and our newly formed Anti-Racism Collaborative (ARC). They are vehicles moving within the PYM geography sharing a focused concern. They inform and act in a variety of ways that echo the strategic directions of PYM whilst connecting Friends into deeper relationships. The annual reports of the collaboratives are under separate cover for review. They convey enjoyment in their formation and a spiritual grounding in their work commitment.

The clarion statement “we are all perfect but we could use some improvement” was mentioned in a recent PYM zoom workshop. It reminded me of a car that needs maintenance to keep it functioning at its best. Prior to the life altering COVID-19 pandemic we had been in the mindset of maintenance inspection – wanting to discern what wasn't favorable and what was. Our intention will continue to clarify some essential practices and definitions that will refresh the work and will be in timely coordination with the new incoming clerk.

One change soon to be implemented is the member composition – having 6 to 10 people including up to 4 non-QLC members serving. This will fuel the Program Committee with a greater offering of experience. Our membership will then be analogous to the arrangement evident in the Sessions Coordinating and the Ministry and Care Committees of QLC.

With Divine assistance the Program Committee of the Quaker Life Council will continue to evolve and engage, to be a part of the spark that ignites creative ministry within the PYM community.

Sincerely,
Cathleen Marion
Program Committee Clerk

Appendix F – Youth Programs Advisory Committee Report

Report of the Co-Clerks to the Quaker Life Council

June 28, 2020

The Youth Programs Advisory Committee (YPAC) is a new committee of the Quaker Life Council, having had its first meeting, via Zoom, in September 2019. YPAC's membership draws from youth, including both Young Friends and Middle School Friends, as well as adult Friends who carry a concern for youth. The PYM Youth Religious Life Coordinator serves ex officio on the committee and provides support and liaison to youth programs staff.

YPAC had two Zoom meetings in the Fall of 2019, in September and November. At the committee's initial meeting, Friends took time to get to know one another, to share the experiences in youth programs that had been the most meaningful to them, and to review YPAC's vision and mission. At the second meeting, Friends received reports from Youth Programs staff on recent and upcoming programs, as well as ongoing transitions in staffing of the Youth Programs. Friends had rich discussion of aspects of youth programming, including balancing worship sharing, workshops and unstructured time, and perceptions of distance to programming. Upcoming events and projects, including the Religious Education and Youth Work Thread Gathering (December 7, 2019), and ways in which committee members could help to publicize youth programming opportunities, were discussed. A decision as to naming of clerk(s) was deferred until the planned in-person meeting at Spring Continuing Sessions.

YPAC's March 2020 meeting at Spring Continuing Sessions was, of course, not in person. The pandemic has shifted programs across all three youth communities into online spaces. Some Friends on the committee participated that day in the online Young Friends and Middle School programming organized for Spring Continuing Sessions by our dedicated, creative and resourceful staff. Friends were pleased to hear reports of staff-organized ongoing and planned online events to maintain youth programming content and connection, as well as reports of Young Friends-initiated online gatherings. The committee nominated Rae Dole, who is currently active in the Young Friends community, and Robert Rosenthal, as co-clerks, and Teal Rickerman as recording clerk. The committee noted for future meetings requests from staff for further discernment, including a question as to stipends for volunteers at youth events.

The committee has an opening for an at-large member and one or two additional Middle School Friends representatives and invites Friends and attenders to consider joining. We note that YPAC is falling short in terms of diversity, as there are at present no persons of color on the committee, and thus we particularly ask persons of color with experience or interest in youthwork in our community to consider joining, as we actively seek to include all voices.

Rae Dole

Robert Rosenthal

Co-Clerks, Youth Programs Advisory Committee

Appendix G – Sessions Coordinating Committee Report

Sessions Coordinating Committee has had a transformative and stabilizing year. The group grew significantly drawing in ten more members. In Fall 2019, we hosted the Fall Continuing Sessions at Arch Street Meetinghouse. The COVID pandemic forced Spring Sessions to be adapted. Under the difficult circumstances, we decided to focus Spring Sessions on PYM-wide worship.

Over the last five years, we had finally developed a rhythm to planning and executing our Sessions to help our community, connect, explore, and contest. This stabilization was enormously important because the pandemic this spring forced us into a radical rethinking about what is essential and possible for us to gather and work together without physically gathering, especially for Annual Sessions. We have maintained our relationship with TCNJ even though we are not meeting there this year.

We do feel loss. The hugs, lunchtime conversations, and being in one room, gathering in silence and sharing our voices, must all be done differently now. The committee and the staff valiantly shifted course, learned by collaboration across the Quaker world, and built a new format for our Annual Sessions in a matter of weeks. The committee is also transitioning to new leadership. At the conclusion of Annual Sessions, Carter Nash and Cathleen Marion have risen up to take on being co-clerks of this committee. Both bring a deep love and understanding of our community and will nurture our spirits into the next era. With this intention in mind, we have decided on a theme for next years' sessions... "Uprooting Injustice/Rooting Justice".

Appendix H – Friends Counseling Service Report

Friends Counseling Service offers therapeutic counseling services to individuals, couples and families in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting which are affordable and grounded in the Quaker spirit. Services also include consultation to Friends and meetings regarding substance use and abuse, addictions treatment and other behavioral challenges. FCS providers are qualified mental health professionals and active Friends.

- Services are provided by licensed counselors, members of the yearly meeting, for a fee of \$95 a session;
- Counselors are paid \$70 for each session;
- Counselor reimbursement rate is 40% below the customary fee;
- Friends who are unable to pay this fee are provided a financial subsidy by FCS;
- Subsidy is based on a sliding scale of household income;
- The minimum fee asked of those receiving subsidy is \$20; those Friends who can afford the usual and customary fee (\$125) help to defray the cost of the subsidy provided to those that cannot.

FSC Subsidy is also provided through an endowment and contributions:

- The Arlene Kelly Fund valued at approximately \$43,500 and managed by Friends Fiduciary Corporation;
- The John Martin Trust Fund contributes \$15,000 annually to the FCS; monthly meetings are asked to contribute funds to offset subsidy received by their meeting members.

Currently, there are nine FCS psychotherapists serving Friends in the yearly meeting. Several of these clinicians are planning to retire in the next few years, so we are actively seeking new clinicians. This spring, Kenneth Brick, LCSW stepped down as the Friends Counseling Service Coordinator after five years of service. Janaki Spickard Keeler, LCSW has taken the position. Jess Purvis continues in their position providing administrative support.

Due to COVID-19, the FCS counselors have moved almost entirely online, with one counselor seeing some clients outside and socially distanced. The shift to online services opens up services to individuals and families who live far from the current clinicians, and we are excited to be able to reach areas of the yearly meeting that had previously not been able to access counseling services.

Friends Counseling Service provides workshops as part of the Ministry and Care Thread Gatherings. In March, we held a Thread Gathering on Trauma and Healing, on how meetings can support the Quaker tradition of eldership as it relates to the mental health, conflict in meeting, and the wellness of individuals and community. Workshops included Understanding Trauma: A Friend's Perspective, Healing from Racial Trauma, and Friends and Conflict.

This summer, we sponsored a 5-week free online series on mindfulness meditation, led by FCS counselor Deborah Cooper.



Plenary Session on Addressing Racism, July 25, 2020

Minutes Taken by Kri Burkander

133 Friends gathered via Zoom, and we opened with worship. Zachary Dutton then introduced us to the features of our technology and the support available to Friends.

Jonathan Rhoads, Germantown Meeting, serving as presiding Clerk, invited other Clerks to introduce themselves. The Elders and Pastoral Care group also introduced themselves, as well as first time attenders and visitors from other monthly meetings.

Friend Jonathan read an excerpt from the Peace Pilgrim's writing, and then invited Terri Whiteford, clerk of Administrative Council to introduce the strategic direction on corporate ministry and explain the idea of a yearly-meeting-wide witness. She reminded us that in 2015 we committed to a yearly-meeting-wide witness on addressing racism in our community and the wider world.

Anthony Stover, clerk of Quaker Life Council, introduced the Poor People's Campaign and the Quaker Life Council minute endorsing the 2020 PPC on behalf of the Yearly Meeting.

Friend Anthony introduced Sophia Burns, the Robert Andrew Stuart Fellow at American Friends Service Committee. She introduced the Poor People's Jubilee Platform, which is organized into five sections: Establish Justice and End Systemic Racism; Promote the General Welfare; Ensure Domestic Tranquility; Secure the Blessings of Liberty; and Provide for the Common Defense. Sophia has been working with the PA and NJ PPC movements and is currently under the weight of a concern to help Quakers engage with the work of the Poor People's Campaign in their local meetings and communities.

Terri Whiteford, clerk of Administrative Council, read the minute from the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent regarding state sanctioned violence, originally drafted in 2016. We noted that much more remains still to be done, and we pray that we will not have to revisit this minute in another four years.

We received the minutes from the Quaker Life Council and the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent. These minutes were approved.

Administrative Council Report to PYM July 2020 Annual Sessions

Query: How is Spirit leading us to be faithful servant leaders for our community?

By faithfully meeting regularly as a community of servants with deep love and respect for all in our midst and by working to secure a strong financial future for PYM's work going forward. (Strategic Priority 2 - Simplify and focus our governance and administration.)

The Administrative Council continues to meet with Quaker Life and Nominating Council, now virtually by Zoom rather than at the Arch Street Meeting House, on the third Saturday of almost every month. During this time, we worship together and receive and engage together around the General Secretary's report and other matters of joint interest, before breaking into our separate sessions to continue our work. This shared time is useful for the connection, grounding, and vitality of each council.

Members and Mission

A list of our members can be found on the [Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Website](#). We are a diverse group with broad geographic representation. Our individual and collective ministry when we gather is to faithfully serve the Yearly Meeting, guided by Spirit. In particular, we are called to work in alignment with the [seven strategic priorities of the Yearly Meeting](#), paying particular attention to fiduciary responsibilities assigned to the council as outlined in the PYM Governance Handbook.

New Members

The Governance Handbook provides that Admin Council will consist of up to 15 members serving not more than two terms of three years each. With some excellent recent additions, we now stand at 10 members. However, we will lose 2 members at Annual Sessions this year and 3 at Annual Sessions in 2021. Admin Council needs a diverse group of additional new members to maintain the health and integrity of the finances, property, personnel, and long-term vision of PYM. The primary attribute that we seek is a deep care for PYM. Background in finance, business or law, or previous experience serving on a non-profit board is helpful but not required. If you have an interest in this important work, please contact any member of Nominating Council to learn more about serving the PYM community.

Communications

The Council posts minutes of meetings within a week or two of their approval at the subsequent meeting and reports to the body in writing and in person at continuing and annual sessions.

Collaboration

The October 19 meeting was a combined retreat for the Councils. The full day meeting included orientation for current and new council members to council roles and responsibilities and exploring the gifts and resources available to and needed by Councils to address regular operation as well as pressing strategic issues for PYM. The extended time together created relationships and understanding that will help Councils collaborate more effectively.

Committees and Sprints

Committees and sprints are two structures used to research, season, and discern the way forward for the business of PYM and important strategic initiatives. Current committees are: Governance, Finance, Property, Granting, Personnel, Development, and Audit. We have developed charges and are in the process of identifying people to serve on the following sprints: Five Year Plan and Governance Review and Addressing Racism Corporate Ministry. Both sprints are charged to solicit input from a wide range of sources to ensure there is sufficient diversity of thought and experience represented.

In order to help the Councils share information and seek unity more effectively on shared issues, we and Quaker Life Council (QLC) combined our separate Governance Committees into a joint Administrative and Quaker Life Governance Committee. We have been meeting as a joint Governance Committee since May 2020.

Finance

In February 2020, we announced that PYM made a \$1 million investment in the Impact Accelerator Bridge Loan Fund I, sponsored by the Reinvestment Fund. The Finance Committee has been working with Friends Fiduciary since July 2019 on the investment. The investment is the first effort by PYM and Friends Fiduciary to invest directly in underserved communities.

