

PYM Continuing Sessions, March 23, 2019

We opened with worship. We continued in worship, hearing an acknowledgment of the Lenape community, whose land we worship on today.

Chris Lucca, Alternate Clerk serving as Presiding Clerk, welcomed Friends reminding us that our political action this morning was borne of a conversation led by Young Adult Friends. We were invited to reflect on the covenant we make with each other. We want to be available to each other, to be teachable, and to lose ourselves in the Spirit.

Administrivia

The Clerk's Table introduced themselves. First-time attenders rose to introduce themselves and be welcomed. We acknowledged and thanked our PYM staff and our speech-to-text translator Missy Smith.

We heard from Wendy Kane, PYM staff, about Bridge contacts. Bridge Contacts serve as a conduit between the Monthly Meeting and the Yearly Meeting. Currently 19 monthly meetings, out of 103 in the Yearly Meeting, have established Bridge Contacts. Is your meeting one of them? If not, why not?

If you haven't completed your One Quilt One Yearly Meeting square, there is still time; the deadline has been extended to June 1st. Please encourage your Meeting to participate so that we can have all Meetings represented in our quilt skirt which will wrap the clerk's table in our love at Annual Sessions.

We were informed that there is an April 16th 6:30 conference call about Refugee and Migrant Justice work; check out the event on the PYM website.

Young Adult Friends report

Eleanor Barba and Rachel Griffin-Snipes, clerks of the Young Adult Friends, reported on the action we participated in this morning. They thanked Catherine Campbell and Marian Dalke and Mary Tierney for their logistical help in making this morning action happen. [report attached] Friends received their report with deep gratitude. Our clerk expressed a sense of being humbled and encouraged by how it feels when we act corporately, being led by the Spirit.

Nominating Council

Melissa Rycroft, clerk of Nominating Council, shared her gratitude at being able to join us. The Council has been considering the importance of alternate clerks, and how vital it is that they join us for our Joint Council meetings. Friends approved the names of Terry Cooke and Jonathan Rhoads as Alternate Clerks. Melissa noted the unique situation in which Chris Lucca has found himself, with the loss of Penny Colgan-Davis and rotating-off of Amy Kietzman and Tom Hoopes this summer. We celebrate the memory of our former clerk Penny and express our appreciation for the grace and good humor with which Chris has approached this role. Friends approved the nomination of Chris Lucca as presiding clerk. Additional nominations included:

- Amy Taylor Brooks, clerk of Quaker Life Council
- Sue Dietz - Quaker Life Council
- Jim Waddington - Administrative Council
- Nikki Mosgrove – Administrative Council
- Scott Duncan – Friends General Conference

Releases:

- Chris Lucca, Alternate Clerk
- Nikki Mosgrove, Nominating Council
- Laird Holby, FGC

Friends approved the full slate of nominations and releases with gratitude.

Philadelphia Quarter Minute and Multicultural Audit Steering Committee

Presiding Clerk Chris Lucca introduced the next agenda item, highlighting that these two tasks seem like polar opposites. We were invited to center into the expansiveness of Spirit in holding our faith and our doubt as we move through these next pieces of business.

Hollister Knowlton, clerk of Philadelphia Quarter, shared a brief history of the minute being brought forward today. She read the resulting minute from the quarter, recommending the laying down of the MASC and reviewing the findings of the FGC institutional assessment.

Friends expressed an interest in learning more about the FGC Institutional Assessment. A Friend shared the data which undergirds the FGC institutional Assessment. 1168 people responded in total to the survey. BYM and NYYM responded in greater numbers than PYM (94). 44 people identifying as African Americans participated in the survey.

Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch reported as a member of the FGC Diversity Committee and the working group which developed the RFP, and as someone who has received monthly reports from the Institutional Assessment Working Group in her capacity as clerk of the Committee on Nurturing Ministries. This Friend suggested that the FGC recommendations were not proposed as a template for Yearly Meetings to adopt. Rather, the purpose was to develop a process that we can, on an individual and corporate level, engage in the work of better understanding how we are complicit in institutional racism and white supremacy in our communities. This may or may not have utility for others, depending on their goals.

tonya thames taylor presented as clerk of the Multicultural Audit Steering Committee. She shared a summary of the committee's process to develop and refine the RFP, and highlighted pieces of the proposal submitted by Prototype Entities, which the committee has united in recommending as the consultant.

