

Concord Quarterly News

of the Religious Society of Friends



Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter Volume 20, Issue 3.1, July 2023

Belonging is the Beginning (Ed. Note: Our program for the joint Concord/Western QM is a presentation on Community by Christie Duncan-Tessmer. What follows are two web posts by Francisco Burgos, Executive Director of Pendle Hill, that I found very pertinent and compelling. These posts are reprinted here with permission.)

On Belonging – October 26, 2022

It is no secret that we all are confronted with challenges in many aspects of our lives at this time, both individually and collectively. Numerous concerns compel us to take a position – we cannot claim neutrality in good conscience. Of course, one result of this is the multiple polarizations that we face nationally, globally, and even at home in our local communities. I firmly believe that we need to create space for the Beloved Community as we try to respond to the pressing social needs of this time, and I believe that this requires us to reimagine ourselves. I do not suggest that we suddenly abandon our political, religious, or economic views but rather that we reach for community with those with whom we disagree or experience difference, dialoguing, listening, and learning from and about each other. These are powerful tools that we have at hand to advance mutual understanding.

Creating the Beloved Community at its core requires us to reimagine our sense of belonging, which can be a deep exercise of faith. It asks us to know that every single person is a unique expression of the Divine and to accept and celebrate each person as such. This is not a mere conceptual framework. It is a truth that touches every aspect of our personal and communal lives as Quakers. Within Friends, this is a truth that we must ruminate upon as we examine ourselves, discern, and practice our social witnesses as manifestations of our spiritual covenant.

A community that embraces belonging as a core value welcomes diversity not as a quota of membership but as a spiritual practice that bends toward equity and draws the Beloved Community closer. This implies seeing each other as equal and being open to accompanying one another in our search for personal and societal healing. A community where belonging is lived as a path to reparation and re-creation, and as a practice of solidarity and active hope. The world loudly cries for this type of community; standing aside is not an option.

I do not pretend that this is easy. Engaging difference can be deeply troubling work. However, when done in the context of community and faithfulness, it can also be deeply transformative. Spreading the seed of belonging as we accept, celebrate, and fully embrace our own and others' humanity is an act of love that can transform us and can change the ways we relate to one another, the natural world, and Spirit. Let us be brave and create space for reimagining

belonging as we seek peace and justice, and as we faithfully listen to the Spirit in our journey toward wholeness.

In Friendship, Francisco

Nudged By Love – June 2023

One of the most beautiful and transformative experiences that is constant in my life at Pendle Hill is the accompaniment of a community that dares to be hopeful in the face of any challenge. This is a community that remains faithful to the movement of the Spirit, despite physical distance and many uncertainties in our lives. I have seen love in action as many of us in the Pendle Hill community face the loss of loved ones, encounter health issues, struggle in our personal journey with the Divine, or respond to pressing financial needs. It is clear to me that this 'holy experiment' is a plain call to reimagine what is possible with love and the courage to realize it.

I cannot count the many occasions when I found myself nudged by love where I started with a closed-off-ness, not recognizing the fertile ground for mutual accompaniment and transformation. I also confess to you that there have been times in which fear has prevented me from embracing and welcoming the gentle but clear divine invitation to hold space for solidarity, care,

compassion, and justice. In these times, I have tried to keep Paul's words to the Roman community in mind: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God." (Romans 8: 38-39 NIV). Even when we fail to answer the call to divine love, we still have the opportunity to recognize the love that surrounds and connects us all.

I have no doubt that the nudges of love have been part of your life as well. Think for a moment about your relationships, your faith community, your callings; the person that, without many words, is fully present in your life. Think about the many gestures of kindness, support, and care that you receive. We can hold these beautiful experiences in our hearts as a sacrament of what is possible with love. Opening ourselves to be nudged by love and to explore its possibilities is what we strive to do at Pendle Hill as we create space for community, deep transformation, learning, and faithfulness. I am convinced that our small Quaker retreat center is a living laboratory for personal and social change, especially when we witness how difficult it is for certain communities to be open to diversity or how slowly we have advanced in our steps toward peace and justice. I hold the conviction in my heart that love is the way forward and that opening ourselves to the nudges of love is an integral step on the path to recognizing the divine presence in everything.