PYM remains in secure financial condition. In March the Council received an “unqualified” (also known as “clean”) [audit of PYM’s FY2019 financial reports](#).

Personnel

The Personnel Committee recommended, and Admin Council approved, several new and revised policies on parental leave and health insurance contribution for part-time (under 20 hours per week) employees. We approved a sabbatical policy for individuals with a least 10 years of service with PYM. In February, we had a joint informational session with QLC for the General Secretary to review the full scope of benefits available to PYM staff. Benefits are in line with comparable non-profit organizations and have evolved to attract and retain high quality full time and part time staff.

General Secretary Oversight and Evaluation Committee (GSOEC)

The GSOEC recommended and Admin Council approved a 3 month wellness leave of absence for the General Secretary in recognition of her years of service to PYM and to provide opportunity for refreshment and renewal. The leave concluded on July 6 and we look forward to insights and fresh perspective that the General Secretary brings to her work. The GSOEC initiated the annual General Secretary review process in April and will again be using an electronic survey to invite feedback from a wide range of sources including staff, councils, and the Arch Street Meetinghouse Preservation Trust.

By Distributing Our Funds in accordance with donor intention to the core of our body, our meetings and individual Friends, with guidance and oversight of the Granting Committee.

In January, Ken Park, clerk of the Granting Committee, shared with Admin Council a thorough and comprehensive report of the work of the Granting Committee and its granting groups. The clerk reported that the 9 granting groups under the Granting Committee's care granted **\$954,322** in FY 2019.

The granting groups are; Greenleaf, Aging Assistance, Committee on Friends Education, Indian Committee, Willits Book Trust, Membership Development, Travel & Witness, Quaker Buildings & Programs, and Fund for Sufferings.

The committee's Grant Maker's Celebrations in March and this upcoming October were cancelled due to the pandemic. The Granting Group meetings that were scheduled for March were held by Zoom. All Granting Group meetings are now done by Zoom. The support of the PYM staff has been crucial to the granting groups receiving all documents in a secure fashion and scheduling time for meetings.

The Granting Committee conducted a self-evaluation in November 2019. The resulting information has led to improved communication and processes. The use of Salesforce has served the Granting Committee well. Reporting and data is more efficient.

By supporting and working with other groups within our yearly meeting.

In December, we received a report from Wally Evans, the clerk of the Arch Street Meetinghouse Preservation Trust. The clerk highlighted the completion of a Marketing and Communication Plan to improve the visitor experience and increase usage. They also completed a Master Space Plan which is a multi-year plan to improve the usability of the space. Work on space utilization is done in conjunction with Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia.

In February, representatives from Admin Council and QLC met with the Friends who volunteered at July 2019 sessions to work on addressing racism in PYM. The purpose of the meeting was to share information and update the volunteers on opportunities coming up to serve on sprints (e.g. the Addressing Racism Corporate Ministry sprint) or as resources to sprints. Many from the group of volunteers have decided to move forward together and have taken steps to form a collaborative to continue their work, invite others to join the collaborative, and call Friends to action.

Conclusion

We are grateful to serve our Yearly Meeting and appreciate the trust that each of you has placed in us. We seek to contribute both spiritually and practically to a strong, grounded, and vibrant yearly meeting.

Faithfully, and in peace, Terri Whiteford, Clerk

Nominating Council Report to 2020 Annual Sessions

Appointments

Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch	Schuylkill	Caln	2022
Frank Barch	Schuylkill	Caln	2022

Rising Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Melissa Rycroft	Pennsdale	Upper Susquehanna	2022

Treasurer			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Andrew Anderson	Friends of Philadelphia	Philadelphia	2023 (2, final)

Recording Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Kri Burkander	Princeton	Burlington	2022 (2, final)
Jim Herr	Lancaster	Caln	2022 (2, final)

Administrative Council, Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
James Waddington	Salem	Salem	2023

Quaker Life Council, Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Anthony Stover	Germantown	Philadelphia	2023

Administrative Council			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Charles Devers	Salem	Salem	2023
Jeanne Elberfeld	Reading	Caln	2023
JoAnn Seaver	Green Street	Philadelphia	2023
John Marquette	Lehigh Valley	Bucks	2023
Thomas Zemaitis	Moorestown	Haddonfield	2023

Quaker Life Council Council			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Guinevere L. Janes	Media	Chester	2023
Steve Elkinton	Chestnut Hill	Philadelphia	2023
Tom Hughes	Reading	Caln	2023

Elder			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
.O	Central Philadelphia	Philadelphia	2023 (2)
George Rubin	Medford	Haddonfield	2023
Jane Cadwallader	Lancaster	Caln	2023 (2)
Paul Kerr	Exeter	Caln	2023
Sarah Miller	Mount Holly	Burlington	2023

Friends Committee on National Legislation			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Joe Laird	Downingtown	Caln	2023
Stefanie Morgan	Trenton	Burlington	2023 (2)
Margaret Mansfield	Providence	Chester	2021

Friends General Conference			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Anthony Stover	Germantown	Philadelphia	2023
Lynne Graham	Wellsboro	Upper Susquehanna	2023 (2)

Friends World Committee for Consultation			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Christy Randazzo	Haddonfield	Haddonfield	2023
John Walz	Mount Holly	Burlington	2023
Joan Broadfield	Chester	Chester	2023

Friends Fiduciary			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Bennett Lomax	Doylestown	Bucks	2023 (2)
Bruce Beaton	Abington	Abington	2023 (2)
Ginny Christensen	Chestnut Hill	Philadelphia	2023 (4, final)
Ken Aldridge	Germantown	Philadelphia	2023
Norval Reece	Newtown	Bucks	2023 (4, final)
Takashi Moriuchi	Moorestown	Haddonfield	2023 (2)

Westtown School			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Maximillian Yeh	Westtown	Concord	2023

Releases

Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Christopher A. Lucca	Yardley	Bucks	2020

Alternate Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Jonathan Rhoads	Germantown	Philadelphia	2020

