

## Reports from PYM Collaboratives to the Quaker Life Council

**Contents** (click on a heading to jump to report)

Antiracism Collaborative Annual Report .....	2
Eco Justice Collaborative Annual Report .....	5
First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative.....	8
Legislative Policy Collaborative.....	13
Middle East Collaborative .....	16
Spiritual Formation Collaborative.....	18

# Antiracism Collaborative Annual Report

Prepared by Wanda Wyffels, Clerk

May 31, 2021

**1. How does your group meet and how frequently?**

We currently meet via Zoom, once a month.

**2. Does the clerk have adequate support from the collaborative or group?**

That's a definite yes; we truly work as a collaborative. As clerk, I'm the face of the Collaborative, but the work is done by all of us as we are able.

**3. Are tasks delegated in the committee with good follow through?**

Yes. Although I write the agendas, the convening of the meetings and minute taking is shared. Our work, such as the interviews we did, was accomplished by dividing up the meetings with 9 people on the collaborative doing the work. There are 2 people working on resource lists. A group was formed to talk with the DEI Sprint to determine our way forward together. A group was formed to work on a Thread Gathering between Fall & Spring Continuing Sessions. Some people are reaching out to other Collaboratives to ask about working together. And we all take part in visioning in each meeting to decide what we want to do in the future.

**4. How does your collaborative remain spiritually grounded through its work?**

We open and close each meeting with worship. I believe we all share a calling to do this work and we encourage and hold each other accountable on our individual as well as collaborative paths.

**5. Let us know what you have been up to; what have you been doing over the past year?**

**6. What are some accomplishments you want to highlight?**

**7. What events or projects have you successfully implemented?**

**This answer addresses # 5, 6, & 7**

This past year has been a whirlwind of activity from our approval last May 16<sup>th</sup> to now. We have our site up and running. On it, we have our initial letter of contact with meetings, info about who we are, a glossary of terms, a resource list, the 2016 minute from Fellowship of Friends of African Descent, Queries from the 2020 Friends of Color & Their Families FCG Pre-gathering, a suggestion list from a White Privilege Conference, our report to Spring 2021 Continuing Sessions, and our survey results.

We conducted interviews with 82 meetings and worship groups across PYM to ascertain what their m/wg was doing in terms of antiracism work. As you can imagine, this was a lot of work and we hope by publishing the results meetings can find new ways to work on antiracism.

Thus far, we have posted one resource list on our site and hope to have a second one, focused on antiracist actions to take, published shortly.

We offered a report to Spring Continuing Sessions 2021 of our work. Two of us represented ARC on the Addressing Racism Panel Discussion. Two of us provided eldership for the Anti-Blackness Thread Gathering. Many of us attended the Truth and Transformation Thread Gathering as well as well as other PYM events.

We have begun the process of:

- Creating a Thread Gathering to be held between Fall and Spring Sessions.
- Taking part in the Collaborative Fair as part of the Runway to Annual Sessions.
- Reaching out to other Collaboratives to imagine how we can work together on antiracism.

**8. How has your work over the past year moved you closer to achieving your goals?**

Since we were just approved May 16, 2020, #8 is answered in #9 below

**9. What progress has been made in goals that your collaborative has set?**

**First, here are our stated vision, mission, and goals:**

The **vision** the Antiracism Collaborative holds is of a time when Meetings within PYM have become/are welcoming and safe for all people, including people of all races and ethnicities, so that all will be nurtured and grow.

Our **mission** to achieve this vision is to provide accompaniment and support to meetings who seek further work on antiracism.

Our **goals** to achieve this mission are to:

1. Develop relationships with other groups and individuals within PYM concerned with antiracism.
2. Create and update resources on the Anti-Racism Collaborative pages of PYM's website.
3. Visit meetings to invite others to join us in learning and doing anti-racism work.
4. Provide or assist meetings with classes, programs, and workshops on antiracism.
5. Continue our own learning and encourage others to continue theirs.
6. Making sure there is someone within each quarter that receives our updates/materials.

**Goal #1** is currently being worked on. Thus far, contact has been made with the Eco-Justice Collaborative. At our last meeting we have assigned people to contact the Middle East Collaborative, First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative, and India Friends Collaborative. Although it wasn't included on our list thus far, we will also reach out to the Legislative Policy Collaborative. As of now, we haven't fully formed our idea of how to work with the other collaboratives, and it remains to be seen as we make these contacts, but our hope is that we can gather and work together on antiracism.

**Goal #2** is ongoing. We will continue to provide resource lists. Our list #2 will be focused on action.

**Goal #3** began during the interviews and as meetings begin to open up their physical doors we will visit meetings to invite them into antiracism work or encourage their continuing work.

**Goal #4** has yet to be realized. We see the survey info as a start but are still working on this goal.

**Goal #5** is a continuing process. We email each other when we find a workshop or program on antiracism, have read or watched a book or article or video that was powerful to us personally, and sometimes mention these during our meetings.

**Goal #6** still needs to be organized. We have a start with the contacts through the interviews and with PYM adding us to the News/Events emails on occasion, but we need to focus on this goal in our next meeting.

