

Concord Quarterly Meeting at West Chester Meeting, October 22, 2017

Opening Worship

The meeting began at 8:17 am with a period of worship.

Welcome -- Deb Wood (Clerk)

The clerk warmly welcomed newcomers and visitors to the Quarterly Meeting sessions. Visitors, all associated with Delaware Valley Friends School, were: Kirk Smothers (Brooklyn MM, NYYM), Donald Palmer (Newtown MM) and Gray Goodman (Providence MM).

Those monthly meetings which were not present were: Concord MM. Twenty Friends were present as the meeting began.

Approval of minutes from July 23, 2017 -- Deb Wood (Clerk)

The minutes as published were approved, with thanks to Rich Ailes..

Ad Hoc Committee on Monthly Meetings' with Limited Attendance Report -- David Leonard

David reported that the initiative had stalled but he is about to reactivate it. The intention was to help meetings with very small active membership find non-Quaker partners to share in using, caring for and managing the meetinghouse property. Concord MM had expressed interest for its meetinghouse and for Chichester's. David wrote to all the other MMs he could identify in Chester County and its vicinity to see if any others were interested in joining the effort, but none responded, not even those that are known to have very sparsely used meetinghouses. David had envisioned some general advertising for partners but the very limited response demands a different strategy with a more focused search. David confessed that lobbying for FCNL against the threatened repeal of the Affordable Care Act has absorbed his energies instead over the last year but he is now ready to work again with Concord MM on finding a suitable way forward..

The clerk also reminded Friends that Concord MM meets for worship at 11:15 and warmly welcomes others joining with them.

Joys and Challenges Report from Middletown Meeting -- Rich Ailes for Tom Ceresini (Clerk of Middletown)

The report was received with appreciation and is attached as Appendix 1.

Delaware Valley Friends School – Kirk Smothers (Head of DVFS)

A letter was received from Kirk Smothers (Head of DVF School), which is attached as Appendix 2. It seeks to have the school come under the care of Concord Quarter. The meeting acknowledged with appreciation receipt of the letter. Kirk responded to questions about the school and about DVFS would like in a care relationship with Concord Quarter. There needs to be a dialogue of just what the relationship would entail. *The meeting approved the appointment of an ad hoc committee to explore the matter further – Debbie Murray-Sheppard (Wilmington MM) and Shirley Wright Kamara (Middletown MM), with further names to be added by the CQM Planning Committee.*

Working Group on Aging Concerns report – Rich Ailes

The committee's report is attached as Appendix 3. Training is being planned for those who are prepared to be resource people on aging and a grant to support its costs has been approved from Friends Foundation for the Aging. *The meeting approved a minute of appreciation to the Friends Foundation for the Aging for the support it has approved for this endeavor.*

Friendly Audit report -- David Wickard

The committee's report is attached as Appendix 4. The committee found that in general the Quarter's accounts are properly and effectively managed. Six recommendations were made. The meeting acknowledged receipt of the report and its suggestions. The Treasurer has already begun to implement some of the suggestions and others will be discussed at Planning Committee and in the next CQM.

Treasurer's Reports -- Tom Haviland (Treasurer)

Tom was unable to attend the meeting, but his full report is attached to these minutes as Appendix 5.

Coordinator's Report -- Lynne Piersol (Coordinator)

Lynne spoke briefly to her report, the full text of which was posted on the CQM blog and is attached to these minutes as Appendix 6.

Meeting Close

The meeting closed at 9:15 with a period of silent worship. Twenty-nine Friends were present at this point, including the addition of a representative from Chichester..

Respectfully submitted, David Leonard (Recording Clerk) and Deb Wood (Clerk)

Appendix 1 -- Joys and Challenges Report from Middletown Meeting

Middletown Monthly Meeting remains small but active, with 8 to 12 people in attendance on most First Days. We find that our members have life to do what needs to be done. Over the past two years, we have welcomed two new members as well as a number of regular attenders, and feel blessed to have a life-long member recently renew his participation in the life of the meeting. Over the same period, we remembered with affection five of our oldest members who have died. Two of our members were able to record an interview with Penny Briggs about a year before her death in which she shared her memories of ministry within the meeting over time, especially during her father's generation, which was the basis for our Quarterly Meeting presentation in October 2016.