Administrative Council, Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Terri Whiteford	Downingtown	Caln	2020

Quaker Life Council, Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Amy Taylor Brooks	Birmingham	Concord	2020

Nominating Council, Clerk			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Melissa Rycroft	Pennsdale	Upper Susquehanna	2020

Administrative Council			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Barry Sloan	Mickleton	Salem	2019
Richard Morse	Harrisburg	Caln	2020

Quaker Life Council			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Cathleen Marion	Downingtown	Caln	2020
George Rubin	Medford	Haddonfield	2020

Elder			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Dana Houghton	Kendal	Western	2020
Inspira Williams	Haddonfield	Haddonfield	2020
Yolanda Covarrubias	Haverford	Haverford	2020

American Friends Service Committee			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Carla White	Chestnut Hill	Philadelphia	2020

Friends Committee on National Legislation			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Burt Dallas	Radnor	Haverford	2020

Friends General Conference			
NAME	MONTHLY MEETING	QUARTERLY MEETING	TERM ENDS
Lori Sinitzky	Green Street	Philadelphia	2020

COMFORT FOOD -- A STEADY AND FAMILIAR BUDGET FOR FY 2021



Unrestricted Budget



Restricted Budget



PYM'S BUDGET SHOWS:

- The Unrestricted and the Restricted budgets
- The use of reserves (savings)
- A zero balance



1 KISS = \$10,000

UNRESTRICTED BUDGET

- ▶ **142 Purple Kisses**
- ▶ Income from contributions, grants and bequests
- ▶ **142 Silver Kisses**
- ▶ Income from investments, programs and fees
- ▶ **9 Blue Kisses**
- ▶ Use of reserves (savings)
- ▶ **293 Total Kisses**
- ▶ Unrestricted Funds available

Total funds available



Total budgeted for spending



Balance



Unrestricted Budget (for approval)	Kisses	\$
Total funds available	293	2,933,500
Total budgeted for spending	293	2,933,500
Balance	0	0

UNRESTRICTED BUDGET



1 KISS = \$10,000

RESTRICTED BUDGET

- ▶ **10 Purple Kisses**
- ▶ Income from contributions, grants and bequests
- ▶ **128 Gold Kisses**
- ▶ Income from investments, programs and fees
- ▶ **5 Blue Kisses**
- ▶ Use of reserves (savings)
- ▶ **143 Total Kisses**
- ▶ Restricted Funds available

Total funds
available



Total budgeted
for spending



Balance



Restricted Budget (for information)	Kisses	\$
Total funds available	143	1,427,000
Total budgeted for spending	143	1,427,000
Balance	0	0

RESTRICTED BUDGET



**Please send
chocolate!**

FY 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

Oct. 1, 2020 through Sept. 30, 2021

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS PROPOSED BUDGET

RESTRICTED FUNDS DRAFT BUDGET FOR INFORMATION

2021 Budget Notes by Line Item

The Administrative Council has released this Proposed Budget to Annual Sessions for approval.

This year's budget timeline

- **Saturday, July 18, 2020.** Admin Council released a final version of the FY 2021 budget to advance documents for Annual Sessions
- **Tuesday, July 21, 2020, 7:30-8:30 PM** on Zoom. Questions and answers on the FY 2021 Proposed Budget, hosted by Andrew Anderson, PYM Treasurer, and Linell McCurry, Associate Secretary for Business & Finance
- **Saturday, August 1, 2020.** FY 2021 Proposed Budget presented for approval during the afternoon business session, 2-3 PM

How to Read the Budget

Unrestricted Funds – Unrestricted or general fund income is from contributions, investments, and fees without donor restrictions. These funds are spent according to each year's approved budget.

Restricted Funds – Restricted income is from grants, gifts, and bequests where donors have directed the use of income in writing. PYM spends this income according to donor direction.

Application of reserves – PYM uses cash from reserve funds (that is, savings) to pay some of its expenses. Showing the use of reserves creates a fuller picture of PYM's available funds and how they cover PYM's expenses. Including the use of reserves, FY 2021 is budgeted for a zero balance.

COVID-19

While 2020 Sessions are virtual, the budget assumes in-person Annual Sessions in 2021. Budgeted Total Event & Program Revenue and Total Event & Program Expense are markedly higher than the FY 2020 projections for these line items. The main difference is pass-through fees and costs related to The College of New Jersey. The budget also assumes modest revenue from a resumption of student tours and visitors to Arch Street. Arch Street plans to reopen gradually, following guidelines.

On April 27, 2020, PYM received a Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$311,600 under the CARES Act. Although not a certainty, PYM anticipates that this loan will be forgiven in full and that such forgiveness will occur in the current fiscal year. The accounting treatment for any such forgiveness has not been determined at this time.

INCOME AND FUNDS AVAILABLE

Line 1, Support from Meetings

The Covenant is our single largest source of unrestricted income and PYM is deeply grateful for meeting support. We hope that meetings that can afford it will choose to increase their Covenant amounts.

Line 2, Arch Street visitor donations /Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust fundraising

Arch Street plans to reopen gradually to visitors and tours, following COVID-19 guidelines. The budget assumes donations from visitors and tours will resume in the spring of 2021 and that the Preservation Trust will raise at least \$55,000 in contributions for Arch Street.

Line 3, Grants and Other Gifts

Grants are usually restricted. The budget includes \$50,000 in grants to Arch Street.

Line 4, Bequests

PYM does not know of any bequests, either unrestricted or donor restricted, in process for distribution to PYM in FY 2021.

Line 5, Support from Individuals

The Annual Fund contributes a significant part of PYM's unrestricted budget each year. Despite the deaths of some of our major donors in recent years, many regular donors have increased their giving and new donors have been drawn to contribute. Thank you! Our whole yearly meeting community grows deeper and stronger in a culture of generosity. PYM warmly appreciates a gift of any size.

Line 6, Total Contributions Income

For unrestricted funds, contributions represent 50% of Line 11, Total Funds Available. Restricted contributions represent 8% of Total Funds Available. Total contributions represent 36% of budgeted Total Funds Available in FY 2021.