**10. What challenges have you had in making progress?**

We had wanted to be able to reach all the meetings/working groups with our interviews and there are a few that are still in process to add to the 82 we already posted on our website, but we have decided to stop the work so we may move on to other projects.

**11. How is the work of the collaborative being shared with the PYM community?**

- We participate in PYM events as asked, e.g. Panel Discussion, and are planning a Thread Gathering right now.
- We take part in Sessions as asked.
- We write news blurbs as asked for the News/Events emails sent by PYM.
- We share our work on the PYM website (<https://www.pym.org/anti-racism-collaborative/>).
- We attempted to reach out to all meetings/worship groups with our interviews and posted the results on our site so everyone could see the work being done around PYM for ideas of what they wish to do.
- We posted a resource list on our site and are currently working on a second one.

- The DEI Sprint joins our meetings.
- We are currently reaching out to other collaboratives to do shared work.

**12. How can the Program Committee of the Quaker Life Council help to support the work of your collaborative?**

Our representative, Sue Dietz, is a valued working member of our collaborative and she has offered much support to our work. If anything is needed in the future, we would reach out to her with our need and she would bring it to you.

# Eco Justice Collaborative Annual Report

May 2021

## 1. How does your group meet and how frequently?

Eco Justice Collaborative meets at least once a month by Zoom. We connect as well, throughout the month on specific projects. We convene subcommittees/sprints for continuing projects such as the Climate Action Network (CAN), EJC Web page design, webinars, and newsletters.

When necessary, we have additionally called meetings of the whole group.

## 2. Does the clerk have adequate support from the collaborative or group?

Since we started having two clerks, the work is easier. One clerk does not have to be the only contact and given the nature of our work the clerks support each other and more can be done. Each member of EJC is an important collaborator and each member manages projects that are also supported by the other members.

## 3. Are tasks delegated in the committee with good follow through?

Often there are multiple concurrent projects with members crossing over to assist on another project. The members of EJC are passionate about the work they are doing and concerned with the existential urgency of the climate crisis. Given the nature of the work, success is not always possible but follow through is never a problem.

## 4. How does your collaborative remain spiritually grounded through its work?

The members of EJC are clear about the difficulties we are facing and would not be capable of continuing their work without the courage that comes from reliance on a spiritual force. Our work can only grow out of deep internal spiritual reflection and worship. Many of us are grieving for the state of the earth and the condition of the people who are exploited, oppressed, and abused. Without the support of our spiritual practices, we would have less hope. Without spiritual grounding we would soon burn out. The members of EJC recognize that much of the work Quakers do in the world arises out of compassion for suffering. This compassion or love comes from our worship and our attention to the Light.

## 5. Let us know what you have been up to; what have you been doing over the past year?

A major focus of our work is to find ways to connect, communicate, and convene Friends who want to work with us. We connect through our Traveling Ministry and presentations on multiple climate and justice issues. In the last two years our webinars have been an effective tool to convene Friends, provide education and build community. Our newsletter and event alerts are now published by PYM and reach a larger number of Friends.

We are dabbling in social media when we can and have opened a Facebook page with over 160 likes and post to it several times a week. During the pandemic, our Traveling Ministry visited MMs online, providing education on the growth dilemma and the financial drivers of climate change and inequality. We developed a EJC presentation which has been presented at FWCC, QEW, two meetings and one Quarter. This past year there has been an intensive effort to support the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). We embarked on educational campaigns, with webinars, newsletter stories and alerts. Additionally, we distributed letters of support for RGGI to the PA governor, signed by twenty meetings. When needed we published calls to contact representatives in our monthly newsletter.

Webinars we produced, recorded, and made available online are:

- Connections between Immigration and Climate Change
- Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) & Community Solar
- The Climate Justice Work of Five Monthly Meetings in PYM

- A Critique of Michael Moore's Film on Climate Justice Organizations
- Green Investing November 16, 2020
- Why the Crises We Face Make Financial Reform Essential
- A Clean Energy Future: How We Get there at the Local Level
- And though no recording is available we produced a webinar on Project Drawdown, the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Pachamama Alliance. A member of the collaborative gives workshops on Project Drawdown and Pachamama when asked.

Friendly Households: a Mini Transition initiative is being implemented at Old Haverford Friends Meeting and one other meeting is exploring implementation.

Members of EJC have embarked on a campaign to educate and support public banking at the local and national levels. We are pleased to see that a green public bank has been established in Philadelphia.

One of our members developed a program on resilience and adaptation in response to extreme weather.

This program is available on request. Program covers: Resilience, Developing a meeting Preparedness Plan, Responding to Disaster, Emotional and Spiritual Care.

#### **6. What are some accomplishments you want to highlight?**

Since January 2020, EJC has been working intensively with the PYM leadership, council clerks, general secretary, PYM clerks, and now the Climate spring. We have contacted most of the MMs and we know that at least twenty MMs have approved our minute to make the climate crisis a meeting-wide concern. We are finding ways to be more effective advocates at the local/township, state, and national levels. Since our last report, we have created a compendium of written materials and resources to support our climate minute.

#### **7. What events or projects have you successfully implemented?**

The success we seek is a spiritual turning of Friends as they take responsibility for healing the earth and the corrosive human relationships that are exacerbated by racism and poverty. We are now seeing some of that turning by Friends in PYM.