In Friendship, Francisco



Image by pch.vector on Freepik

Program Note: Our Joint QM with Western will be at Kennett Meeting hosted by London Grove on July 16. It will feature Christie Duncan-Tessmer leading a presentation on Community. It will be inter-generational, so Middle Schoolers and above are encouraged to join in. London Grove Meeting is excited to welcome everyone to join in for a delicious meal afterwards, with many thanks to Kennett Meeting for agreeing to help us due to a property emergency. After lunch WQM will hold their business meeting, but CQM will hold its business meeting the following Sunday, July 23, at Birmingham at 1 PM.

Wilmington's "Berry" Successful Outreach

Wilmington Monthly Meeting occupies an entire block of the Quaker Hill neighborhood in Wilmington, DE. Despite having been in the same location since 1750, the Meeting has recently struggled with establishing a connection with the neighboring community; there is very little interaction between the Meeting and the residents of the neighborhood. It has felt uncomfortable to be in the neighborhood, but to not feel a part of it. One notable exception to that feeling has been on the occasion of our annual Berry Festival. On that day, neighbors stroll through our grounds, share food, listen to music, and enjoy a late spring afternoon.

We were not able to have the festival in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, and we were not able to have it last year due to the death of Friend Hermetta Harper, the festival's prime organizer. This year we were determined to bring the festival back. It was a way for us to honor and remember Hermetta, and a way for us to once again connect with our neighbors. It took place on Sunday, June 4th, 1-4PM.

As we drew close to the date, several people started pitching in without being asked to, or without being assigned a task. Signs suddenly appeared in the neighborhood, posts about the event popped up on social media, grocery shopping took place, and musicians were booked. In preparation for the festival, several members met on June 3rd to bake shortbread and



pound cake, and to slice nearly fifty quarts of strawberries. June 4th was a brilliant day, sunny and warm, a perfect day to spend a few hours outside.

One of the changes that we made this year was to provide food to everyone at no cost. Many of us expressed our discomfort in the past for requiring neighborhood children to pay for their sandwiches, or to not allow them a second helping of strawberry shortcake. The result was that we often did not charge everyone for the food, and that somehow did not feel right, either. On the day of the festival, nearly everyone who ordered food expressed their gratitude for not having to pay for it. The effect of this was visible. Neighbors seemed numerous this year, and more at ease and less like invited guests. Many of them lingered for long periods of time. We had arts and crafts, tossing games and a bounce house for children, and many of our young friends shuttled between games and the tables where their families sat, eating and chatting. A few families asked for food to take home so that they could feed others who were not able to attend.

As the day was winding down, a member said, "We needed this." I knew what he meant. The Meeting needed the experience of working together to create a joyful event;

we all got a boost from seeing others benefit from our efforts. There was another sense in which we needed it as well. Since our meeting has been in the neighborhood for so long, we have taken it for granted that we have a place there. On June 4th, we were once again able to welcome our community and to be a part of the neighborhood, rather than just residents of it. —*Brian Fahey – Wilmington Meeting*

The Great Penn Oak of London Grove

A magnificent white oak tree recently named Pennsylvania's champion, stands on the grounds of the London Grove Friends Meeting. When last measured, it was more than nine stories tall, and its branches extended out 135 feet from its trunk. That huge trunk is more than seven feet in diameter. This tree is believed to have been alive before William Penn first visited Pennsylvania in 1682, and it is part of Penn's Woods, which were deeded to William Penn as payment of a debt King Charles II owed to William Penn's father.

Elizabeth Conant Cook wrote about the London Grove Oak in her book, "Let's Listen! Ways of Inviting children to Listen and Find God", published in 1958 by Friends General Conference. She wondered whether the native Lenni-Lenape people might have liked the hill on which the tree grows, noting that it may have provided a good vantage point for watching deer or seeing rabbits. The natives did not cut trees unless they needed the wood for shelter or for a fire. They treasured the trees of the woods as shelter for themselves as well as a place deer and bears found food.



The tree grew in the quiet of the native people until the silence was shattered by newcomers—men who were not natives began cutting down trees, clearing land, and building houses. An exception was a group of plainly clothed men who rode into the grove and dismounted. They spoke quietly as they walked among the trees and stared up in awe of the magnificent white oak. They grew quiet and still. Finally, one of the men spoke, "This is a good place for a Meetinghouse. But it would be a shame to cut this tree. Let us put the Meetinghouse over there." He pointed and the others agreed.