Line 7, Funds Held at Friends Fiduciary

Friends Fiduciary pays a 4% distribution based on a three-year average of Quaker Growth & Income Fund unit value. Unrestricted income supports the unrestricted budget. Restricted income is largely granting income that will be paid out in Line 16, Contributions to Others. It also includes some restricted program funding.

Line 8, Funds Held at Third-Party Banks

Third-party banks hold unrestricted funds for PYM as trusts (PNC) and as private foundations (BNY Mellon). Wells Fargo holds a restricted fund for PYM as a private foundation. Income can be difficult to predict since some of these funds base their distributions on market values as of certain date, such as December 31. To be prudent, we have assumed slightly lower income for FY 2021.

Line 9, Event and Program Fees

Unrestricted revenue includes fees from residential Annual Sessions, other programs and events, and rental income and events at Arch Street. The budget assumes in-person Annual Sessions in the summer of 2021 and more normal activity at Arch Street next spring and summer. Restricted fees are associated with Friends Counseling Service.

Line 10, Administrative Fees

PYM charges its restricted-purpose funds an administrative fee based on their principal value at Friends Fiduciary. The fee is unrestricted income to PYM, per accounting rules. It was calculated on the Quaker Growth & Income Fund's unit value at June 30, 2020.

PYM's restricted-purpose funds are largely granting funds. PYM follows foundation best practices: we view administrative costs as shared in the aggregate and we use a tiered fee schedule that charges a slightly lower fee to smaller funds. Administrative fees pay for PYM's grantmaking function and the administrative costs of managing restricted monies.

Line 11, Total Funds Available

Unrestricted total funds available of \$2.84 million derive 50% from contributions and 50% from investment income, program income and fees. Restricted total funds available of \$1.376 million are 8% from contributions and 92% from investment income, program income and fees. Combined funds available of \$4.2 million represent an increase of 2.3% over the FY 2020 Projection.

EXPENSES**Line 12, Staff Salaries and Wages**

In FY 2021, PYM expects to have 20.9 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) in the unrestricted budget and 3.4 FTEs in the restricted budget. Restricted funding for staff comes from restricted investment income (notably the Theodore H. Nitsche Fund, which will provide Arch Street with more than \$90,000 in support next year) and from funding provided by the Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust, which will cover Arch Street program staff in 2021 .

At \$1.34 million, the salaries and wages budget for FY 2021 is 6% above the 2020 projection of \$1.26 million, which trails its budget of \$1.38 million. PYM did not fill the open controller position and is still using Your-Part-Time-Controller in that role. Consultant expenses for the controller role are recorded on Line 18, Professional & Service Fees, and not in Line 12. The FY 2021 budget includes a) an across-the-board cost of living adjustment, effective Oct. 1, 2020, and b) long-overdue adjustments to senior staff salaries resulting from a review of objective salary benchmarking surveys of similarly sized nonprofits in the Philadelphia region, as directed by Administrative Council. (See posted Admin Council minutes of March 2020.)

Line 13, Payroll Taxes, Benefits and Employee Travel

Benefits include health insurance, workers comp insurance, staff training and pension funding. We were able to budget a lower pension assessment in FY 2021, thanks to strong investment returns in calendar 2019, but we have estimated higher health insurance costs for calendar 2021.

Line 14, Total Staff Expenses

Total staff expenses are budgeted at \$2.0 million, a 4.1% increase over the FY 2020 projection.

Line 15, Volunteer Expenses

Unrestricted volunteer expenses are budgeted at \$20,000. This figure includes funding to cover the costs of PYM appointed representatives participating in other Quaker organizations.

Line 16, Contributions to Others

PYM uses a portion of unrestricted Chace Fund income to contribute to other 501(c)(3) charities, mainly religious organizations such as FGC, AFSC, FCNL, FWCC and the National Council of Churches, in accordance with the Chace will. Friends Fiduciary is trustee of the Chace Fund. Contributions also include Louisa & Corson Poley Fund income granted to Burlington Quarter, per the 2017 Burlington Meeting House Agreement, and outreach grants to monthly meetings from the Membership Development Fund, an unrestricted reserve fund.

Restricted contributions reflect the more than 400 grants PYM makes each year to individuals, meetings and nonprofit organizations. Restricted grants should decline in FY 2021 from FY 2020, which included \$300,000 funded from restricted reserves (accumulated, unspent income from prior years) due to the timing of some large Quaker building grants awarded in the fall of 2019.

Line 17, Event and Program Expense

The unrestricted budget covers a range of programs: Annual Sessions, Continuing Sessions, youth programs, other smaller programs, publications, and a Quaker Life Council “program envelope” to support collaboratives, programs and events.

Restricted expense includes Friends Counseling Service, spending from grants at Arch Street, and various restricted program funds budgeted for Annual Sessions, youth, and other smaller programs.

Line 18, Professional and Service Fees

Unrestricted spending includes normal and typical fees for the audit, payroll services, banking services, credit card processing fees that support online giving to PYM and the monthly meetings, and routine consulting and legal work. Currently the work of the PYM controller is performed on a consulting basis. Restricted spending is budgeted for ASMHPT.

FY 2021 spending is budgeted lower than the FY 2020 projection. The current year has included additional consulting around the PYM database and additional accounting costs associated with the FY 2019 audit and the implementation of Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Update 2016-14, Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-For-Profit Entities.

Line 19, Development Expense

Unrestricted costs are for PYM and restricted costs for ASMHPT.

Line 20, Copying, Printing and Postage

Unrestricted costs are for PYM and restricted costs for ASMHPT.

Line 21, Rent (Friends Center Expenses and Other)

Rent expense includes Friends Center rent and small storage charges. PYM is one of three equity partners in Friends Center with the AFSC and Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.

Line 22, Utilities

Gas, electric and water at Arch Street Meeting House and telephone at PYM’s offices and Arch Street.

Line 23, Office Supplies and Support

Expenses for office supplies and miscellaneous administrative expenses.

Line 24, Computer Support and Licenses

Expenses for PYM information technology (IT) support provided by the AFSC, annual computer licenses, and routine software licensing and support.