We are beginning to establish an expanded and effective Climate Action Network including a dynamic web presence. In addition to our webinars, we took part in the panel discussion on climate change as lead-up to Continuing Sessions. FWCC invited EJC to present our work on the climate change in PYM.

#### **8. How has your work over the past year moved you closer to achieving your goals?**

The work of the last year has been difficult but encouraging. Climate change and justice issues are systems problems that require larger perspectives on world problems. Our work has helped increase awareness among PYM Friends of the interconnectedness of the climate crisis and social and racial justice issues. This understanding has strengthened the work on all these fronts. Quakers are small but far-reaching in their influence and impact. Our talent is our ability to think and build paradigms, and to see clearly the actions that are needed. When Quakers organize, they are powerful.

#### **9. What progress has been made in goals that your collaborative has set?**

Increased membership in the collaborative itself, as well as the growing numbers in attendance at our webinars and in our workshops, is evidence that increasing numbers of Friends in PYM are being led to work on the climate crisis. We have been able to connect Friends to one another for collaboration, provide tools for action, and connect PYM Friends to the wider Quaker community working on earth care. This building of community is crucial to the essential work of transformation that lies before us. The specifics of our work changes and develops continuously but the members of EJC are powerful, intelligent, and effective. With or without resources, EJC grows stronger and more effective each year.

**10. What challenges have you had in making progress?**

The year 2020 through the first half of 2021 has been difficult because of the pandemic. We are looking forward to in-person contact with our community. Publicity and connection with the yearly meeting membership are continuing challenges but recent developments to distribute our newsletter to a larger readership through the Peace & Justice network and weekly PYM updates has been encouraging. We are also making progress on a Climate Action Network and a dynamic Eco Justice web site.

**11. How is the work of the collaborative being shared with the PYM community?**

We connect continuously through our newsletters, webinars, online public events, and for the last two years, our Traveling Ministry.

**12. How can the Program Committee of the Quaker Life Council help to support the work of your collaborative?**

We would like to be in closer contact with QLC, especially as we move forward with climate and climate justice as Yearly Meeting witness. We appreciate the work of the Climate Sprint and believe that close coordination with QLC would be helpful.

During the pandemic we were not able to use the funds the QLC funding group awarded us. We appreciate your trust and support. Thank you!

**Acknowledgments:** We are incredibly grateful for the liaison work of Andrew Anderson who kept communication open between EJC and PYM leadership team. Olivia Brangan has been a close and invaluable friend to and collaborator with EJC. We are as well, deeply appreciative of Zachary Dutton’s leadership and his critical and organized response to our goals. T.J. Jourian, Malcolm McAtee, and Shelly Xia have been enormously helpful, guiding us through the technical issues related to the Climate Action Network.

**ECO Justice Collaborative**

Bruce Birchard  
Burt Dallas  
Ruth Darlington  
Patricia Finley  
Pamela Haines

Paula Kline  
Stephen Loughin  
O Love  
Margaret Mansfield  
Kathryn Metzker

Steve Olshevski  
Liz Robinson  
Rita Varley  
Richard Whiteford

## First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative

Annual Report 2019 – 2020

December 2020

Loving works by “members” of the First-Contact Reconciliation Collaborative are represented with those ascribed by Lenape Tribal Nations’ leaders as allies and/ or those in accompaniment or companionship with Indigenous concerns. With humility, we acknowledge that the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting region is primarily existent within Lenapehoking, ancestral & contemporary land of the Lenape Peoples/ sovereign Tribal Nations; yet Friends also occupy homelands of the Nanticoke Indian Tribe and the ancient territory of the (removed) Susquehannocks.

Glory be of our maker – Yahweh, Allah, God, Spirit, Creator.... This report from the First-Contact Reconciliation Collaborative represents approximately 18 months of Spiritual listening, engagement with local Lenape Tribal Nations/ Peoples as well as “Indian Country” truths, as well as Friends’ labours of espousing historical t/Truths (sometimes painful), healing, and acts of social engagement/ justice. We pray too that PYM corporate structures held by staff, interns, councils, clerkships, all currently serving, those yet to rise, youth, and those who have transitioned may seek clearness and speak to our condition righteously; if/ when there is confusion may we gather with open hearts and minds toward growing together.

Some reoccurring local concerns include recognizing (authentic Tribal Nation) Indigenous sovereignty; common and unique cultural features of Indigenous Peoples; patterns of dismissive predominant cultural appropriations and stereotyping; steadfast predominant cultural lifeways/ defensiveness; and grief/ remorse driving spiritual “blocks.”

First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative has created and stewards [their PYM web page](#) ; rising 2021 FCRC co-representative contact is Arla Patch (Doylestown MM,) [arla@arlapatch.com](mailto:arla@arlapatch.com), along with s. boone o’Scheyichbi, [aliibiondi@gmail.com](mailto:aliibiondi@gmail.com).

Peacemakers, locally and worldwide, are engaging in acts that redress practices of colonization - conquering then remaining, settling permanently, maintaining political paternalistic cultural oversight/ genocide (defined by the United Nations.) Those in relationship with PYM’s First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative are instrumental in the following joyful noise:

### Listening to Authentic Indigenous Voices

**DAWNLAND** and **DEAR GEORGINA**, online screenings, documentaries of truth-telling by individuals of four Maine Indian tribes - Maliseet, Micmac, Penobscot and Passamaquoddy - known collectively as the **Wabanaki**, "People of the Dawnland";

**Protecting Tribal Lands and Sacred Places: Current Threats Across Indian Country**, National Congress of American Indians;

**The Untold Story**, National Congress of American Indians, conversation on racial equity;

**Native American Presidential Forum**, Aug 2019, where a hand-full of Democratic Presidential candidates were greeted by panels of Indigenous leaders who individually posed relevant background and inquired of candidates “how Tribal Nation sovereignty, Treaty rights, and human rights would manifest in their Presidency.” Recordings are available through [Four Directions](#);

**History of the Lenape in the Lower Delaware Valley**, Historical Society of PA;

**Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples** Conference, Pendle Hill Planning Committee members (due to the pandemic, the conference turned into a webinar series of six sessions over 12 weeks, Summer – Fall 2020):

**Sovereignty and Tribal Government Relations in the United States and Canada** with Jerilyn DeCoteau and Will David <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBHf9QqO-BE&feature=youtu.be>

**Implementing the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** with Sheryl Lightfoot and Jennifer Preston (non-native) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yj0Pj0Q1k0>

**Cultural Appreciation vs. Appropriation/ Misappropriation** with Dan and Mary Lou Smoke, Freida Jacques, Rev. J.R. Norwood, and Trinity Norwood <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1gnEwy5WRo>

**Truth and Healing** with Marie Wilson, Denise Altvater, Esther Anne, and Penthea Burns <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltXpUvV0AJk>

**Solidarity, Guidance for Engagement** with Kenneth Deer and Chief Dennis Coker <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-rpugmPEhc>

**Healing from Intergenerational Trauma** with Elicia Goodsoldier and Cante' Waste Win (Good Hearted Woman) Zephier [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g\\_1btw5Mvuw;](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_1btw5Mvuw;)

**Dawnland Signals: [Tribal Sovereignty](#) and [Land Acknowledgments](#);**

**Everyday Decolonization: How to Rebalance Power for Equity & Justice in Your Organization**, Edgar Villanueva, author of *Decolonizing Wealth*;

**Leadership Summit: Indigenous Rights and Environmental Justice** series, Edgar Villanueva;

**Using Books to Engage Young Children in Talk about Race & Justice** hosted by EmbraceRace; “*raising inclusive, empathetic children who are able to think critically and compassionately about race and racial justice...\_raising inclusive, empathetic children who are able to think critically and compassionately about race and racial justice*”;

**Rethinking Thanksgiving**, SU4RJ - Showing-Up for Racial Justice.

## Consultations

Byberry Monthly Meeting (Mary Ellen and Susan), acknowledging Indigenous children interned in the burial grounds and working with their families/ relatives;

\*New York Yearly Meeting Indian Committee co-clerks (Buffy and Liseli,) collaboration toward workshops with Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting;

Parent of a high school student carrying a concern of mascotry (Atlantic County,) school’s leadership seen as elusive, parent desires anonymity, guided to FCRC web, ongoing;

Former students and faculty carrying a concern of mascotry (Unionville, Chester County, PA) leadership leaning-in by altering the logo, taking up the concern despite (some) push back within the community, selection

committee offers two potential new mascots/ imagery names, providing (exemplary) [youtube video](#) identifying intentions, benefits for both options, voting will be the rising 8th-12th graders, resolve/ announcement expected Jan 2021;

Member of Philadelphia Cricket club, carrying a concern for inappropriate Indigenous club logo, small group of club members taking up informal conversations, guided to FCRC web, subsequently FCRC declined news media interview request, ongoing;

\*\*Medford Meeting “75 Things” Group carrying a concern of local Regional HS district with multiple indigenous mascotry, ongoing;

Abington Friends outreach for historic truths of “Quakers dealing with the Lenni Lenape”, sovereign Lenape Nations removed...toward a land acknowledgement and Minute being developed by MM, sensing resistance for change/ decolonizing, further educational materials available on FCRC web, ongoing;

Kendal, Land acknowledgement for southern Chester County (Lenapehoking);

\*\*\*Quaker Religious Education with Melinda Wenner-Bradley; how First Day School lessons might be more inclusive *How do we approach this topic (education lacking truths/ perspective of Indigenous Peoples) in youth religious education programs? How do we address the history of colonizer settlement, including of oppression of Native people by Quakers? What resources are helpful, and how do we assess bias in resources about indigenous people?*

Kendal, Monday Talks, Land Acknowledgement to open their reading of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address (Words that Come Before All Else,) engaged in discussion...invitation to return as way opens, ongoing;

Birmingham Friends First Day School facilitators (Chester County) seeking inclusion of Indigenous Peoples of their region and native plants, mitigate historic mistruths, biases, stereotypes, focus on Hannah Freeman (Lenape) b./d. Chester Co;

Chestnut Hill Friends, Addressing Racism Committee seeking to understand the practice of land acknowledgements, advices due to PA history and current resistance voiced within their committee, ongoing.