We appreciate opportunities for fellowship include our annual Christmas social and Middletown Day in early June. In addition, a little over a year ago we instituted refreshment time at the rise of meeting on the first Sunday of the month. We have had a renewed interest in adult religious education, and last month we began a six-week series on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. We realize that our lack of children in the meeting is a challenge; in anticipation of their arrival, we've gathered the required clearances from some of our members who can provide childcare services.

Thomas Swain has led an effort to provide outreach to those driving by the meetinghouse on Route 352 during rush hour. We have had banners made to bring his effort to the attention of drivers, and are handing out water and juice as well as a recently produced rack card which includes contact information and welcomes those interested to join us for worship. This outreach is funded by a major contribution from Yearly Meeting's Development Group.

In the spring of this year, we appointed a Nominating Committee to review term limits and to bring forward a name for Clerk and Recording Clerk. Tom Ceresini and Clem Gerdelmann are the new clerk and recording clerk, respectively, with Rich Ailes and Shirley Dodson to serve as assistant clerk and recording clerk. Each will serve a two year term.

Our Men's Group continues to thrive with 5 regular members meeting every other week and one member who lives at a distance attending when he is in the area. Members of this group have conducted several programs for other meetings and have themselves attended numerous workshops over the past two years. Several of the men were particularly blessed to participate in a week-long road trip and spiritual retreat in New York and Maine and were able to spend time with our friend Ralph Greene of New England Yearly Meeting and with the Shakers of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village.

The finances of the meeting are in good order. About a year ago, we replaced the south side of the meetinghouse roof; we are now considering how to rebuild the capital improvements account which paid for this work. We approved asking the Quaker Buildings and Program Granting Group for a grant to repay the cost of our new roof and improvements to the school house.

Some other highlights from the past two years include:

- In our Joys and Challenges Report of October 2015, we reported a once a month experiment with one of a group of Friends providing a prepared "leading message" after the meeting had settled into worship. In time, we decided that the practice had helped us with vocal ministry, as we had hoped it would, and so we laid aside the experiment.
- Given an overall reduction in money coming into the meeting, we decided to reduce our budgeted annual amounts to PYM and the Concord Quarterly Meeting staff person funding.
- The south side of the meetinghouse roof was completely redone at a cost of \$6,960.
- We approved Thomas Swain's concern on Yearly Meeting process and discipline at Annual and Continuing Sessions,

and this concern was carried forward to Quarterly Meeting.

- We united with the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent's four point agenda regarding state sanctioned violence. In support of their work, some of us attended the dedication of the Ujima Friends Peace Center on 8/26/2017.

Approved at Meeting for Worship for Business 10/15/2017 Tom Ceresini, Clerk

Appendix 2 -- Delaware Valley Friends School



October 2, 2017

Dear Friends of Concord Quarter,

We write this letter to you with greetings in fellowship. We at Delaware Valley Friends School (DVFS) wish to engage Friends in a conversation over the School coming under the care of Concord Quarter. Presently, DVFS is under the care of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting. It is our hope that coming under the care of Concord Quarter would be spiritually enriching to the members of the Quarter's meetings as well as the families, students, and staff of the School.

Delaware Valley Friends School was founded due to growing sense amongst Friends educators that there needed to be a Friends School for secondary students who learned differently. When DVFS was incorporated in 1986, it had no campus, staff, or students. The Board of Trustees hired Irene McHenry as Head of School. The school opened its doors to 20 students in the autumn of 1987, at a space rented from Harcum College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. By 1997, the school community had grown significantly, and moved to its present home at 19 East Central Avenue, the site of the former Paoli Elementary School.

Given that there was no campus at its founding, the Board of Trustees agreed to use the phrase "Delaware Valley" as a descriptor for the school. Friends of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting generously took the school under its care in 1986. We at DVFS are grateful for the connection with Philadelphia Friends, but the geographic distance of the past 20 years has made it difficult to build a substantive relationship with Philadelphia Quarter.

