



Ministry and Care Committee

Report to Quaker Life Council of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

June 2021

This year's work for Ministry and Care Committee of Quaker Life Council has focused on two major tasks: the Spiritual State of the Yearly Meeting Report and the Truth and Reconciliation concerns assigned to us by Quaker Life Council.

In order to develop the Spiritual State of the Yearly Meeting Report, the M&C considered what queries might assist the monthly meetings in examining their year. All Monthly Meetings were invited to respond and we received 64 reports from 58 distinct entities, several of which were quarterly meetings. We continue to find that meetings profit from being invited to submit their reports early in the year, and notice that some monthly meetings have a well-developed practice of considering the spiritual state of their meeting at the close of the year. We note as well that some meetings find being provided with queries helpful and supportive to their process while others seem to profit from seeking their own queries from other sources. We were able to reassure meetings that the queries provided were not intended to be proscriptive but were to be used as they found them useful.

The most significant portion of our effort and work this year has been devoted to looking at the request from Quaker Life Council to develop a Truth and Reconciliation process for the yearly meeting to use particularly focused on instances of racial wounding and available for use as other conflicts arise. Several months were spent looking at the Truth and Reconciliation process as it has been applied in other situations and concluding that we needed to develop something different for the use of Phila YM. Our first attempts at this process met with some concerns from QLC which we used as part of the basis for revision of the process. We do not have the power or authority to mandate reconciliation. We know that deep listening has the potential to be transformative. These considerations have led us to develop and support a process for the yearly meeting to use in which deep listening forms the foundation on which transformation is built. We have offered a thread gathering program in which we presented this concept and taught some of the concepts and skills Friends needed to support it. Now that we have completed work on the Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports for this year, we are returning to this Truth and Transformation work, preparing a presentation/training for the runway to annual sessions, and looking at next steps in training and supporting monthly meetings to take up this method where it would be useful to them. We are also developing materials which can be available to monthly meetings for additional support which will primarily be provided by Resource Friends.

Respectfully submitted, Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch, Clerk, on behalf of the committee