For a long time, there wasn't any quiet on the hill, as the great stone Meetinghouse was built. Once it was finished, the quiet was restored. The great white oak tree continued to grow, serene and sure, as the Friends in the Meetinghouse were the tree's friends too. This amazing tree is one of God's greatest living things, beginning its life as a tiny acorn 350 – 400 years ago.

When we gather at London Grove for joint Quarterly Meeting, perhaps friends will join hands around the base of the London Grove Oak to see how many are needed to circle the trunk, as many have done before us!

—*Debbie Murray-Sheppard, Wilmington Meeting*

Birmingham Meeting has a Bee Yard

For PYM's Witness on Climate Change, Birmingham Meeting's *Peace and Social Concerns Committee* chose to focus on climate change this year. In doing this, we wanted to make sure we chose something our Children and Youth would have an interest in. After consulting with the Youth Committee and educating ourselves about beekeeping, a proposal was approved at our Business Meeting to purchase two beehives to be placed on Meetinghouse grounds.



Nurturing bees has many benefits to the environment. Not only are bees critical to agriculture and growing food, accounting for as much as 30% of the world's food production, they're necessary for wild plants as well. It's estimated that as many as 90% of wild plants rely on pollinators like bees to survive and thrive. Without bees, many of these plants would die off.

A beehive brings an educational and rewarding experience to any backyard. There are opportunities to witness young bees taking their first orientation flights, house bees removing debris from the hive, and nurse

bees tending to the young. You may even see the infamous 'waggle dance' that forager bees use to communicate the direction and distance to new food sources!

Bee care is also an excellent way to witness group cohesive dynamics and group decision making. The hive demonstrates the best in consensus driven success. Without constant communication among hive members, other insects would rob the hive, the ability to nurture the queen and young bees would be a disorderly effort, and finding and storing pollen and honey would be impossible.

In addition, beekeeping teaches kids about the life cycles in the natural world around them. It's an excellent way to get children to care about the environment and want to be a part of taking care of it.

Birmingham Meeting is fortunate in having two beekeepers as members: Jarl Mork and Julie Senko. Julie agreed to maintain the Bee Yard and Jarl agreed to help. In the middle of April, the bees arrived. They are now buzzing around the neighborhood gathering the abundant pollen.

—*PYM Web report & Julie Senko – Birmingham Meeting*

Bees, Meet the Pollinators!



As you can see from our previous beehive story, Birmingham has been working on sustainability issues. Our young people have a grave concern about climate change, and they feel rather helpless to do anything substantive. Being a part of this project has given them a tangible role to play.

After that plan was approved people began talking about a pollinator garden. But, in fact, our whole property is a pollinator garden! Some twenty years ago we began thinking about using native plants in our landscape choices. Our Peace Garden,

Creating Birmingham Friends' Website

Two events recently occurred that resulted in the decision to move forward with creating a new Meeting website: FGC was to cease hosting the Quaker Cloud Website and Birmingham engaged a new Office Manager, Cindy Spalding, who had solid website skills. After approval by Meeting for Business the website committee began the process of creating a new website. Our sense was the best way to tell the story of our meeting was visually through photos, using our large photo library. The process took almost a year from approval to the publishing of the website. The process was a collaboration between the website committee and Cindy with her technical skills. The committee created the organization scheme of the site as well as the content, while Cindy created the design. Her creative skills were instrumental in producing a vibrant and colorful site.

To begin with, we had our own domain name, birminghamfriends.org, which we owned and had used for the Meeting's old FGC website. Since we already owned the domain name, we kept it for our new website. If you don't have a domain name already, you can create one and register it with most website hosting platforms. With the website creation service we used, we could have created the domain name and registered it through them at any stage of the website design process.

Below are the steps we took to create our new website:

-We began by soliciting input from Birmingham Friends. We emailed a questionnaire asking what they thought were the important elements to have on the website, and what our focus should be. This helped inform our decisions about content.

-At the same time, the website committee began exploring a variety of Quaker and other religious websites. We particularly liked the design, organization and content of Friends Meeting at Cambridge (<https://fmcquaker.org>), Providence Friends Meeting (<https://www.providencemeeting.org>) and Bethesda Friends Meeting (<https://www.bethesdafriends.org>). We also viewed a webinar presentation by a Friend at Downingtown Meeting who had worked on that Meeting's new website.