Hollister Knowlton, present clerk of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting and a member of the DVFS Board of Trustees, appreciated the relationship but sensed that it was time for DVFS to make a change to a care relationship with a meeting geographically closer to the school. A small advisory group of board members, administrators, staff, and faculty began to prayerfully consider the issue. On 25 September 2017, the advisory group recommended that DVFS engage members of Concord Quarterly Meeting about the possibility of coming under its care. Kirk Smothers, head of school, presented the recommendation of the advisory group to the Board of Trustees of Delaware Valley Friends School at 3 October 2017. The Board united with the recommendation to open a dialogue with the Quarter about coming under its care.

If Friends of Concord Quarterly Meeting are willing, we would like to set up a committee made up of members of the Quarter and the Delaware Valley Friends School community to examine the possibility of the school coming under the care of the Quarter.

In Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kirk Smothers".

Kirk Smothers
Head of School

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WWW.DVFS.ORG

Appendix 3 – Report of the Working Group on Aging Concerns

The committee has met twice after the last Quarterly Meeting on August 16 and September 20, and will meet again on

November 1. Meetings remain open to any Friend or attender in the Quarter. All Meetings in the Quarter continue to be represented. Currently the committee has two projects working. A workshop on Aging in Place featuring PYM staff person George Schaefer is scheduled for January 20 at a location to be determined. County resources for Seniors will also be displayed at this workshop. A training for Friends and attenders in Concord Quarter who are interested in becoming Aging Concerns Resource consultants in the Quarter is scheduled to be held the weekend of April 13 to 15 at the West Chester Meeting/Hickman campus. This training will involve the ARCH New York Yearly Meeting staff person Callie Janoff, along with George Schaefer, conducting an intensive weekend workshop on many different aspects of the aging process. The intention is to help participants become knowledgeable enough to provide guidance on aging issues to members of their Meetings and members in the Quarter. We see this as a way to train a group of 20-25 individuals, who would then be available to help to strengthen their meetings' capacities to fully embrace the participation of their older and differently abled members and attenders.

The cost of this training is fairly high, about \$7,000, which includes meals for the participants and fees for the Trainers. Knowing this, the working group approved our coordinator Lynne Piersol, Rich Ailes and Pam Leland to request a grant from the Friends Foundation on Aging to cover these costs. Lynne was the point person for this effort. She drafted the letter and interfaced with the FFA staff person, Deb Frazer. At their board meeting in early October FFA approved a grant of \$6,993 for this event. This will allow the working group to move forward in our organizing effort.. Needless to say the working group is deeply appreciative for the Foundation's support and urges this Quarterly Meeting to minute its gratitude and ask the clerk to forward this minute to the foundation's staff person. Since the approval Lynne set up a conference call with Callie Janoff, George Schaefer, and Rich Ailes to deal with initial concerns about the training.

This looks like an issue that is gathering a lot of weight in the Quarter. The working group appears to have participants who are strong in their commitment to the work. We are blessed with a staff person who offers us tremendous assistance. For more information you can contact Lynne Piersol at concordquarter@pym.org or Rich Ailes at railesjr@ailesdodson.org.

Appendix 4 -- Friendly Audit of Concord Quarterly Meeting Treasurer's Operations

Summary

On Ninth Month 27, 2017, Friendly auditors David Wickard and Tom Gilbert met with Tom Haviland, CQM Treasurer, to review the Quarter's financial management and records. During the meeting, we discussed current processes, record-keeping, and banking arrangements. We asked a wide variety of questions.

The review did not perform all the tests that a formal audit would require but we did review records, electronic data, and documents. In general, the auditors found that the financial operations of the Quarter are carefully and thoughtfully managed, and we commend the Treasurer for his effective stewardship of the Quarter's finances.

Procedures

1. The Treasurer has documented a wide variety of details about his work.
2. The Treasurer uses his personal email account for CQM financial business.
3. The Treasurer uses QuickBooks to manage all accounting. He is skilled at using the software effectively.