Clerk Chris Lucca clarified that the charge for this committee, as set forth in November 2017 minutes, was to provide a name of a consultant to facilitate this audit. While there was some confusion about the charge of the committee, due to an email from our former clerk, we were reminded that the decisions made by the corporate body take precedence over clerk correspondence.

A Friend asked to hear from members of the Multicultural Audit Steering Committee who have left the committee. Three former members spoke from their perspective of having learned about the work of the FGC assessment and believing that there are lessons to reflect on as individuals and meetings in order to make our Meetings more open and welcoming and diverse. Perhaps after doing that work, we might want something else from a consultant.

Given that the committee has brought forward the name of a consultant, this body released the Multicultural Audit Steering Committee, with deep gratitude for their work. We receive with gratitude the name of the consultant, Prototype Entities.

Minutes of Religious Service

We read into these minutes the Minutes of Religious Service for Eileen Flanagan and Tedford Taylor, attached, endorsing the minute for Eileen Flanagan. [these need to be attached]

Closing

We reviewed and approved these minutes. Recognizing that our time has come to a close, despite not addressing all of our agenda items, we closed with worship.

Minute of Religious Service for Eileen Flanagan:

The following minute of religious service for Eileen Flanagan was approved at Chestnut Hill Monthly Meeting's meeting for worship with attention to business at its regular meeting on 6/17/2018. We ask that it be endorsed by Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting and forwarded to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for endorsement.

Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting recognizes that our longtime member, Eileen Flanagan, has been called by the Spirit into a prophetic ministry of healing humanity's separation from the earth, each other, and the Divine. Her ministry includes writing, teaching, public speaking, and travel. Grounded in her commitment to follow divine guidance and tested by her faithful public action for racial and environmental justice, her ministry is an expression of the prophetic Quaker tradition of challenging those systems and practices that keep us from living in right relationship with Creation and each other.

We have received the blessing of her ministry in our own community. We support her call to public ministry, with prayer; by providing a committee for support and accountability; and by receiving donations and grants to Chestnut Hill Meeting to be released to Eileen for the costs of this work. Eileen is looking forward to keeping the Meeting connected to her work on an ongoing basis, and her committee will make a formal report annually. At the end of the third year the Meeting will revisit its commitment to support this ministry. We commend Eileen to all, in the hope that she will be kindly received wherever she serves.

Young Adult Friends Reflection

“You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order for us to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness.”

— Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches

We came together from very different entry points: some long involved in the Young Adult Friends community, others returning after many years of distance, and some with their path beginning at last year’s Annual Sessions. We came with guarded reserves, passionate anger, combinations of doubt and determination. What resonated with all of us was a need to organize our own in a time of political, social, and spiritual turmoil. A need to act in resistance to the destructive detention of families and speak out against the violent anti-immigration practices of our nation. A need to point out that the world is on fire, and to tackle any of it, we need to center those in the white heat of the flame -- families fleeing for their lives and seeking asylum, that have been met with police brutality and criminalization in the United States.

These are things we know to be true: you cannot center love without trust, and trust is needed to give or receive unconditional love. That trust and love are far from easy to cultivate - it takes deep vulnerability that is messy, and in navigating that path there will be mistakes. It means setting down your ego and stepping back from the tunnel vision that rises when conflict makes us want to run or hide or freeze where we are.

