

YF Business Meeting July 28, 2013

We started with a moment of centering worship

- Epistle
 - The epistle committee shared the proposed epistle [attached below] and asked for feedback from the community
 - What do we want to include about the ESC trans policy and where to go from here?
 - Friends gave input on what to include about Young Friends engagement around the ESC policy at Sessions as well as commitments for next steps.
 - Clerk asked for additions / alterations and Friends offered several small adjustments.
 - Friends approved the epistle with the alterations, and great thanks for the committee's work.
 - Appreciation for Zan Lombardo (outgoing YF Adult Clerk) – Clerk explained that Zan has been the Adult Clerk for the last seven years – she's now stepping down.
 - What do we wanna do for appreciation?
 - Hannah talked about her plan – writing a news piece about Zan's contributions.
 - Young Friends brainstormed ways they appreciated Zan, took a break to compile it into a minute of appreciation, and approved the following:

Zan Lombardo, in her seven years of service as adult clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Young Friends, has always been a spiritually grounded guiding presence. She's nurtured the community, and many Young Friends have felt strongly touched by her presence. She's a compassionate person, well spoken, warm, and friendly. Zan understands young people and has a special youthfulness about her. She knows what her gifts are in so many areas – personally, spiritually, creatively – and puts them all at the disposal of the Young Friends community, leading workshops, lending a listening ear when needed, and finding a way to connect with every person she meets. Zan has the capacity to both listen very well and give good advice, and knows when to do which. Many of us have known her for a long time, even before our time in Young Friends, and felt nurtured by her and loved by her for that whole time—but even those who have met her more recently have found it easy to connect authentically with Zan. She has a natural facility for both conscientiousness and playfulness, and her ability to do both at the same time is a gift. She's an example of integrity, knowing herself, and sharing herself. She's a pillar, a person you can go and lean on, talk to, be stabilized by. Young Friends respect Zan's wisdom and presence, and thank her deeply for her years of service to the community.

- People at Onas should make Zan an afghan!
- Next Adult Clerk
 - What qualities are we looking for? Young Friends did sharing out of the silence about important qualities in the next Adult Clerk:

- Lots of gifts could be helpful. Mostly what made Zan a good fit for the role was that she was a fun and great person to have around - that's an important piece of whoever is next. A good listener and available to give advice or support. Someone who is willing to take responsibility between gatherings with responding to emails, etc. Someone who can still be youthful and have fun. Someone who has the time and will be present when they show up. Someone who has some familiarity with this community and how Young Friends works.
 - Nominations
 - Hannah spoke about how she's imagining this process – take nominations now and Hannah will contact the nominees and see who is willing – those names will come to Onas for discernment.
 - Mike Inskeep, Maggie Harrison, Tom Hoopes, Brad Ogilvie, Chris Mohr, Zac Dutton, Kurt Weins, Stephen Dotson
 - There are some YAFs who have been FAPs previously – what if one of them would be willing to serve?
 - Maybe we want to bring more people in over the next year?
 - What about a term length – it can be helpful for people to know how long they are serving and have a point where we all reconsider if this is still working well.
 - Friends expressed appreciation for the idea of a term
 - Maybe we have an interim Adult Clerk so that we can discern a more long-term Adult Clerk and discern it more carefully.
 - Friends approved appointing an Adult Clerk for either a one-year term or an interim term that could be turned into a full appointment after a year.
- Hannah and Kody on this gathering – needs met and unmet
 - Kody talked about enforcement of the space boundaries that FAPs set up – that's been a struggle. Enforcement more generally has been a struggle too. FAPs want to have a conversation about whether these struggles are about needs that are unmet in Young Friends, communication errors, etc. We would like responses to those questions, because our jobs are really different when we get to be with YFs as supportive and egalitarian humans rather than enforcement police. With time for the current business session running out, Hannah and Kody invited personal responses either here at Sessions or over email, with the possibility of picking the topic up during business at Onas.
- Friends closed with a moment of worship

Young Friends Epistle, Annual Sessions, 2013

Dear Friends Everywhere,

“What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a happening??”

The Young Friends had a spectacular time at this year’s Sessions and especially enjoyed the inclusiveness Muhlenberg’s campus provided. We held multiple business meetings, discussing the suspended Youth Programs Transgender Policy developed recently by the Education Standing Committee. This policy has caused great anguish among our community, and Young Friends have been deeply involved in the discussions and efforts here at Annual Sessions, including Thursday’s Conversation Tent and the following Minute of Exercise. Young Friends united in our business to create our own proposed policy to send on to Education Standing Committee in order to find a practice that fulfills the needs of our community.

Our business meetings also included a discussion of upcoming gatherings and a visit from Zan Lombardo, the (outgoing) Adult Clerk of Young Friends. Zan told us all about the 2014 Friends General Conference Gathering. We greatly appreciated her presence at business meeting and throughout her many years of service.

We also had unprogrammed time filled with friendship and games. Young Friends shared many laughs reminiscing about our group trip to see the musical Jesus Christ Superstar – we especially appreciated the use of modern dance moves and all the amazing high notes!

Young Friends really enjoyed the many intergenerational activities. During this gathering we not only facilitated our own worship sharing, but also wrote the worship sharing queries for the larger body of Annual Sessions. Saturday evening Young Friends had the opportunity to attend the keynote speeches and found the topic of racism to be relevant and helpful. We came away appreciative of the speakers’ willingness to share their stories with such openness and honesty. Young Friends not only really enjoyed All Together Now, but got to expand our Quakerism, minds, and spirits with people from all generations. Young Friends and Middle School Friends came together for the eventful trek up to the Glen Onoko falls and the treacherous slide back down! The Young friends had the delight of supervising and playing with Middle School Friends and Children’s Sessions each day.

Overall, the Young Friends had a great time and look forward to next year’s Annual Sessions gathering.

With Love and Light,

PYM Young Friends