Income

1. The auditors spot reviewed 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 financial records for unusual check recipients and amounts. Nothing unusual was seen in either year.
2. The Treasurer keeps careful documentation of checks received from Monthly Meetings, including correspondence and allocation of funds to the various accounts.
3. The Treasurer is working to help Monthly Meetings send their PYM Covenant amounts directly to PYM, rather than having those funds pass through CQM accounts.
4. The Treasurer uses internet-based check depositing service for the bank account, ensuring that checks are deposited promptly.

Expenses

1. The auditors spot reviewed 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 financial records for unusual checks and amounts. Nothing unusual was seen in either year.
2. The Treasurer keeps careful documentation of payments made to various purposes, including for payroll, independent contractors, and program expenses.

Investments

1. The Treasurer appears to be the sole contact with Friends Fiduciary. He makes and implements investment allocation decisions.
2. The Treasurer determines when and if to move excess cash from the bank account to Friends Fiduciary accounts.
3. The Treasurer is maintaining records to document the original sources for all funds in the endowment.

Record-Keeping

1. There is no formal document retention policy; all documents are indefinitely retained.
2. All electronic data is contained on a single laptop, with periodic backups of that laptop being performed on an undefined schedule.
3. We understand that the financial reports produced by the Treasurer are included in the Quarterly Meeting's annual report; we are unclear whether these records are then provided to the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College (or similar archival facility).

Organizational Structure and Support

1. When consultation is required by the Treasurer, he relies on the CQ Planning Committee or individuals in the various Monthly Meetings. There is no Finance Committee or similar group in place to review financial policies and operations on a periodic basis. Effectively, Tom Haviland is acting as the Treasurer, Comptroller, and Investment Manager.
2. There is no formal succession planning process for the position of Treasurer.

Auditor Observations

1. It appears that all income is recorded and deposited in CQM accounts; that all expenses are recorded and paid from CQM accounts and via the payroll service, and that all seem to be properly managed and accurate.
2. It appears that all records are formally maintained; while correspondence and additional records are on paper while accounting data and statements are electronic.
3. We did not review insurance coverages or applicability.

Auditor Suggestions

1. We suggest that a second individual receive automatic, electronic copies of monthly statements from Friends Fiduciary and First National Bank of Malvern. This would ensure that additional transparency around financial operations is in place, and could be helpful if the Treasurer were unavailable for a period of time.
2. The Treasurer might investigate obtaining a debit card on the First National Bank of Malvern account and set limits around cash outflows, and give the card to the Quarter's Coordinator. This might streamline expenses for the Coordinator and reduce overall paperwork and records.
3. CQM might consider forming a small (3-5 person) group to serve as a resource for the Treasurer and to review key policies at least annually.
4. The Treasurer might research storing all data on cloud storage and accessing it directly from software on the laptop. This would prevent a hard drive crash from interrupting financial operations.
5. There may be a risk to CQM from malicious ransomware activity on the internet. It might be prudent to make electronic copies monthly of all files on the laptop onto cloud storage on the chance that the laptop might be attacked.
6. The auditors understand that at one time, excess cash was collected from Meetings for the purpose of paying the Quarter's Coordinator. While that surplus is no longer being increased, there is excess cash in the bank account - more than 50% of the Coordinator's annual compensation. The Planning Committee might consider whether this cash should be added to the endowment, to the annual scholarship funds for Quaker children attending Quaker schools, or for advancement and marketing purposes. There might be a unique opportunity to experiment with a short-term social media advertising program designed to strengthen membership that might be conducted on behalf of the Monthly Meetings.

Appendix 5 -- Treasurer's Reports (note: complete report email concordquarter@pym.org)

October 22, 2017

Income and Expense Highlights

- Covenant checks were received from five Meetings for a total of \$5,662.50. This is consistent with last year's first quarter contributions.
- Operating/Program costs for the quarter represent the summer tubing program expenses, background clearances and attending PYM Annual Sessions expenses (Coordinator), newsletter expenses, and the Quarter's web space annual fee.
- Several Meetings included the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting covenant contribution along with their Quarter covenant contribution. These funds were sent on to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. A reminder email was sent on 9/22 to all Monthly Meeting Clerks and Treasurers that effective July 1, 2017 all Meetings are now to send their Philadelphia Yearly Meeting covenant contribution directly to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Instructions and a mailing address were also provided in the email.