## **Public Speaking Engagements**

Annual Sessions 2019, *Candling One’s Self* 2-hour workshop;

Tri-Quarter Gathering 2019, *Tribal Realities*, by Jeremy Newman, a unique documentary of the Nanticoke Lenape Tribal Nation;

FCRC sponsored workshop [Call to Action\(s\)](#) Oct. 2019, Friends Ctr, Phila., introduce sacred Treaty of Amity Wampum Belt; truths to conciliations - decolonizing harms of predominant culture by addressing Columbus Day/ Indigenous Peoples Day, Thanksgiving Day/ Truthgiving Day, mascotry, Doctrine of Discovery, and healing;

\*Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting host co-facilitation of NYYM Liseli Haines & Buffy Curtis, with PYM FCRC - boone & Trinity Norwood (Nanticoke-Lenape,) series of sessions – *Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change* workshop; “Indigenous Allies” talk (land acknowledgement, rematriation, appropriation, myths, mascots,) *Two Rivers* documentary [Mar 7, 2020; last in-person public engagement];

Spring Continuing Sessions 2020 – Out of worship, vocal ministry/ Land acknowledgement prayer;

*RACE BASED MASCOTS: A Prime Challenge to Decolonize*, PYM Annual Sessions 2020 (virtual) FCRC Workshop (boone and Arla Patch);

PYM (virtual) Annual Sessions Land Acknowledgement Prayers for Plenaries (Climate Change, Membership and Belonging, Treasury, Addressing Racism,) and Opening Program, with follow up interviews by Grace Cook for PYM News posts;

PYM (virtual) Fall Continuing Sessions Land Acknowledgement Prayers for Meeting for Worship (Nov) and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (Dec);

"[TWO VOICES: Healing Our Shared History](#)" co-presenters Rev. Dr. JR Norwood (Nanticoke-Lenape) and Arla Patch, hosted by Monty4Heritage & One Montgomery and Princeton University Tiger Challenge Team;

\*\*Talk with Medford Meeting “75 Things” Group carrying a concern of local Regional HS district with multiple high schools supporting indigenous mascotry (racism);

\*\*\*Quaker Religious Education (QRE) Philadelphia et al, guest speaker; shared various educational resources written by Indigenous Peoples/ communities, Indigenous authored books for young adults and children, historic roots of dismissiveness, need for healing, resourced FCRC website; participants noticed that they might become more aware before facilitating and acknowledge why, why we “teach” what we “teach”; there is interest to cycle back together;

Abington Friends seeking historic truths of Lenape removed, sensing resistance led to a talk by Coalition of Natives and Allies who collaborate with FCRC, Friends acknowledged their discomfort and desire to continue learning;

Kendal (at Longwood) Monday Topic guest speaker for a Land Acknowledgement to open their reading of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address (Words that Come Before All Else,) also introduced the sacred Treaty of Amity Wampum Belt, engaged in discussion...invitation extended to return in the near future;

Woodbury Friends Meeting seeking “Winter book chat”; planned for Jan 2021, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse* by Charlie Mackesy;

Barnegat Friends Meeting seeking local Indigenous history, extending Black Lives Matter (BLM) to include Black Indigenous People of Colour (BIPOC,) post 2018 intros.

### **Additional Relationship Building**

Network with newly formed [Coalition of Natives and Allies](#) (CNA,) seeking PA legislation to abolish the inappropriate/ dismissive use of Indigenous mascotry/ logos;

FCRC Hosted Indigenous Peoples Day 2019 planning committee meeting;

3rd Annual Indigenous Peoples Day Philly, October 2019, Penn Treaty Park;

*The Land Remembers: Native Peoples Through the Land*, Paula Palmer, encouraging non-Native people to explore how their personal stories intersect with Native peoples through the land they know and love, hosted by Haverford College;

By special invitation, attend Nanticoke-Lenape Tribal Nation's non-public gathering, 2020 Mid-winter Social;

One Book: One Community winter 2020, "*Strong Medicine*" *Speaks* by Amy Hill Hearth, met 4 times during Jan and Feb, segueing from 2019 OBOC read by Robin Wall Kimmerer to discussing what moves us toward becoming "indigenous with the land;"

[Virtual 24-Hour Vigil for Justice](#), Interfaith Philadelphia;

Mashpee Wampanoag Land Case (US District Court) [petition](#) signatories;

Toward Right Relationship, *Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change* pilot virtual workshop;

*Bending the Arc for Justice Together: Call for Solidarity and Action* by La Convivencia, Princeton University;

Braver Angels, Bridge the Divide – Training for a Polarized Society;

Crafted/ published/ posted to the FCRC [Call to Action](#) web page, *Guidelines for those Seeking Healing Relations with Indigenous Peoples: Lessons of Lenapehoking*; a "living document" drafted in coordination with Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal leadership and east coast Yearly Meeting Friends of shared spirit;

Salem Quarter Friends accept (non-public) invitation to the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape (Fall) Gathering Oct 2019 at their Cohanzick Tribal Grounds;

Medford Friends' Climate Change Group and Ad Hoc Committee for the Outdoor Gathering Space host Dale Hendricks of London Grove Meeting (southern Chester County, PA) *Wonderful Life! Soil, Plants, Carbon and Climate in Relationship*;

Joint Indian Affairs Committees - burgeoning support/ clearness group of **east coast Yearly Meetings'** fellow Indigenous-ascribed allies and those in accompaniment toward right relations – PYM (FCRC), NEYM, NYYM, BYM, SEYM, Canada Friends, and a few Friends in the mid-west and western US;

[Healing Ancestral Trauma: What is Epigenetics and Why Does it Matter?](#) with Erva Baden "*Understanding these histories, and our own inherited patterns can open new doors to understanding, healing, and justice.*"

**Lovingly submitted on behalf of First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative,**

boone o'scheyichbi, contact representative

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting [First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative](#)

Minute of Religious Service: Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation

pronouns: kin/ they/ them

Phone: 609-221-7247 (US East Coast Hours preferred)

Email: [aliibiondi@gmail.com](mailto:aliibiondi@gmail.com)

Submitted 12/28/2020

Revised 12/29/2020

## Legislative Policy Collaborative

Annual Report

October 2020 – September 2021

The Legislative Policy Collaborative works to coordinate lobbying and education on the national legislative priorities set by the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), a Quaker lobby group based in Washington. Our collaborative includes ten Friends, nine of whom are appointed by PYM as representatives to the FCNL General Committee.

In addition to our ten members, the LPC has a list of monthly meeting contacts who are organized into a Rapid Response Network. We are always happy to learn of new monthly meeting contacts.

Although this year the Coronavirus Pandemic ruled out physical gatherings and the fellowship and energy that can come with meeting in-person, we discovered that Zoom meetings and virtual lobbying allowed us to continue our work and expand our outreach, even as we learned new ways to communicate, educate, worship, and discern. The LPC has had a busy and active year.

In November 2020, under the theme of *Fierce Love*, all LPC members attended FCNL's 2020 virtual annual meeting and lobbying sessions. Although we missed being in Washington, the virtual meetings provided significantly greater access, allowing more than 800 Quakers and friends from across the nation to gather and hear from inspiring speakers, participate in workshops, learn about advocacy, and engage in worship.

In our business sessions the General Committee approved FCNL's budget, heard reports from standing committees, set legislative priorities for the 117th Congress, and continued discussions and discernment on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

In years past, a highlight of FCNL's annual gathering has been the short walk up to Capitol Hill offices to lobby our congressional representatives and senators. In 2020 such walks were not possible, but our virtual lobby training showed us how even from our homes we could make our voices heard. Last November we lobbied our elected officials to ask that they support legislation that would take a small step in addressing the crisis of racism, police brutality, and the militarization of police. There were more than 220 virtual lobby visits, representing 44 states and the District of Columbia, speaking to the crisis of police violence and militarization, and lobbying to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.

We spent the winter months planning our highly successful April 2021 virtual workshop *Pathways to Ending Gun Violence: Legislative Solutions*. More than 120 people registered for this event that gathered Friends from more than 30 meetings within PYM. Similar to FCNL's Annual Meeting, the virtual platform doubled our numbers and drew Friends from meetings located in PYM's outer geographic reaches.

In his Pathways workshop keynote address, Peter Murchison, a member of Wilton Friends Meeting (CT), shared the emotionally wrenching story of his nephew Daniel, who was killed in his first-grade classroom at Sandy Hook Elementary School eight years ago. As Peter spoke, we noted his humility, his encouragement to seek our own ways of working to stem gun violence, and his call for finding ways to talk with those who would take a different stand. He reminded us that what can look like anger can be a deep fear, a need for perceived safety in an unsafe and changing world. Yet, because guns are idolized, he called gun rights "not a crisis of the second amendment, but rather a crisis of the second commandment." The number of guns in the U.S. and the deaths caused by them constitute a moral crisis.

Peter's remarks were impactful in their emotional honesty and set the tone for the panel discussion that followed with gun violence prevention groups working at the local, state, and federal levels. The panelists from Heeding God's Call, CeaseFirePA, the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation addressed the most difficult arguments to counter in talking about gun rights and gun violence as well as actions that they and workshop participants can take. These actions include vigils, contacting other faith groups in our communities, gun buy-backs, tee shirt displays depicting those who have died by guns, and more. An effective way to be heard is to organize a visit to your representative's offices. We drew hope from these examples of how to put our faith into action.

The Pathways workshop concluded with Jim Cason, the FCNL Associate General Secretary for Strategic Advocacy, who provided us with training on how to lobby our members of Congress and senators. Pennsylvania State Representative Joe Webster underscored the importance of contacting legislators, noting that as constituents, we have a lot more power than we may realize.

Equally exciting, portions of the Pathways Workshop were recorded and are available for meetings to access for forums and discussion groups.

As part of PYM's 2021 Runway to Annual Sessions, we facilitated two virtual programs in May with FCNL. The first workshop – The Roots and Branches of Quaker Advocacy – focused on how advocacy and Quakerism are intertwined and how the experiences of early Friends continue to inspire legislative action, and how the Spirit is leading us to witness today.

Our second Runway to Annual Sessions program – F/friends in Unlikely Places: Engaging with Those Who Don't Agree with You – was equally timely, coming in a period when we are reminded daily how deeply our nation is divided. Drawing on theoretical, strategic, and spiritual frameworks from Quaker tradition, F/friends were equipped with new skills for communicating across political divides and practicing seeing that of God in others, especially those with whom we disagree.