- The next step was to choose a website builder. Cindy had experience with Wix.com and it offered a good price for non-profits. Our Meeting was already a member of Tech Soup, which enabled a Wix discount. TechSoup is a service that provides software applications, web-based services, QuickBooks, Zoom, and tech support services to non-profits at steep discounts, or in some instances, for a simple administrative fee. It is free to join, and other organizations that have joined include PYM and CQM. You can learn more about TechSoup by going to their website, <http://www.techsoup.org/>.

-The committee spent time reviewing the many templates Wix offers and chose one that gave us the design features and look we wanted. Wix has over 800 templates, which aided us in designing our site. Its templates offer a lot of flexibility, so we were able to adapt our template to our needs. Wix also gave us a generic link to view the site, which kept it from being public, but allowed us to send the link to others to view and critique. To "go live" with the site, making it searchable and discoverable by browsers, we simply created the connection to our existing domain name, marking the official transition from our FGC site to the new one.

established after 9/11, was planted exclusively with native trees, shrubs, and perennials. Pollinator plants are everywhere. Our young people have begun making plant stakes and painting rocks to label the different pollinator plants. In our children's program we have planted seeds of purple coneflowers in pots to add to the Peace Garden when larger. The children have also made wildflower seed balls and scattered them in that garden.

We are all becoming educated. In the plantings we have done, and the new beehives we've established, we have a very concrete way of telling stories about biodiversity, endangered species, and interconnections among all of God's creation. Now we are just at the beginning of the journey that our bees will take us on as new perceptions and ideas emerge.

- Gwynne Ormsby Birmingham Meeting

-Once we chose a template, we spent time agreeing on the primary and secondary colors. Our primary colors are shades of blue and red.

-The Home Page is the most important part of a website, creating that good first impression a visitor will see. While designing the Home Page, we asked ourselves - What is most critical for us. We decided the Home Page should reflect Birmingham as a welcoming, inclusive, and active faith community, while showing its unique spirit.

- The next vital step was to agree on the Header. This is the uppermost part of a website and is often the first thing visitors see. It contains the website menu - which helps visitors easily find what they are looking for. We also wanted our Header to include a Link to our Donation Page.

-Another important aspect of a website is the Footer, which appears at the bottom of every page. Ours included the Meeting's statement of Inclusion as well as a sitemap and a way to reach us.

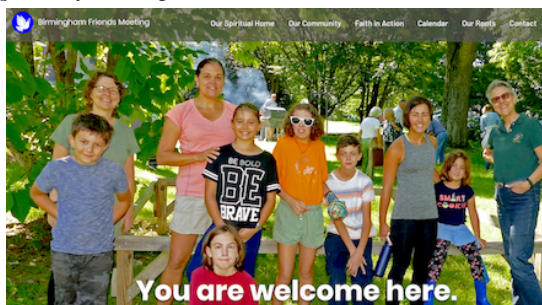
- With the header and footer created, we began working on the content. We used some from our old FGC website but based on the feedback we had gotten from the questionnaire; we wrote new content as well. A small group of Friends who had writing skills and a deep understanding of Quakerism were asked to review and edit all the content before it was laid into the website. Their review of the content was invaluable!

-To create the many images that we used on the website that tells our story, we used image editing software. We didn't spend any extra money on this software as it is available in Microsoft PowerPoint. The many photographs from over the years in our archive were indispensable, and when we didn't have images for specific things we wanted, we either took new ones (for example, we staged a photo of meeting for business) or we used free images available in the Flickr Creative Commons (<https://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>). We looked specifically for free images that don't have any limitations in republishing, other than giving credit. For videos, we used Quaker Speak videos, available on YouTube, which can be embedded on a webpage seamlessly and doesn't require one to leave our website to view it. Wix also supplies images and some image editing capabilities as well.

Having bright, colorful, and engaging images on the website is crucial to telling the story of the Meeting. The reality is that people will not spend much time reading the content posted on the site, and they are very unlikely to read long content. This is especially true on a smartphone. Having the phone version of the site look engaging and easy to see and read was a major factor in the design of the site. Wix makes it easy to design the site for the mobile phone. One statistic holds that over 60% of visitors to a website visit on their phone. This number will likely grow over time, so we thought this was one of the most important factors in all the decisions we made for how the site was organized and looked.

Birmingham Friends went live with the website at the end of 2021. The process of creating a new website was a very rewarding one, and the Meeting community is very pleased with the result.

- Celia Lang and Cindy Spalding, Birmingham Meeting <https://Birminghamfriends.org>



Concord Quarter July 2023 Announcements & Calendar of Events

Announcements

The West Chester Area Refugee Resettlement Project is making progress! Funds for the initial application to sponsor two refugees has been secured, a number of support team members have completed Welcome Corps online training, and task group leaders/volunteers to provide core services have been identified. Finding affordable housing in West Chester is a major challenge. If you have any leads on housing for two adults or have a relationship with a realtor or landlord who might wish to assist, please contact Susan Brodessaer at be_still@verizon.net

Draft minutes of our April 2023 Quarterly Meeting are on the website:

<https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes>. Please send any comments to the Recording Clerk, Marty Boston, at mboston0916@gmail.com by July 18, 2023.

The 2023 FGC Gathering will be held at Western Oregon University in Monmouth July 2 to July 8

The next Concord Quarterly Meeting will be jointly held with Western Quarter on July 16 at London Grove.

PYM Annual Sessions will happen from July 26 to July 30 at The College of New Jersey.

Calendar of Events

- July 7
7 to 8 pm** **Wednesday Worship Sharing - A Series hosted by Moorestown Friends:** The tradition of gathering midweek has always been strong among Friends. Please join us to reflect and connect in fellowship. This week, we'll sit together, online, and reflect on the query, What is freedom? <https://www.pym.org/event/wednesday-worship-sharing-7/>
- July 12-16** **Pendle Hill Workshop - Transformation Stories: Altering Books and Awakening the New You** - A retreat in the Pendle Hill Art Studio with Jesse White. Tell your transformation story with a newly recreated, interactive, multimedia book! <https://pendlehill.org/events/transformation-stories-altering-books-and-awakening-the-new-you/>
- July 16
8:45 pm to
1:15 pm** **Joint Concord/Western Quarterly Meeting at Kennett Meeting hosted by London Grove Meeting- Belonging is the Beginning:** Christie Duncan-Tessmer, PYM General Secretary, will lead us through an exploration and reflection of how our practices speak through and outside our meetings. The children's program will be held during worship and during the adult program. Western Quarter Business Meeting will be at 1:30 PM. Concord will have their business meeting on July 23rd at Birmingham. More info posted at <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2023/joint-concord-western-qm-meetg>
- July 23
1 pm** **Concord Quarter Planning Committee and Meeting for Business via Zoom and in person at Birmingham:** Open to all interested in the activities and workings of Concord Quarter. Contact the Coordinator with questions and for the Zoom link at concordquarter@pym.org. More info will be posted at <https://concordquarter.org> closer to the event
- July 26 to
July 30** **343rd Annual Sessions of PYM:** Online: Wednesday and Thursday of Annual Sessions are online only with Zoom. Onsite: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are available at The College of New Jersey but there will also be a hybrid option. Youth Programs; Friday to Sunday at The College of New Jersey, Bring the whole family! Programs for young people entering K-12 in Fall 2023, and childcare for the littlest Friends, are available onsite so that families with children and youth can attend together. For info go to <https://www.pym.org/sessions/>
- July 29
1:00 to
1:45 pm** **Semi-Programmed Worship Series at Sessions:** Gather with Friends for the experience of semi-programmed worship. The format of the hour-long worship will begin and end with music, and include short, inspiring readings interspersed with 15-minute periods of waiting worship in silence. Hosted by Shulamith of Swarthmore Monthly Meeting. Part 1 of a series to continue in the Fall of 2023. <https://www.pym.org/event/semi-programmed-worship-series/>
- Aug 7 to
11** **Pendle Hill Workshop - Aiming for Freedom: Race, Reparations, and Right Paths:** An in-person multiracial space for the bold visioning of our shared liberation through the development of individual and collective art works. <https://pendlehill.org/events/aiming-for-freedom/>
- Aug 7
7:30 to 9
pm** **Pendle Hill Monday Night Lecture: Wait and Listen, Love and Yield:** Stages and Diligence for the Traveling Ministry with Benigno Sánchez-Eppler who will explore experiences that intensify our focus on what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do. Does Love remain the first motion? How does our monthly meeting test the leading to go on the road? <https://pendlehill.org/events/wait-and-listen-love-and-yield-stages-and-diligence-for-the-traveling-ministry/>
- Aug 12
4:30 to 7
pm** **Birmingham Meeting presents their annual Chicken Dinner** with entrees prepared by Ted Pace as well as the traditional favorites of tomatoes, coleslaw, watermelon, and desserts. Bluegrass music provided during dinner. Look for info to be posted at <https://www.birminghamfriends.org>

Joint Concord/Western Quarterly Meeting Virtual on Zoom/In-Person at Kennett Meeting hosted by London Grove July 16, 2023

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81814846752?pwd=UjU3WE0rS3Rka2VhYTRYMk0zZmxjZz09>

Please note QM location has changed but still hosted by London Grove

8:45-9:30 am	Sign in and Social Time
9:30 – 10:30	Joint Worship (childcare available) Children & Youth Program – Part 1
11:00 – 12:00	Program with Christie Duncan-Tessmer
11:00 – 12:00	Children & Youth Program (Youth encouraged to participate in Adult program)
12:15 pm	Lunch
1:15-3:00pm	Western Quarterly Meeting for Worship with attention to Business



Belonging is the Beginning Exploring community and engaging the wider world A presentation by PYM General Secretary Christie Duncan-Tessmer



The people who belong to a community shape it, and the way a community is shaped signals to people they belong. How do our Quaker practices, in our meetings and our outreach, create experiences of inclusion and belonging for those already among us and those seeking a spiritual home? Christie Duncan-Tessmer, PYM General Secretary, will lead us through an exploration and reflection of how our practices speak through and outside our meetings. Her interactive, intergenerational program will help us to collectively imagine our meetings as inviting and engaging in new ways.

Children and Youth Program at 9:45: Join London Grove member Kim Brosnan-Myers and her two assistants for a program of songs and cooperative games that emphasize the theme of Beloved Community. At 11 AM, PYM staff members continue with the same theme with the younger youth. Older youth are asked to join in the adult program which will be intergenerational. It is appreciated if parents who are bringing children register at the link below to help program leaders anticipate the different age ranges of those young people attending.



For more info, email concordquarter@pym.org
or Deb Wood at coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org
Event Website: <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2023/joint-concord-western-qm-meetg>
Kennett Meeting is located at 125 West Sickle St, Kennett Square, PA 19348

Concord Quarterly Meeting at West Chester - April 30, 2023 – Minutes of combined CQM Business & Planning Committee

Opening Worship - The Clerk opened the Meeting with silent worship.

Welcome to Newcomers Debbie Murray-Sheppard (Clerk)

Debbie asked newcomers to Quarterly Meeting to introduce themselves. Andy Coe from Westtown Meeting, Johana Halmaith from West Chester Meeting, and Paul Kaniefski from Birmingham Meeting introduced themselves and were welcomed by Friends.

Monthly Meeting Count - (Birmingham, Concord, Goshen, Middletown, West Chester, Westtown, Willistown, Wilmington)

Twenty people were present at the beginning of the meeting. All Meetings from the Quarter were represented except Concord and Goshen.

Approval of Agenda - Friends approved the agenda as written but noted that Gary Johnson who was to give a report for the Climate Action Working Group was not in attendance.

Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2023 - The minutes were approved as written with the correction of one typo that Rich Ailes volunteered to update on the Quarter's website.

Joys and Challenges Report from Birmingham Meeting (attached) - Charles Spadoni, Clerk of Birmingham Meeting, presented the joys and challenges report from the Meeting. A question was asked about changing the name of the Religious Education Committee to the Children and Youth Program. The change in name was made to more accurately reflect the current practices. The Children and Youth Program oversees programming for children and youth and the Worship and Ministry Committee oversees adult religious education programs.

Some questions were asked about how Birmingham updated their website. Friends General Conference is no longer hosting the Quaker Cloud but is providing support for meetings to update their websites. Rich Ailes would like to put an article in the Quarter's Newsletter about how Birmingham updated its website that may be of help to other meetings in the Quarter. Charles suggested that Rich contact Celia Lang about the new website.

Nominating Committee report - Rich Ailes - Charles Spadoni has agreed to serve as the Quarter's Treasurer for the period beginning July 1, 2023, and ending on July 31, 2024. Friends approved having each subsequent Treasurer's term begins on August 1 and end on July 31 to accommodate accounting needs. Friends approved with gratitude having Charles Spadoni serve as Treasurer for another year.

Friends approved with gratitude having Debbie Murray-Sheppard serve another year as Clerk of the Quarter.

The Nominating committee continues to search for a new clerk and recording clerk and currently has queries out for both offices. The committee is examining the demographic character of each of our 8 meetings.

Friends expressed appreciation to Marty Boston for serving as Recording Clerk for the past three years and to Chris McKenney for serving an additional year past his term as Assistant Clerk of the Quarter.

Climate Action WG Report & Epistle (attached) - Gary Johnson was not available to give the report today. Debbie Murray-Sheppard explained that The Climate Action Working Group is asking for approval for a letter of support for the Eco-Justice Epistle to go to PYM in July. Debbie is going to send the Eco-Justice Epistle to each of the meetings in the Quarter to review the epistle and approve it before sending the letter of support to PYM.

Report on Possible Welcome Corps Refugee Program - Susan Brodesser gave a report on the Possible Welcome Corps Refugee Program. Susan reviewed the past support the group gave to the Isaac family. The Refugee Program was laid down after the Isaac family moved to another city. Later some people in the group came together to support another refugee.

President Biden and the federal government recently initiated a new program to have private citizens help support refugees. Susan said various members from the West Chester community have volunteered to help with refugee settlement. Susan has been seeking support from the community before committing to sponsorship of another refugee family. The Clerk asked if Susan could write up a brief announcement to be disseminated in the Quarter for what the group needs.

Working Group on Aging Concerns (attached) - Evelyn Brownlee gave a report from the Working Group on Aging Concerns. The group recently sponsored two workshops. Evelyn's term as clerk is ending at the end of June. The group is seeking a new clerk.

Coordinator Resignation and New Coordinator Strategy - Bianca Santini-Dumas, Concord Quarter Coordinator, resigned from the position in early March to pursue other opportunities. Debbie thanked Rich Ailes for filling in for the coordinator this past month. Friends approved having the Quarter move forward to fill the coordinator's position as soon as possible. The search committee is composed of Debbie Murray-Sheppard, Christopher McKenney, Rich Ailes, Charles Spadoni, and Pat Daly.

Newsletter Articles - Rich Ailes, Concord Quarter Newsletter Editor, asked the group for ideas for articles for the next newsletter. One article will advertise the program for the next Quarterly Meeting. A second article could be about Birmingham Meeting's experience developing a new website. The Historical Library at Swarthmore could be asked for an article about graveyard records. Matt Bradley will contribute a story about expanding the science lab at West Chester Friends School. Rich will look into an article about the Concord Quarter "See for Yourself Tour" to be held Saturday June 17th sponsored by the Climate Action Working Group. The three tour sites will include Birmingham Meeting's bee project, Barclay Friends' gardens, and Kendal-Crossland's gardens.

Treasurer's Reports (attached) - Charles Spadoni gave the Treasurer's Report. The following issues were covered:

Adoption of Total Return Practice: In accordance with the requirements of 15 Pa. Con. Stat 5548 (c), the Meeting has an investment practice that seeks a total return for its assets and the assets it holds in trust, and the Meeting has committed to follow such a practice. Friends approved following this practice.

Concord Quarterly Meeting Friendly Audit - Paul Kaniefski gave a report on the audit. Tom Gilbert (from Willistown Monthly Meeting) and Paul Kaniefski (from Birmingham Monthly Meeting) completed a "Friendly Audit" of Concord Quarter's financial statements for the three annual periods ending June 30,

2020, June 30, 2021, and June 30, 2022. Several disparities were identified, which do not materially alter the financial results of, nor assets held by, Concord Quarter. (Full details are outlined in the Reports).

Paul and Tom reviewed the Quarter's information backup and financial institution access. The auditors found these processes to be appropriate. In particular, the QuickBooks file is backed up to iDrive, with the password contained in the Quarter's records and retained by the Quarter Coordinator as well. Separately, both the Treasurer and Clerk are authorized signatories on the Quarter's bank account at National Bank of Malvern and investment accounts and Friends Fiduciary Corporation.