Concord Quarterly Meeting Income and Expenses (run date 10/9/2017) (REDACTED)

Assets Report

- From June 30 to September 30, the Consolidated Funds unit value increased from \$50.64 to \$52.05 and the Green Fund unit value increased from \$37.32 to \$38.22.
- In early October, \$8,502 (compared to \$8,084 in 2016) from the FF – STIF (TOF) account was withdrawn, and sent to 5 Friends Schools for the tuition aid program (13 total children each receiving \$654). This will be reflected in next quarter's Assets report.
- The 80/20 percent goal for our Consolidated Fund holdings to our Green Fund holdings continues to remain at this level.

Concord Quarterly Meeting Assets (report date 10/9/2017) (REDACTED)

Note: Individual Monthly Meeting Consolidated and Green Fund balances are available by request.

Appendix 6 – Coordinator's Report for October 2017

It is hard to believe I have been serving the Quarter for more than 4 months already! Along with the regular duties of communication, event planning including Quarterly Meeting, and supporting the Working Group on Aging Concerns (which will now be moving forward with an ARCH training!), I have been visiting the meetings. I have now visited 8 meetings, and attended the Fall Worship at Chichester. Soon I hope to visit Appoquinimink, the preparative meeting under the care of Wilmington. I've also attended events at several meetings and am gradually getting to know more people and learn what the various relationships are.

I also attended Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions in July (and was happy to see some of you there!). I participated in several sets of exercises which were meant to encourage us to be more welcoming by being better listeners, and sharing our deepest feelings. I attended workshops by the Eco Justice Collaborative (which shared a wonderful video which can be brought to meetings), one by Spiral Q, and another by the Quaker Voluntary Service program.

In addition, I had the opportunity to meet with other Quarter Coordinators and Clerks of Quarters over lunch. It was very helpful to hear what other Quarters are doing and how the various Coordinators function. Some issues (very small meetings, and how to get meetings to support each other's events, for example) seem to be common to every Quarter. The Coordinators will be meeting again later this fall at Friends Center after the new PYM program staff have been hired.

There was also a meeting of First Day School and Children's Religious Life people, including those of us who attended the FDS retreat in May (I attended before I was hired), along with interested others. We talked about what we'd like PYM to do to support us. Zac Dutton has since reached out.

Several very important decisions were made this summer – including the approval of a new Faith and Practice! Two buildings which had been under the care of PYM are becoming independent of the Yearly Meeting. The Burlington Meeting and Conference Center is being Transferred to the care of Burlington Quarter. The Arch Street Preservation Trust is well on its way to becoming financially independent. I think the decision with the potential for the most impact on PYM is the approval of the undertaking of a Multicultural

Institutional Audit – the fruit, I think, of all the discussions, workshops and listening, even when hard, that has taken place over the last several years. An article about this was in the Concord Quarter October Newsletter

The General Secretary's report was pretty powerful for me. She accepted responsibility for the conflicts and impacts of the controversial staffing decisions made earlier this year in a very humble way, and asked for our help in keeping her open and asking for support.

Another new event at Yearly Meeting Sessions was the inclusion of local faith communities at a picnic (held indoors due to weather), and an interfaith panel around the topic of how faith inspires their advocacy. It was noted that in the past we have gone to Annual Sessions and not interacted with the community around the site, so this programming was an attempt to get more involved and knowledgeable. I found myself talking to some people of the Muslim faith at dinner who did not know about Quakers, but had come to dinner and to hear their leader on the panel.

Overall I am enjoying the work and inspired by all that you are doing both in your meetings and outside of them. I am very open to feedback, so if there is something you would like me to do differently, or you would like my help, please let me know! Here are some small ways I can continue to support you:

- Publicize events at your meeting – I send out Announcements every month around the 20th – try to get copy to me by the 15th.
- I can generally bring and set up the Quarter's sound system for your event.
- I can put you in touch with people in other meetings doing similar work.
- I can find you resources.
- And more – just ask! - *Lynne Piersol*