In July 2021, right before Annual Sessions, we will participate in the Collaborative Fair, to share the work of the Legislative Policy with interested participants of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. We will also share our work and annual report in the final workshop of the Runway to Annual Sessions as Representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Looking ahead to the autumn of 2021, FCNL will hold its Annual Meeting in November, although it remains to be determined whether we gather in Washington, continue in an all-virtual mode or a hybrid combination.

Regardless of when we are able to return to "normal," the LPC will continue its work by planning our Spring 2022 workshop, encouraging YAF to participate in FCNL's legislative work, and drawing strength from our spiritual well to engage Congress on issues of peace and social justice.

The LPC wants to thank PYM for its spiritual and financial support. Through this support, members of the LPC are able to contribute to guiding the good work of FCNL and in turn, sharing with PYM members how to direct the energy of their Spirit towards legislative change.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Members of the Legislative Policy Collaborative**

Sylvia Bronner, Co-Clerk, Haverford

Deborah Hejl, Co-Clerk, Gwynedd

Emily Abels, Downingtown

William Cozzens, Germantown

Mary Lou Hatcher, Rising Clerk of the FCNL General Committee, Lehigh Valley

Joe Laird, Downingtown

Margaret Mansfield, Providence

Stefanie Morgan, Trenton

Lynn Oberfield, Providence

Steve Olshevski, Radnor

## **Middle East Collaborative**

Summary of July 2019 to November 2020 (Addendum and update included through May 2021)

At the invitation of Sue Dietz, on behalf of the PYM Quaker Life Council, the following report is a summary of the work of PYM Middle East Collaborative in the last 18 months.

Middle East Collaborative of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is composed of members and attenders at various PYM monthly meetings, all of whom share an interest in the Middle East region. We wish to educate PYM Friends about the region and current issues and make suggestions for individuals' actions to support peace with justice and equality in the region.

Middle East Collaborative (MEC) meets on the first Sunday of every other month: January, March, May, July, September, November. Additionally, we have typically presented a workshop or two at PYM Annual Sessions. While our meetings have been virtual [Zoom] since May 2020, our consideration of issues relevant to the Middle East region has not waned.

In a typical 90–120 minute meeting, we check in with each other, have brief reports on various topics and then go on to one or two major items for discussion. Brief reports in the recent past have included:

- Ramallah Meeting and Ramallah Friends School
- Israel / Palestine
- Lebanon including Aug 2020 explosion, economic crisis, and Brummana High School and Brummana Friends Meeting in the hills east of Beirut
- Iraq – development projects under care of Mennonites; Chaldean school.
- Armenia/Azerbaijan – recent conflict
- Luke 10 – ecumenical efforts to send aid to Iran in face of US sanctions
- Iran – assassination of military commander; COVID and sanctions;

We have members whom we support in their connections to Ramallah, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Palestine.

Friends on our committee carry out their own social action work and help us make direct connections to a number of organizations:

- Christian-Jewish Allies of Philadelphia
- Mennonite Central Committee
- Jewish Voice for Peace
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- United Nations and UNRWA
- Luke 10
- AFSC and their campaigns in support of justice in Palestine
- Quaker Palestine Israel Network
- Ramallah Friends Meeting and school.
- Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture in Philadelphia

Recent minutes of our meetings have listed resources for Friends through which they may investigate deeper analyses of topics discussed at that meeting. At our most recent meeting we listed four foci for 2021:

- Further support intersectionality efforts connecting Palestinian rights issues to Black Lives Matter movement
- Familiarize and clarify how we may support Boycott Divestment and Sanctions
- Further connect Why Palestine Matters curriculum to a wider audience of PYM Friends
- Connect to FCNL and legislative priorities for new congress

Thank you to PYM and the Quaker Life Council for all your support and encouragement. Olivia Brangan has been tremendously helpful numerous times in numerous ways. Kate Bregman cheers me on individually and us collectively on a regular basis.

### **In the Light, Sandy Rea, Clerk**

**5/22/2021 Addendum** at request of PYM/Olivia Brangan

Since December, MEC has met in January, March, and May. Discussions included:

- Christian Zionism
- Weaponizing Anti-Semitism with focus on the new book by our virtual member and Texas Friend Alex McDonald, [When They Speak Israel.](#)
- Brumanna High School – The Quaker school in Lebanon and the severe challenges it faces as Lebanon deals with governmental, economic, and political crises.
- Continued reports from our liaisons to Christian-Jewish Allies group in Philadelphia as Why Palestine Matters curriculum is presented to another faith community. Stay tuned.... Friends of PYM may be offered this course.
- How the Biden administration might move in relation to the “nuclear deal” / JCPOA from which Mr. Trump pulled US support in 2018.
- Updates on Iraq after the US shelling in early March of alleged ISIS sites near Erbil. Two MEC members worked in Erbil for four years and remain in close touch with former Iraqi and international colleagues there.

