



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Quaker Life Council Retreat of 17 February 2018 - draft

Present: Jim Herr, Zachary Dutton, Kate Bregman, Andrew Anderson, Amy Brooks, Bryn Hammarstrom, Melanie Douty-Snipes, Penny Colgan-Davis, Kri Burkander, Gray Goodman, Karen Winner, George Rubin, Cate Marion

Regrets: Ayesha Imani

Minutes

Members worshipped together in retreat and proceeded to worship with the two other Councils. Reports were given by each of the Council clerks.

General Secretary Report: Christie: Duncan-Tessmer: She spoke on the efforts of the National Council of Churches to end racism. April 4 is the first day of a 3-day launch of this ministry entitled, "Act Now: Unite to End Racism". In Washington, D.C. There are two days of worshipping and listening to speakers. The third day is set aside to meet and speak to political leaders in Congress. Friends are encouraged to attend. The NCC is setting up a structure on how to continue the work in eradicating racism. Information will be sent to monthly meetings. PYM will work with other faith communities to support the logistics of attending.

Multicultural Steering Committee: tonya thames taylor: The Committee has created a Care and Concern Committee to support its members. The Committee has also created a rubric for measuring what a consulting group needs to address. Finally, they have created a committee to manage a call for proposals. The Steering Committee will be making a recommendation for a consultant to the Yearly Meeting.

QLC Retreat: Members took time for reflective walking outside followed by worship. Following worship members engaged in activities to help spiritually ground them in the work of the QLC.

Youth Program Sprint: The Sprint created a mission statement, vision statement, and an organizational structure for youth programs at PYM. Kri read the document to Friends.

Members minuted deep thanks to the SPRINT for the report.

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Members sensed the group should be a Committee of the QLC.

Members received report. QLC members should send feedback to Kri before 2/24.

After modifications, the report will be sent out with advanced documents for Continuing Sessions.

Mapping Brainstorm: Members divided into 4 groups and brainstormed ways to answer the 4 parts of the PYM mapping structure that lacked information. The sections were:

- a. Maintain Health and Integrity of the Community
- b. Support Spiritual Depth of the Community
- c. Cultivate Relations within the Community
- d. Nurture Meetings

Friends reconvened and summarized to the entire Council ideas from each subgroup.

Continuing Sessions Report: Members provided input.

1. Minutes of Concern: history + desire for seasoning
2. Youth Program: Summary with linked email address for feedback
3. Discernment Team: Update
4. State of the Meeting Reports: Explain the history and the need
5. Collaboratives: each has a contact person on QLC.
6. Retreat : Nurturing the PYM Spiritual Community

Members closed with worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Gray Goodman, Recording Clerk

Youth Program Document

Vision Statement:

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting children, youth and their families will feel connected to and engaged with the Religious Society of Friends, and seekers will be drawn to the Religious Society of Friends via programs and practices that provide for connection and engagement.

Mission Statement:

PYM demonstrates our commitment to community, accessibility, and the foundation of our Quaker faith by working together to provide youth of all ages with opportunities for meaningful participation.

This mission is rooted in four pillars: Community, Accessibility, Quaker Faith and Values, and Meaningful Participation.

The first pillar is Community. We aim to provide youth, children, families, and seekers in our yearly meeting with opportunities to gather and be known to one another through shared experiences. We note that these opportunities may take place at either monthly, quarterly, or yearly meeting levels, and we are committed to supporting integration between and across these offerings. Additionally, our youth programs have the intention to nurture a sense of belonging and building supportive relationships within and among our youth, children, families, volunteers, and staff. To support this intention and these relationships, youth programs are structured to support the provision of pastoral care as appropriate by staff. Lastly, we recognize and celebrate the different youth communities within PYM and wish to nurture connections among them.

The second pillar is Accessibility. We aim to provide programs that are intentionally welcoming to everyone (with respect to race, physical ability, class/financial ability, gender, familiarity with Quaker process, and geographic location) with adequate support and accommodations that permit participation by all. Our commitment to accessibility means that

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we recognize that the diversity within our community, as well as the broader community, strengthens us.

The third pillar is Quaker Faith and Values. Our programs are intended to invite all children, youth, and their families into deeper relationship with Spirit and nurture an understanding of our Quaker faith, traditions, and practice. Our programs provide youth with opportunities to grow spiritually, cultivate their leadership ability, learn and own Quaker process, and care for each other in loving community. We aim to nurture the capacity of youth to build Quaker faith communities and equip our youth to bear Quaker witness in the world.

The fourth pillar is Meaningful Participation. We are driven to provide children, youth, and their families with experiences that speak to their needs for exploration, knowledge, spiritual growth, and leadership development. We believe that these experiences prepare children and youth with important skills as well as engendering a commitment to remain engaged with the Yearly Meeting through the years.

Governance Structure

Youth Programs Advisory Collaborative ("Y-PAC")

Membership: 9 members

-Youth Engagement Coordinator (Melinda)

-Associate Secretary for Program and Religious Life (Zachary) - ex officio

-MSF youth representative

-YF youth representation

-at least one member of Youth Sprint III

-parent representative

3-at-large members provided by Nominating Committee (approved by QLC)

Membership Notes:

In considering membership for this committee, attention should be paid to all aspects of diversity named above, including race, class, geographic location, and experience with Quakerism.

Youth members - at least one MSF and one YF who don't necessarily serve as clerks (inviting new role as liaison to YPAC). Youth members may be active at any level of youth programming - monthly, quarterly, and/or yearly.

At large members are intended to provide outside voices that are not necessarily familiar to those on the YPAC or QLC - to ensure that youth programs are meeting the needs of all stakeholders. Guidance to Nominating should be to seek members from diverse parts of the YM, and those who bring the perspective of monthly and quarterly meetings.

YPAC Responsibilities

- This group should meet no less than 4 times per year, and be available for consultation as needed with the Youth Engagement Coordinator
- Support the staff and volunteers in carrying out the mission and vision of the PYM youth programs
- Serve as a sounding board for Youth Engagement Coordinator
- Ongoing evaluation of the MSF and YF guidelines to ensure that they still meet the needs of the group and serve to support the vision and mission of youth programs
- Support the organization and coordination of Youth Resource Friends
- Consult with Administrative Council on any matters related to Youth Program staff
- Provide policy guidance for staff and volunteers throughout the yearly meeting, including those related to child safety
- Assisting with communication between youth programming and various communities within the YM
- Regularly evaluate that the YM youth programs are supporting the Strategic Directions of the YM and that programs are serving the needs of youth (recommend surveying youth who are involved and those not involved to identify areas of improvement)

PYM Mapping Brainstorming

Query: How can the Quaker Life Council accomplish the following tasks?

Amy 1: Maintain Health and Integrity of the Community:

1. Website measurement of use and whether that is an effective tool - QLC puts out a newsletter and share the monthly meetings
2. Shout out the monthly meetings with inspirational words and have some revelations about connection -
3. Road trips to monthly meetings and using us to do some of that work communicating with our meetings-

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4. Incorporating Faith and Practice and making sure people read it
5. Reviewing annual state of the meeting reports/spiritual self assessments - impact on one meeting is remarkable and helps with its integrity and this can be very nurturing to health and integrity of our communities - QLC will look at themes and divergences and share that back with the Yearly Meeting.
6. Working on defining healthy relationships between yearly, quarterly meetings and monthly meetings members (Listening with love, openness, non-shaming, etc.)
7. Providing real, substantive training in conflict resolution
8. Encourage personal individual spiritual self assessments
9. QLC doing its own Spiritual Self Assessment
10. Defining what we are as a Peace-based Religious Community and seeking and living into what that asks us to do in holding ourselves accountable
11. Modeling and defining what a healthy spiritual meeting community is and what our obligations and responsibilities are living into that with all of the contradictions that entails
12. Defining a community that is both safe/loving and courageous
13. We are all ministers and clerks and educating people on ministry + clerking.

Gray 2: Support Spiritual Depth of the Community:

1. Sharing beliefs via
 - a. potlucks + conversations
 - b. Presentation followed by worship sharing
 - c. Spiritual formation programs and Quakerism 101
 - d. Religious Education All Ages: linking readings with personal connection.
 - e. Make use of Melinda Wenner Bradley's national curriculum network.
2. Skill building in:
 1. Listening
 2. Daily connecting to the Divine.
 3. Deepening spiritually leads to trust, which helps periods of conflict.
3. Structured Programs/Opportunities
4. Monthly meetings share what works in their meetings.
5. Bridge Contacts with Monthly Meetings to maintain links with PYM.
6. Help small MM who don't have enough members
7. Work with the Sessions Planning Committee.
 - e. Work, listen, relate in worship through PYM events.
8. Stay in contact with Collaboratives- check in frequently.
9. Resource Friends: mentor and/or support them.
10. Holding ourselves accountable for deepening our spirituality.
11. Norms of behavior for how we relate to each other + bring out the best.

Kri 3: Cultivate Relations within the Community:

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1. Consider the membership of sprints and collaboratives and make sure that they span monthly/quarterly meetings
2. Work to ensure that YM continuing and annual sessions and other programs are accessible for all Friends
3. Think about how to help monthly meetings find value in YM association, nurture those relationship (What's in it for them?)
4. Sister meetings? Partnerships across quarters
5. Use of Resource Friends
6. Intentional intervisitation
7. Strategic use of state of the meeting reports to nurture relationship building and resource sharing
8. Youth Programs bring youth and families together - QLC might consider how to provide support to families and Quaker parents

Zachary 4: Nurture Meetings:

- How do we cultivate relationships with monthly meetings?
- How do we make PYM's presence relevant for monthly meetings
 - Developed a state of the meeting reports process,
 - developed a process for addressing minutes of concern,
 - resource friends are in development,
 - program committee keeps collaboratives accountable for being in touch with monthly meetings about their work,