Line 25, Insurance

Property, liability, and Directors & Officers insurance.

Line 26, Repairs and Maintenance

The cost of maintenance and repairs of the building, equipment and grounds at Arch Street Meeting House. This line includes non-routine repairs funded by the Capital Reserve Fund (see Line 30).

Line 27, Fixed Asset Depreciation

Depreciation is an unrestricted expense, calculated from depreciation schedules for Arch Street Meeting House and depreciable equipment and furnishings at PYM's offices.

Line 28, Total Expenses

Budgeted at \$4.36 million or 98% of the 2020 Projection, mainly from lower expected grants, Line 16.

Line 29, Net Income Available Prior to Application of Reserves

Both unrestricted and restricted budgets show deficits because their total expense includes items that will be paid for using cash from reserves. See Lines 30, 31 and 32. The 2020 deficit is larger due to the timing of some large grants. See Line 16, Contributions to Others.

Line 30, Capital Reserve Funds for Repairs at Arch Street

Unrestricted repairs expensed in Line 26 that will be covered by Capital Reserve funds.

Line 31, Miscellaneous Spending from Reserves, Grants and Accumulated Granting Income

Unrestricted use of reserves includes Membership Development grants, unexpended grant funds from prior years, and use of other reserve funds for programs. Restricted spending is largely expensed in Line 16, Contributions to Others.

Line 32, Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust Reserves

Restricted spending from its own reserves by ASMHPT.

Line 33, Net Balance

Budgeted at zero in FY 2021.

Line 34, Number of Full-time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)

PYM expects to have 20.9 FTEs in the unrestricted budget and 3.4 in the restricted budget, for a total count of 24.3, level with FY 2020's expected year-end employee count.

Questions or comments?

Andrew Anderson, Treasurer
andrewbanderson@hotmail.com

Linell McCurry, Associate Secretary for Business & Finance
lmccurry@pym.org

ANNUAL SESSIONS 2020
FY 2021
PROPOSED BUDGET

	FY 2021 UNRESTRICTED	FY 2021 RESTRICTED	FY 2021 TOTAL	FY 2020 TOTAL
	Sept. 30, 2021 Proposed Budget	Sept. 30, 2021 Proposed Budget	Sept. 30, 2021 Proposed Total	Sept. 30, 2020 Projected Total
All Periods are 12 Months				
INCOME AND FUNDS AVAILABLE				
1 Support from Meetings (Covenant)	1,100,000	0	1,100,000	1,130,000
2 Arch Street Donations/ASMHT Fundraising	20,000	55,000	75,000	65,000
3 Grants and Other Gifts	0	50,000	50,000	30,000
4 Bequests	0	0	0	0
5 Support from Individuals (Annual Fund)	300,000	0	300,000	300,000
6 Contributions Income	1,420,000	105,000	1,525,000	1,525,000
7 Funds Held at Friends Fiduciary	500,000	1,246,000	1,746,000	1,733,000
8 Funds Held at Third-Party Banks	358,000	15,000	373,000	380,000
9 Event and Program Fees	175,000	10,000	185,000	93,500
10 Administrative Fee on Restricted Fds	387,000	0	387,000	390,000
11 TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	2,840,000	1,376,000	4,216,000	4,121,500
EXPENSES				
12 Staff Salaries and Wages	1,195,000	149,000	1,344,000	1,265,000
13 Payroll Taxes, Benefits, Employee Travel	595,000	65,000	660,000	660,000
14 Total Staff Expenses	1,790,000	214,000	2,004,000	1,925,000
15 Volunteer Expenses	20,000	1,000	21,000	18,000
16 Contributions to Others	50,000	1,070,000	1,120,000	1,345,500
17 Event and Program Expense	165,000	100,000	265,000	179,000
18 Professional and Service Fees	200,000	25,000	225,000	299,000
19 Development Expense	20,000	10,000	30,000	29,500
20 Copying, Printing and Postage	40,000	5,000	45,000	40,000
21 Rent	265,000	0	265,000	261,000
22 Utilities	43,000	0	43,000	43,000
23 Office Supplies and Support	22,000	0	22,000	20,000
24 Computer Support and Licenses	69,000	2,000	71,000	71,000
25 Insurance	34,000	0	34,000	34,000
26 Repairs and Maintenance	90,000	0	90,000	60,000
27 Fixed Asset Depreciation	125,500	0	125,500	125,500
28 TOTAL EXPENSES	2,933,500	1,427,000	4,360,500	4,450,500
NET INCOME AVAILABLE PRIOR TO APPLICATION OF				
29 RESERVES	-93,500	-51,000	-144,500	-329,000
30 Repairs at ASMH (Capital Reserve)	68,500	0	68,500	30,000
31 Other Misc Reserves (Grants & Granting Groups)	25,000	51,000	76,000	299,000
32 Arch Street Preservation Trust Reserve	0	0	0	0
33 NET BALANCE	0	0	0	0
34 No. Full-time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)	20.90	3.40	24.30	24.30

Dear Friends Everywhere,

We are the Middle School Friends program of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. We are the youth and we have something to say.

During these Sessions, July 29 to August 2, we had two workshops with Zenaida Peterson where they taught us about poetry. We learned to write our own poetry using their prompts. We also had a workshop with City Love, wrote our own songs, and made a presentation for everyone. We listened to a youth-led presentation about immigration justice. We thought about how we feel about immigration issues and we voiced our opinions about what we can do. We played games and had fun. We joined the rest of Annual Sessions during All Together Time in the mornings and we hosted one of those times. We sat in silence and reflected on the world around us and what is going on currently. We reflected on the protests.

We have learned more about the inequalities in the world. We have learned about what is going on that will influence the world that we are living in. We learned about immigration and oppression, and here are our concerns:

- We feel it is unfortunate that persons who come to the U.S., and in some cases are here for many years, may be forced to leave due to a technicality. We think that this policy should be re-imagined.
- We are concerned for all the families that have been separated. We don't want families to be separated from each other, or family members being killed.
- We need to help other people know about this issue and recognize it as an issue, so that we can move toward it being solved.
- We are interested in possibilities of working toward socially-distanced vigils in the Philadelphia area, and also doing smaller things in local groups.

We want to be heard. So we are asking for the adults' support while we fight against these injustices. We ask for them to just be available for supporting us and we ask for constant support. We hope the adults will take time to learn about racial injustice and the issues at the border. We think that it might be helpful to give the youth-led presentation that MSF heard to the adults as well. We want adults to get educated around these issues, so that they have a place to start. We also think that it is best to not organize one big protest. We ask that we all start by contributing in small ways on their own.

In friendship,

Middle School Friends of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

To All Friends Everywhere, from the Children of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

We gathered for our Annual Sessions in Zoom rooms, July 29 to August 2, 2020. Our time together included playing, singing, laughing, and being close to Spirit.

The artist in residence Zenaida Peterson helped us to deepen our relationship with God through poetry and games. We wrote poems and made zines. We laughed a whole lot. Together we wrote this poem:

We are young people, Pokémon trainers, some of us are 5.

We are fun, joyful, big kids.

We are the color sky blue,

a kiwi fruit,

a sweet potato,

animal lovers,

happy people.

We are in quarantine.

We are us!

We gathered for a Playshop to play and talk about the challenge of speaking in meeting. We practiced listening for God's messages together.

City Love joined us on Saturday to consider big questions, and encouraged us to use our voices and change the world. We learned the significance of sticking up for another and we danced and sang a whole lot.

We send greetings to all Quaker children in the world. We send our love and we send our hope.

Dear Friends Everywhere,

We, the Young Friends of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, a group of high-school-aged Quaker kids from the Greater Philadelphia area, met from Wednesday, July 29th to Sunday, August 2nd, 2020 for the 340th Annual Sessions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. This year, due to the pandemic, we met using a virtual format that allowed us to be in a shared community from inside our homes.

The theme for this year's Sessions was, "Letting ourselves be known". We welcomed a new group from Middle School Friends to their first Young Friends gathering at Annual Sessions. It was wonderful to adapt to our new virtual platform with every member of our group. We learned that while the world is changing very quickly around us, in both good ways and bad, our community has stayed the same.

Throughout the week, the theme "Letting ourselves be known" was present in our activities that helped us bond as a community. The poetry workshop led by Zenaida Peterson was very powerful and helped us to find our voices through writing. Hearing poetry about racism and other issues in our country helped to open our eyes to the systemic racism that so many people in our country experience every day. Another way we let ourselves be known was through worship sharing groups that allowed us to reflect on queries and relate over shared experiences. Our youth-led committees -- Native Justice, Program, Discernment, and Nurture -- all met to discuss different topics that affect our community.

Business meeting on Thursday, July 30th was a very productive time to discuss our community. During this meeting, the body approved three new Young Friends clerks who will serve a one-year term. We are very thankful for their agreement to serve our community through these times of change.

The Black Lives Matter movement has been heavy on our minds. Young Friends have been working hard to become more involved in this movement, as we believe that all people deserve to be treated equally regardless of skin color.

One of the ways we have been involved is through a partnership with an organization called "Youth for Black Lives Matter." This group has partnered with high schools, universities, and youth groups in the Greater Philadelphia area. We were honored that they reached out to us, and we are excited to attend the Youth for Black Lives Matter march on Sunday, August 2nd. We prepared a minute of support that will be read by a Young Friend at the protest:

The Young Friends of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting feel a strong calling to stand in solidarity with the Youth for Black Lives March, and the wider movement for Black Lives, to fight white supremacy and violence against the Black community. Quakers have a very complicated relationship with racism, and white Quakers, specifically, continue to benefit from white supremacy and systemic racism. As young Quakers, we are committed to fighting for the movement for Black lives, most especially because our fundamental beliefs and values as Friends lead us to see the Divine in all people, and we are committed to acting upon this belief. We are grateful for the invitation to stand with the Youth for Black Lives Movement in this vitally important work.

As a group, we are proud to be representing Quaker Youth everywhere with this minute. We are the next generation, and we are ready to make the world a better place where racism does not exist.

Continuing with this work, the music group City Love led a workshop for us around racial identity. We listened to their beautiful music on the topic of race and learned about ways to use words to make change in our separate communities. Hearing friends talk about their identity was a moving experience, and by listening to others' stories we will be able to make lasting change.

We created songs about activism and race that will be shared in an open space, allowing people from every generation to hear our voices, it also gives us the chance to learn from them. Learning about impactful activism during COVID-19, and protecting ourselves from burnout will allow us to make a more positive change for every person around the world. This workshop was very insightful and we were happy to be a part of a workshop with music, conversation, and activism.

Help us make change; go out and vote, sign petitions, listen to youth, and remember that Black lives will always matter.

In peace,
Young Friends of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Young Adult Friends Epistle from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions 2020

To all Friends everywhere:

Greetings from a gathering of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Young Adult Friends, together from many different homes for Annual Sessions, July 29–August 2, 2020. Many of us gathered from the lands around Philadelphia, on the traditional homelands of the Lenni Lenape. We humbly acknowledge that many or all of us are settlers here, and live on stolen lands.

Young Adult Friends joined together Wednesday night, presenting ourselves with pictures, words, star signs, gifs and laughter. Many Friends experienced this welcoming activity as an expansive and joyful one, despite our separate locations, and we came back to the space opened in that spirit-filled way for the three succeeding nights.

Throughout the week we explored our emotions together. Grief has weighed heavily on Friends—as it has on others—for months. After the collective experience of Zenaida’s beautiful, resonant poetry, we came together around a short story about fear and grief. We practiced *lectio divina*, centering love in the text, in our lives, and in the world. We recognized in the passage we explored together, and again Friday night in Naomi’s talk “The Fire of the Light,” that grief, fear, and anger should not be dangerous to express. Anger is not antithetical to community. Decision making that excludes the possibility of expressing these emotions does a disservice to our members and to our community’s capacities. Anger, felt in response to injustice, can be a reminder to ground ourselves, so we can do the work.

