

Young Friends Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

November 7, 2015

Westtown School

Clerking: Sara Sheffer

1. YF meeting for worship with attention to business began with a period of open worship. Co-clerk Sara Sheffer asked for approval for Kody Hersh to serve as acting recording clerk. Friends approved.
2. The co-clerk invited visitors and FAPs to introduce themselves. Visitors and FAPs were Traci Hjelt Sullivan of Greene Street Friends, Karen Gallagher of Norristown Meeting, and Robert Rosenthal of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.
3. The co-clerk reviewed the agenda. Friends approved.
4. Adult co-clerk Robert Rosenthal presented on the morning activities of Continuing Sessions, in which Friends worked on a query related to combatting racism and white supremacy in the Religious Society of Friends and beyond. The first part of the morning was a lecture presented by Michelle Ewing of Virginia Beach Meeting. Two models were presented: the three concentric circles of individual, group, and societal experience and the “flower” model of understanding interactions between behavior, explicitly stated values, and core assumptions. The second part of the morning was spent in worship sharing groups to allow Friends to speak from their own experiences and listen to one another.
5. A member of the Young Friends program committee presented on the ongoing discernment about which of three previously agreed-on themes (Cultural arts, Cuisine & Cinema; Healthy Relationships & Sexuality, Arts & Creative Expression) should take place at which upcoming YF gatherings, each of which allow for different amounts of attention to the theme. Friends mentioned level of interest, breadth of topic, and space needs as important factors in discernment about when to plan for each theme. Friends approved the Arts & Creative Expression theme for the Spring Gathering. Friends affirmed that Healthy Relationships & Sexuality feels like an important and relevant topic to commit our longest gathering to, approving it for the Onas Gathering. Friends recommended that the Cultural Arts, Cuisine & Cinema theme could focus in on just two of those three elements to fit better at the Christmas gathering. There was a concern to make sure programming for this theme is participatory, and that culture is understood as something we all are part of, not a distant other.
6. Adult co-clerk Robert Rosenthal presented on the Quaker Life Council, a new structure in Philadelphia YM to coordinate YM-wide work on spirituality, peace and justice, and other issues of relevance to Friends. “Sprint groups” of the QLC work on specific short-term projects. Applications will be open online soon for any interested Friends who would like to propose a short-term project within this model.