When we act with a grounded listening to our silence, we have that power where there is a charge, a buzz, an aliveness to the spirit of worship that connects us all in a struggle for justice. We know that this body is capable of harnessing that, because Young Adult Friends in attendance of last year’s Annual Sessions saw it at the Listening Session with attention to the Multicultural Audit Steering Committee and the internal racial justice work needed in this community - a time of convoluted emotions, confusion, and conflict for also the PhYM body. The feeling of the room was a familiar one - a room of people trying with all their might to love each other but struggling with how. It felt like a make it or break it moment - a moment of walking away or deciding that the chasm could be overcome. And through holding all of the different emotions and perspectives and vulnerabilities that showed up, the body chose the latter.

It was the first time in a long time that Young Adult Friends saw a reason to believe in transformative and restorative justice, in healing, in the very idea of change. And through late talks with Young Adult Friends and the opportunity for multigenerational brainstorming and dreaming in the Open Space Technology session, the sketching of the Young Adult Friend Epistle began to form. An air of frustration shifted to a charged feeling of hope that we could ask our spiritual community to stand at our side and be a part of a change we desperately need. A change in our complicity and acceptance of continued violence towards immigrant families at large and specifically at Berks Detention Center, just hours away from where we live, worship, and come together to as a community. Additionally, we need to change in our complicity in violence towards each other.

In the months since Annual Sessions, Young Adult Friends have built relationships with migrant justice organizations that have long been fighting for the rights of asylum seekers in Berks County Detention Center. In building those relationships, we have come to recognize that this is not a world that has been getting worse -- it is a world that existed long before the last presidential election and that there is a privilege in having these violences only recently unearthed. We must hold ourselves accountable in that uncovering, and show up for the reckoning of this history before we ask for a recovery. If Quakers want to tap on their history as abolitionists, we must also pull out the dirty laundry of how this community played a part in creating the current practices of government sanctioned violence as well. For example, the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia -- founded by Quakers -- was where solitary confinement was first introduced as a form of criminal justice reformation. Impact outweighs intention here. Yes, it is complex to take ownership of a history that was harmful long before you personally came into the picture. But it is necessary. The privileges that come with certain skin color, gender identities, sexualities, citizenship status, class, and able-bodied-ness are not shed when we walk into this room to worship. We can, and must, build spaces that call attention to the voices of all those who cannot be in this room due to those conditions and do whatever we can to change it.

For a groundedness, a hope, a healing...for this we joined together at Berks Detention Center this morning. We ask this body to act with us - to show up for the families at Berks County Detention Center through calls to the Governors office, lobby visits, and financial support for organizations long involved in this work. We ask you to bring these ways to act back to your meetings and spiritual spaces because together. We ask you to ground yourselves in the silence to listen - really listen -- to hear the Spirit in each other's words, vulnerabilities, and emotions.



YARDLEY FRIENDS MEETING

65 North Main Street, Yardley, Pennsylvania 19067 • 215.493.5376

Yardley Friends Meeting and Bucks Quarter share this minute with the Quaker Life Council not for action but for sharing with the wider PYM community as an example of how the traditional Quaker practice of recording of ministers can be adapted for use today. Yardley Friends Meeting was pleased to honor and support Ted Taylor in this way.

Linda Flower 1/3/19

Linda Flower

For Ted Taylor's Spiritual Support Committee



YARDLEY FRIENDS MEETING

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MINUTE REGARDING THE RECORDING OF MINISTRY OF TEDFORD TAYLOR

Through a careful process of discernment, the Yardley Monthly Meeting has come to unity in the recording of the healing ministry of its member Tedford Taylor in the Religious Society of Friends.

Ted's gifts of ministry have been recognized and named. His generosity of time and personal energy, his kindness, patience, humility, his listening skills and his personal leading to pursue a healing profession have all been noted by Meeting members. In his choice of profession of chaplaincy and his personal life, he is deeply centered and grounded in the Spirit. We perceive that his primary ministry is in the wider world, as he serves as a channel through which the Inward Christ may comfort, console, encourage and heal those who are suffering.

Ted has grown in his spiritual life as he has continued his education and training, taken leadership roles in the Meeting in the areas of adult religious education, clerkship of Worship and Ministry Committee, and Recording Clerk of Meeting.

As Ted goes out into the world of work, teaching, and conference participation, we feel that he is a fitting representative of Yardley Meeting and the Religious Society of Friends.

With the recording of Ted's ministry, Yardley Monthly Meeting accepts its responsibility to support his ministry through an ongoing eldering and counseling process, through such formal minutes as may be required by outside agencies to certify his standing, and by reasonable financial support for travel and other expenses related to his ministry.

This minute was approved at the April 13, 2008 Meeting for Business.

Edward Snyder, Clerk

5/14/2008

Date

YARDLEY FRIENDS MEETING

65 North Main Street, Yardley, Pennsylvania 19067 • 215.493.5376

Minute Regarding Yardley Monthly Meeting's Ongoing Support of Ted Taylor's Ministry

Ten years ago Yardley Monthly Meeting minuted Ted Taylor's healing ministry in the wider world. The minute was then endorsed by Bucks Quarter. That minute read, in part, "Ted's gifts of ministry have been recognized and named. His generosity of time and personal energy, his kindness, patience, humility, his listening skills and his personal leading to pursue a healing profession have all been noted by Meeting members. In his choice of profession of chaplaincy and his personal life, he is deeply centered and grounded in the Spirit. We perceive that his primary ministry is in the wider world, as he serves as a channel through which the Inward Christ may comfort, console, encourage and heal those who are suffering."

Ted Taylor's ministry includes his work as a compassionate and well-respected hospital chaplain who counsels patients, families and hospital staff. Ted also facilitates the presentation of workshops at RWJBarnabas Health on topics such as organ donation, sexual identity, and end of life challenges. While the workshops are open to anyone their target audience is clergy and those working in health care. The information given helps those people provide better informed service and ministry to all in their care. As director of the hospital's Clinical Pastoral Education Ted Taylor has supervised over 80 individuals through a semester long course of study. He notes each intern's needs and fears and shapes his mentoring to meet them where they are. Most interns report that their time under Ted's tutelage strengthened their personal spiritual life, enhanced their ministry skills, and transformed their understanding of themselves.

Yardley Monthly Meeting recognizes that Ted Taylor's Spirit-led gifts to others are an extension of Yardley Monthly Meeting's ministry. Ten years ago, the Meeting accepted its responsibility, as a body, to support his work in the world. That backing currently includes a monthly gathering of his spiritual support group of Quakers who sit with him as he explores his high and low points and invites Spirit to inform his experience thereby offering him a new understanding. A member of Meeting also serves on his Pastoral Care & Training Advisory Committee at RWJBarnabas Health. The committee's functions include approving department policy changes, affirming his standing as a minister for tax purposes, reviewing his budget, resources, accomplishments, professional development, community outreach and opportunities. The committee also welcomes the new cohort of interns, confidently debriefs the interns at the end of their semester of training, summarizes the intern's critique of the program and of Ted Taylor and provides that report to Ted. Yardley Monthly Meeting provides minutes, as needed, to certify his standing. The Meeting also offers some financial support for his travel to conferences and for education.

With the recording of this minute we again recognize, and, with gratitude, honor Ted's Spirit led healing ministry. Yardley Monthly Meeting also affirms its ongoing support of Ted Taylor's ministry. Our Meeting is grateful for the opportunity to widen the scope of our ministry in the world through Ted's work at RWJBarnabas Health System.

This minute was approved at the October 14, 2018 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

Linda Jacobs
Linda Jacobs, Clerk

11/11/2018
Date

John...
Edith...
...
Alan Walker

Christine Dreidenbach
Eisa Jarowsky
Betty...
Phyllis...
Jared Zimmerman

...
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Wendy M. Allen
Sandy Gibson
Deen Barnes-Poy
Ken Smalley



YARDLEY FRIENDS MEETING

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Minute Regarding Yardley Monthly Meeting's Ongoing Support of Ted Taylor's Ministry

Addendum: This Minute, which was approved by Yardley Friends Meeting on October 14, 2018, was then approved by Buck's Quarter at the Meeting for Business on November 18, 2018.