



Dear Friends Everywhere,

We found joy and excitement in seeing our Friends at Sessions this year. After three years of Annual Sessions being held via Zoom, it was refreshing to find each other and experience fellowship. We felt hopeful both leading up to and during Sessions, with the Light flowing strongly in many of us.

Young Adult Friends enjoyed a fellowship time for them to engage with each other in the evening, excellent vespers that encouraged discussions on community facilitated by Young Friends, and breakout groups to discuss specific topics within the yearly meeting. We feel that these events could be incorporated into future meetings, both within Philadelphia Yearly and more broadly. The keynote speech by Jeanne Elberfeld was well received, as it brought attention to practices that meetings could implement in order to increase a sense of welcome and belonging.

While many of our experiences at Sessions this year were positive, we felt it prudent to share concerns within our meeting as a way for Friends broadly to assess and reflect upon the states of their meetings and the processes within. Our Sessions' Meetings for Business contained a number of conflict points, as is to be expected within large gatherings where diverse opinions are shared. We affirm the place of individual vocal ministry within business, and seek to ensure that all messages are heard. Friends also wish to express the necessity of living process and concise business to maintain the ability for the Spirit to move among us.

The Spirit led Karl Malchut to deliver a presentation to the Young Adult Friends during an evening gathering, focused on the recently legalized persecution of the LGBTQAI community in Uganda. We seek to raise the following minute of concern, as approved by Chester Friends and FLGBTQC to Friends within the yearly meeting and worldwide:

“Given continued persecution, and the recent formalizing of such to the point of execution by the Ugandan government, as Friends we would like to affirm our love for members of the Ugandan LGBTQAI Community whose lives speak boldly to us. As individuals, support them as you may feel led. May they feel our abounding love as we hold their witness in the light.”

We hope to see Friends continue and engage further in practices that encourage inclusivity and acceptance of voices who will carry Quakerism into the next generation.

In Spirit,
Young Adult Friends, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting