

Welcome and Agenda Review

Co-presiding clerk Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch (Schuylkill Valley MM, Caln QM) welcomed us into our business this evening, providing an overview of the agenda.

We began with introductions from the rising clerk, the clerks of the Councils, our recording clerks, Elders and Pastoral Care members in attendance, and our General Secretary, and welcomed visitors in our midst. Christie Duncan-Tessmer, our General Secretary, provided an overview of the technology we're using tonight.

We settled into worship, and heard a land acknowledgement offered by S. Boone Murphy (Salem QM).

Co-presiding clerk Frank Barch offered queries for our silent reflection:

- Why did I choose to come to these business sessions?
 - What am I bringing to serve the community?
 - How do I hope to be served by being here?
 - What do I expect to take away with me?
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General Secretary's Report

We then turned our attention to our [General Secretary's report](#). We heard that our Yearly Meeting is in strong financial shape, which in the year 2020 is great news. Christie described our PYM environment with the metaphor of a series of neurons which receive and send and transmit information and Spirit to each other.

Some of these "neurons" recently have included: [Giant Children's Meeting](#), the [Young Adult Friends Instagram](#) Project, and the [Friends Counseling](#) Service's 7-week series focused on mindfulness meditation, as well as gatherings among our monthly and quarterly meetings. All of these activities, like neural activity, facilitate our connections to God and to each other.

Nominations & Releases from Service

Terri Whiteford, clerk of Nominating Council, brought four nominations and a release before the body.

- Cathy Toner (Downingtown MM, Caln QM) for Administrative Council;
- Robert Greene (Princeton MM, Burlington QM) for Quaker Life Council;
- Keith Barch (Schuylkill MM, Caln QM) for PYM representative to Friends General Conference;

- and Margery Rubin (Medford MM, Haddonfield QM) as a PYM representative to American Friends Service Committee.

Julia Carrigan (Mickleton MM, Salem QM) has requested a release from service. Friends approved these nominations and release with gratitude.

Quaker Life & Administrative Council Reports

Anthony Stover, clerk of Quaker Life Council, reminded Friends of the charge of QLC. Anthony noted the value of having younger Friends in service on the Council, and would like to reserve two seats on the council for younger voices.

There are currently nine Collaboratives under the care of the Council, as well as several other bodies. There is much work to do, and Anthony invited others to join him on the adventure. Friends in attendance asked how to get in touch with those involved with the work of the Collaboratives, and we heard that there is contact information on the website, and that PYM staff are also available to support those connections.

We were reminded of the importance of the State of the Meeting reports to help us know how we are growing and learning together, and were encouraged to engage in the creation of these reports. We heard a question from the body about the status of the anti-racism activity under the care of this Council, which we heard will be addressed later this evening by the Ministry and Care Committee.

Jim Waddington, clerk of Administrative Council, reported for the body. There are five new members of the Admin Council, which have allowed the council to repopulate the numerous committees under their care. They have also been engaged in reevaluating their various committee charges to perform necessary housekeeping.

There are two Sprints (short-term committees) that Admin Council has been involved in: Strategic Directions and Governance; and Membership and Belonging. The latter includes all of the Councils of the YM. Our YM contributions to the Reinvestment Fund have met our expectations, which has encouraged us to reconsider our other investment strategies.

The Administrative Council is always looking for ways to work together with the two other Councils on initiatives that can deepen our spiritual connections, as well as engaging in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to aid in strategic planning going forward.

Jim identified one glaring need: the Administrative Council is responsible for appointing 5 at-large members on Nominating Council. They are particularly looking for ways to increase diversity on Nominating Council. Recognizing that Nominating Council will continue to meet via Zoom to permit participation from far-flung Friends, we were encouraged to spread the word about this opportunity and send names their way.

Clerks' Report

The co-Presiding Clerks then shared that as of December 7, 19 monthly and 2 quarterly meetings have responded to the general call to consider the three issues currently under discussion within the YM: questions regarding membership, eco-justice, and our commitment to addressing racism. The co-Presiding Clerks presented an interim report summarizing the responses from Meetings to date. This report is attached (*and published*)

Friends shared reactions to the [co-Clerks' summary report](#), which included questioning how to phrase what we are working toward – the language we use is important. Are we working toward anti-racism? Toward healing racial wounds? Others encouraged us to look around the Zoom call to see who is and is not represented here.

Some Friends shared their experience of having their gifts recognized by the YM, only to have their service stymied by a lack of monthly meeting membership.

Other Friends shared their experience with differing interpretations of membership, and we were reminded that the issue of membership is not age-bound. There is clearly more discernment that is needed, and these concerns will be back on our agenda in March. Our co-clerks encouraged Friends present to bring these questions back to our monthly meetings to engage further.

We heard about upcoming programs – Spring Sessions virtually March 27th. Annual sessions are scheduled July 27-Aug 1 but we have not yet decided whether or not we'll be in person. Friends are encouraged to visit the PYM website to learn more about children's and youth programs coming up.

We also heard about upcoming Thread Gatherings (workshops) focused on Addressing Anti-Blackness in our Monthly Meetings, Responding with Care to the Seasons in the Life of a Meeting, Truth and Transformation, and Engagement and Fundraising. More details are available on the PYM website.

Our co-Presiding Clerks shared four closing queries:

- Why am I glad I chose to come to these business sessions?
- How was I able to use what I brought in service to the community?
- What did I receive by being here?
- What am I taking away with me?

These minutes were approved by the body.

Respectfully submitted, Kri Burkander