MEC proposed and has been accepted to present two virtual workshops for the PYM Runway to Annual Sessions 2021. On May 13, 2021 members Tony Manasseh and Leila Barclay, both Lebanese Quakers who grew up in Lebanon, presented [The Middle East Conflict As a Global Issue of Injustice.](#) Their conversation combined with commentary and questions by Friends attending (via Zoom) led to a detailed and rich exchange about the current picture in Lebanon and nearby countries in the region, Israel, Palestine, Syria, and Jordan.

Our second workshop is set for Thursday evening June 17, 2021. We hope to present a film as a beginner of examination of the injustices in the Israel-Palestine, on the ground realities. **Wrestling with Israel – Palestine: Equality, Rights, Justice, and the Future.** Friends are encouraged to register for this workshop via the [www.pym.org](http://www.pym.org) website. The title was selected in advance of the 11 day conflict between Israel and Palestine of May 10 to May 21, 2021. Our considerations that evening will surely include this most recent, violent engagement.

**Thank you, Sandy Rea, Clerk, PYM Middle East Collaborative**

# Spiritual Formation Collaborative

Annual Report

October 2019 to September 2020

## 1. How does your group meet and how frequently?

The entire group meets every other month on the second Saturday currently via zoom. If we are doing a 9-month program, a team of 3-5 people designing and running the program will meet much more frequently. For example, we are providing a midyear retreat for Abington Meeting and will meet 4 times this month

## 2. Does the clerk have adequate support from the collaborative or group?

All members of the group support the clerk and take turns working on different programs. The collaborative is also a great spiritual support to all of its members, including the clerk.

## 3. Are tasks delegated in the committee with good follow through?

Members volunteer to be a part of a team for each project. The team is headed by one of the group who tracks what needs to be done and prepares agendas for the team meetings

## 4. How does your collaborative remain spiritually grounded through its work?

It is our custom, when we meet as an entire group, to spend 30-60 minutes praying together and checking in on our spiritual lives and well-being. If a member requests it, we hold that member in the Light. Team meetings also begin and end with prayer. And before a program begins, team members meet and pray for an hour and then pray throughout the program. It is also our custom to team each facilitator with an elder who holds both the facilitator and the group being facilitated in the Light.

## 5. Let us know what you have been up to; what have you been doing over the past year?

- On October 11-13, the collaborative offered a weekend retreat entitled Seeking Connection to Self, Spirit, and Spiritual Companionship to 19 people from a variety of Meetings. This is an annual retreat to encourage others to become leaders, offer spiritual formation to their meetings and serve others who want spiritual enrichment.
- Pre-session retreat for summer session; the SFC identified a speaker for summer sessions, Marcelle Martin, and assisted with recruitment and eldering during the retreat.
- Offered introductory SF sessions to both Haddonfield and Abington Meetings.
- Started the nine-month program for Abington meeting.
- Transformed the 9-month Spiritual Formation program to a virtual program and are offering the program to Abington meeting in this format
- Held a virtual retreat for SF facilitators

## 6. What are some accomplishments you want to highlight?

One of our biggest accomplishments is converting the 9-month in-person program into a virtual one. This has taken many hours of planning.

## 7. What events or projects have you successfully implemented?

This is the 21st year we have brought Spiritual Formation Programs to the Yearly Meeting. This is a unique opportunity for Friends and Meetings to deepen the spiritual ground of their lives. The program and the collaborative continue to grow and pray for guidance.

## 8. How has your work over the past year moved you closer to achieving your goals?

Our goal is to continue our work and expand our reach throughout PYM. We seem to be moving toward that with the Retreat programs. We are optimistic that attendance will grow. We also intend to broaden and diversify the membership of our collaborative.

## 9. What progress has been made in goals that your collaborative has set?

The restrictions of Covid have been a setback, but we continue to be available to Meetings and individuals, offering opportunities for spiritual deepening.

**10. What challenges have you had in making progress?**

The biggest challenge this year has been COVID and the required social distancing. Much is accomplished through spending physical time with Friends and networking during breaks and meals. Zoom really cuts down on this. One Meeting decided to wait another year before having the Collaborative bring the Spiritual Formation program to the Meeting. Another Meeting decided to go ahead, so we are experimenting with our first online Meeting and asking for lots of feedback from the group. They know they are the guinea pigs for this experiment. The planning time has greatly increased for our group.

**11. How is the work of the collaborative being shared with the PYM community?** We share in 4 ways: any Meeting or Quarter who wants the Spiritual Formation for its membership can have it as long as there are 12 people who will commit to the program and the clerk of the Meeting and the worship and ministry committee support it. The Meeting also has to provide a small care committee to work with us to deliver the program. The second way we share the program is that annually we hold a weekend retreat for anyone who wishes to facilitate a spiritual formation program in his/her own Meeting. Past attendees share what they have done in their Meetings to further the spiritual life of the Meeting. We also include others who have been unable to take the 9-month program but want to attend a spiritual formation program or who wish to know more about the program. The third way is through the PYM website on our web page where one can find everything we have developed for the program. Finally, we will also send a team to any Meeting that wishes an hour introductory session.

**12. How can the Quaker Life Council help to support the work of your collaborative?**

Continue to support us with a budget and send anyone you think would like to join the collaborative would be helpful. If you would like to hold us in the light when we begin programs that would also boost us spiritually.