We are grateful to see ourselves reflected in the Friday keynote speaker, Naomi Madaras and the poet in residence, Zenaida Peterson. Their messages were powerful and spoke to the spirit of the moment we live in, moments of abolition, uprising, and solitude. Indeed, we are all called to be responsive to this moment, and that spirit demands that we evolve and grow. Part of our evolution should be critically considering what we call “Quaker practice.” All our practices have been shaped by the culture by which they were surrounded. In America, white supremacist culture has always been part of those surroundings. What parts of the practices we have inherited are perpetuating oppression? What parts of the practices bring Truth to the surface of our Meeting? These must be separated and it is our choice, as a yearly meeting, to maintain them and pull them apart. How can we carefully tease apart that which will nourish the future of our faith, from that which closes it off and diminishes it?

One Friend gave a message that they worry about the source of the Quaker tendency to avoid anger and conflict. Do we fear that our shared beliefs are not strong enough to hold us together through it? Do we doubt the existence of the power that binds us? Unfortunately, we feel that the [letter penned last April](#) by the former clerks of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, fed this fear. In

point 8, the clerks insulate that expression of feeling is manipulation or “appeals to emotion.” By requiring our Friends to leave emotions at the meeting room door, we are asking them not to be their whole selves in our meetings. We are missing out on the important insights that feelings of anger can bring to the gathering. We should not be discouraged from bringing our fullest selves to worship.

When a message rises, it does not need to be palatable. Spontaneity has been, from the beginning, a necessary part of Friends meetings. In our own meetings for worship, Friends hold messages of babbling babies, song and dance, and much else that is unexpected. Young Adult Friends do not draw the line at anger or grief. We must let it rise as we do all messages. Our concept of the inner light is more than something tentative: it is bright and can be harsh.

Friday night, we came together to share a practice treasured across many branches of tradition since the fourteenth century, that of contemplative prayer. Just as we are called to meditate on God in order to “pierce the cloud,” we reflected, we are called too to meditate on suffering.

In this moment of solitude, we are being asked to confront a great deal of suffering. We try to manage our suffering and one other’s suffering; domesticate it, tame it, package it, and send it off to disappear. Prayer is a practice of being present, staying turned toward the thing we are afraid to look at, and moving through it with God. At the Uprisings for George Floyd, protestors knelt in silence for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, the same amount of time an officer knelt on Floyd’s neck, closing his pathway to air, and taking his life, violently and from a place of power. In this silence we are able to confront how long 8 minutes and 46 seconds is, staying turned toward George Floyd’s death, and the racism that led to his murder and the murder of so many Black and Brown people. Love and grief and anger go together. Looking away from suffering in our communities and relationships is neglect. We cry because we care. We are angry because we love.

Zenaida read on Thursday night, “My grief prays/ lights a candle for each new loss/ They melt without fire these days.” Their words are deeply personal testimony, offered to our Yearly Meeting in abundant care. The threads of Spirit reached out from their work to every one of our hearts. And they brought into clear relief the urgency of Naomi’s call the following night. Paying attention to the emotional responses too often silenced in Friends spaces is critical, if those threads are to reach beyond these Sessions. Young Adult Friends, as both the present and the future of this community, want to participate in and inherit a yearly meeting that can hear grief and anger, because without these, our prayers are shallow.

P.S. To all Friends everywhere, abolish the police. Love, Young Adult Friends

To Friends everywhere:

Greetings from the 340th Annual Sessions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. These Annual Sessions took place in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic that led Friends to meet via Zoom videoconferencing technology. This pandemic has exacerbated the very racial injustice and societal inequities that have hindered our spiritual growth within the PYM.

Friends met before the start of our 340th Annual Sessions with a series of plenaries focusing on climate change, membership, and racial justice. In a pre-retreat and the first plenary, Marcelle Martin brought us the fire of the early Friends as we reflected on how God is calling us and how we can let ourselves be known. Friends continued our practice of cross-generational worship, and families joined in all-ages spiritual community throughout the week. Many Friends seized this opportunity of Annual Sessions to be tethered together even in the isolation of these challenging times.

Our second plenary speaker, Zenaida Peterson, brought a grounding of self-awareness and care, with a contagious energy of love and Light. Zenaida shared their work, offered a collective poem to our community, and invited Friends to write their own poetry in the light of Love.

Naomi Madaras, our third plenary speaker, had a sober offering, tenderly but clearly given, of unrecognized early Quaker history regarding the practice of slavery, and our resistance to the challenges of conflict and anger that has kept that history hidden. Naomi invited recognition of conflict and anger as gifts which may be understood as invitations to discern, an offering to experience and welcome the fire of Light and refining.

City Love brought their social justice band to Children, Middle School Friends, and Young Friends. Middle School Friends worked

with City Love to create a song to accompany the MSFs' slideshow. Their focus was on race in the United States today, including a timeline of the continuing story of protests against racial injustice over the past century.

There was great spiritual honesty and deep connection among Friends. This depth of Spirit was new, and welcomed. A Bible study focusing on the words of John Lewis affirmed the sense of the times and Lewis's recent passing.

Friends noted the effect of time and platform on the unfolding of business as decisions required efficient approval separate from discussions informing those decisions. Zoom videoconferencing allowed participants to raise their hands and voices, but kept them also at a distance.

Our business meeting offered hope and change with a new slate of candidates to serve the PYM. We approved a budget for the upcoming fiscal year that exhibited structures and financial stewardship moving forward in our next year.

The rising appointees were welcomed by the community, which was united in approval of these people in their groundedness and calm. Friends expressed the ferment felt in small groups, in which they experienced a commitment and connection deeper than words. Through this process at Annual Sessions, which involved all ages, we are led to continue to strive to be where God needs us to be: on a long pathway leading to Home, Light, Justice, and Equality for all people. In this time of urgent need, we are challenged to take the fire that we have experienced into our work in our meetings and communities.

- Epistle Committee

Anthony Stover, Joan Broadfield, and Yelena Forrester