The auditors thanked Charles for his work in support of Concord Quarter and his cooperation with the Friendly Audit. The auditors reported, "We find that Concord Quarterly Meeting is well-served by Charles Spadoni's careful, detailed, and experienced work as Treasurer. " Friends approved the audit report and thanked Paul Kaniefski and Tom Gilbert for doing the audit.

Treasurer's Report - Charles reviewed the attached report. Currently the Quarter has a good cash position and all meetings in the Quarter are up to date with their covenants. Tuition Operating Fund money was distributed to Westtown School, West Chester Friends, and Wilmington Friends for the benefit of 17 students. To avoid capital losses, FFC TEF distributions are being invested in a certificate of deposit and the reserve fund is being invested in a money market fund. - Friends accepted the report with appreciation.

Proposed Budget 2023-2024

The proposed operating budget for 2023-2024 included a 5% increase in the constituent monthly meetings' Coordinator covenants over their Coordinator covenants for the current fiscal year. Meeting Covenants for operations for 2023-2024 are the same as the current year. Friends approved the budget for the coming year.

Planning for Joint QM with Western July 16 at London Grove

(Arrangements Committee & Concord MM Joys & Challenges & Hickman Report)

Western Quarter offered to host a joint meeting between Concord Quarter and Western Quarter at London Grove Meeting. The Program will be given by PYM staff about building relationships internally and externally. The schedule will include Worship from 9:30-10:30; Program from 11:00-12:15; and Lunch from 12:15-1:15. The children's program would be held during worship and then unstructured childcare will be supplied during the adult program. Western Quarter Business Meeting will be at 2 PM.

Friends approved having a joint meeting with Western Quarter on July 16th at London Grove and Concord Quarter would have their business meeting hybrid on July 23rd at Birmingham Meeting if the building is available or at Westtown if Birmingham is not available.

The program from the last Concord Quarter program was reviewed. Some computer issues were identified. A password was needed to sign in on Zoom and not everyone had the password. Some people had issues hearing on-line if several people spoke at once.

One friend said that she appreciated the fellowship time after the meeting as it brings friends together. Another friend suggested having the host meeting supply food rather than having a potluck. The Clerk thanked West Chester for hosting Quarterly Meeting

Reading of Minutes for Approval Marty Boston (Recording Clerk)

- Friends approved having Charles Spadoni serve as Treasurer for another year and to have the Treasurer's term to begin on August 1 and end on July 31 to accommodate accounting needs.

- Friends approved having Debbie Murray-Sheppard serve another year as Clerk for Concord Quarter.

- Friends expressed appreciation to Marty Boston for serving as Recording Clerk for the past three years and to Chris McKenney for serving as Assistant Clerk an extra year beyond his term.

- Friends approved having the Quarter move forward to fill the coordinator's position as soon as possible with a search committee composed of Debbie Murray-Sheppard, Christopher McKenney, Rich Ailes, Charles Spadoni and Pat Daly.

- Friends approved the audit report.

- In accordance with the requirements of 15 Pa. Con. Stat 5548 (c), the Meeting has an investment practice that seeks a total return for its assets and the assets it holds in trust, and the Meeting has committed to follow such a practice. Friends approved this practice.

- Friends approved the proposed operating budget for 2023-2024 that included a 5% increase in the constituent monthly meetings' Coordinator covenants over their Coordinator covenants for the current fiscal year. Meeting Covenants for operations for 2023-2024 are the same as the current year.

- Friends approved holding a joint meeting with Western Quarter on July 16th at London Grove and having the Concord Quarter business meeting hybrid on July 23rd at 1 PM at Birmingham Meeting if the building is available or at Westtown if Birmingham is not available.

Second Count of Meetings in Attendance - Seventeen people were in attendance at the second count of the meeting. All meetings of the Quarter were represented except Concord.

Announcements of Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise noted, contact the Coordinator for the Zoom links (concordquarter@pym.org)

Many other programs for children, youth and young adults can be found on the PYM calendar: <https://www.pym.org/calendar/>

Respectfully submitted, Martha Boston, Recording Clerk

Editor's Note: Minutes here are abridged. Reports from this Meeting for Business can be found at

<https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes> For unredacted Treasurer's report please email concordquarter@pym.org

Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter
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Recording Clerk:
Treasurer: Charles Spadoni
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Concord Quarter Meetings

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Birmingham
Concord
Goshen
Middletown
West Chester
Westtown
Willistown
Wilmington

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