

**Permanent Board Meeting  
August 3, 2019  
Castleton University**

**19-47: Opening Worship**

Friends opened with a period of worship.

**19-48: Welcome**

Sarah Gant, clerk of Permanent Board, welcomed Friends to Sessions 2019 and to Permanent Board.

**19-49: Roll Call**

The recording clerk called the roll.

Present: Sarah Gant, Clerk; Hannah Zwirner Forsythe, Recording Clerk; Kim Allen, Travis Belcher, Peter Bishop, Martin Zwirner Forsythe, Chris Gant, Ben Guaraldi, Ian Harrington, Rebecca Leuchak, Ed Mair, Christopher McCandless, Jean McCandless, Gina Nortonsmith, Carole Rein, Sara Smith, Phil Stone, Will Taber, Tom Vargo, Rosemary Zimmermann, Mary Zwirner

Ex-Officio:

Noah Merrill, Secretary; Bob Murray Finance Committee Clerk; Bruce Neumann, Rising Presiding Clerk; Elizabeth Reuthe, Secretary's Supervisor; Shearman Taber, Treasurer; Fritz Weiss, Presiding Clerk

Regrets: Deana Chase (Development Co-Clerk), Darcy Drayton, Betsy Kantt, Anna Raddochia, Elizabeth Szatkowski, Bill Walkauskas

Visitors: Alice Allen-Harvey, Susan Davies, Leslie Manning, Phebe McCosker, Anne Pomeroy, Emily Provance, Allison Randall, John Reuthe, Scott Rhodewalt, Nia Thomas, Ben Warner, Kathleen Wooten

**19-50: Minutes**

The minutes from the May Permanent Board meeting were approved at that meeting. Any corrections should go to the Recording Clerk.

### **19-51: Presiding Clerk's Report**

Fritz Weiss, Presiding Clerk, submitted a report to the advance documents and welcomed any questions. Fritz has heard arriving Friends' concerns about the weight of the work we have in front of us. We have substantive, structural elements of our community to discuss and discern this week. We are encouraged to affirm our commitment, both individually and corporately, to be faithful to the opportunities to live more fully into the Kingdom of God.

### **19-52: Secretary's Report**

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, welcomed us back to Castleton University and to Sessions 2019. He expressed gratitude for the Friends who have been working throughout the year to set the table for our time together this summer.

Noah shared the joyful news of a bequest from a Friend of just over \$32,000. Permanent Board is asked to approve placing this bequest in our quasi endowment fund instead of our operating budget.

Concerns were raised about ensuring that our operating accounts were sufficiently funded to avoid multiple transfers into and out of the quasi endowment. Noah, and others, expressed a desire to set precedent that one-time gifts of this kind not just go into working capital, reminding us that placing the funds in the quasi endowment does not preclude us from using the funds for the operating budget as needed. We are encouraged to create policy to clarify this process in the future.

Friends accepted this bequest with gratitude and approved placing it in the quasi endowment.

### **19-53: Minute of Gratitude**

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, expressed his deep gratitude for Sarah Gant's service as the clerk of Permanent Board. Sarah has encouraged us to work steadily and incrementally, gently pushing us in the right direction. She has helped each of us to recognize the gifts we bring to our community and we are very thankful for Sarah's faithful leadership. We are in better shape organizationally, and thus in better shape spiritually, thanks to Sarah's four years as clerk.

### **19-54: Clerking Structures & Practices Working Group**

Nia Thomas, clerk of the Clerking Structures and Practices Working Group (CSPWG), reported on the work of that group. After the May Permanent Board (PB) meeting CSPWG spent time turning the broad recommendations in their report to that meeting into specific action items. CSPWG hopes that the specificity of these action items will better enable us to faithfully hold each other accountable for the implementation of these changes.

PB is asked to endorse the following items to be forwarded to and minuted by Sessions:

1. That the Yearly Meeting has an ongoing commitment to diversity.
2. That a progress report should be given to Sessions next August with updates gathered by Nia Thomas, Quaker Practice and Leadership Facilitator.
3. That the overall responsibility for responding to concerns raised in CSPWG's report rests with Permanent Board.
4. That, as possible, the Finance Committee shall ensure funding for the recommendations in the FY2020 budget and into planning for future budgets.
5. That Ministry & Counsel offer support to PB in creating a working group charged with exploring and naming how New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) currently supports ministry and the spiritual life of Friends in NEYM.
6. That Coordinating & Advisory (C&A) pay careful attention to how committee structures can best facilitate effectiveness in the work of NEYM.

More details on these points are in the advanced documents for Sessions.

Friends were given the opportunity to share questions and concerns about CSPWG's report and the items we were asked to endorse. It was suggested that there be clearly named benchmarks that next year's report responds to with the intention of more faithfully tracking our progress.

Concerns were raised about how C&A's role in point six seems to mirror the many iterations of past structural working groups. How and why might this iteration of that work end differently? Members of CSPWG, and others, pointed out that for the first time we have a paid staff member who will be tracking this work and that we are more clearly laying out the challenges and our aimed-for structural changes.

Leslie Manning, the rising PB clerk, reminded us that PB is the laboratory for the work laid out in CSPWG's report. We must be the agents of culture change in NEYM. We must show up, be prepared, and be faithful. This is a culture shift for everyone in the Yearly Meeting (YM) and we must help to lead it.

Bob Murray, clerk of the Finance Committee, cautioned us to be clear that the FY2020 budget is complete and comes to Sessions for approval this week without having had much time to address CSPWG's report and its recommendations. As work begins on the FY2021 budget more time and attention will be spent aligning the YM finances with the working group's recommendations. However, the FY2020 budget does include money for expanded childcare hours at Sessions and Nia Thomas's changed role in the YM staff, both of which are aligned with recommendations from CSPWG.

Friends endorsed sending these six points to Sessions. We commit to carry this conversation forward such that the wider body of Friends here are well-prepared for discussion and discernment of the report at Business Meetings.

#### **19-55: Mosher Book and Tract--Recommendation for Stewardship and Distributions**

At its May meeting Permanent Board (PB) received and discussed a recommendation for the Mosher Book and Tract Fund to be stewarded by the Yearly Meeting (YM) Secretary and Office Manager. Noah Merrill, YM Secretary, brought this recommendation back to PB with more clarity and specificity. The updated guidelines for this fund intend to make the availability of these monies more widely known. Friends had the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. Friends approved the new guidelines for the Mosher Book and Tract Fund.

#### **19-56: Mosher Book and Tract--Spanish Language Edition of John Woolman's Journal**

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting (YM) Secretary, brought forward a proposal for a project to be funded by the Mosher Book and Tract Fund. This proposal would fund the publication and promotion of a Spanish language version of John Woolman's journal. More details on the project are in the proposal in the advanced documents. Friends approved this proposal for use of funds from the Mosher Book and Tract Fund.

#### **19-57: Student Scholarship Granting Committee**

Rebecca Leuchak, clerk of the Student Scholarship Granting Committee (SSGC), reminded Friends of the work that the committee has been doing for the last four years. The remaining funds from the previous Student Loan Committee were spent down in grants over those four years. In accordance with Permanent Board Minute 2015-30 establishing the SSGC, that committee proposes that the small amount of remaining money is transferred to the operating budget and that the committee be laid down. Friends approved these proposals with gratitude for the faithful work done by the SSGC.

#### **19-58: Finance Committee Updated Financial Handbook**

Bob Murray, clerk of the Finance Committee, brought the updated Financial Handbook to Permanent Board (PB) for questions and concerns. Full discussion and approval of the handbook will occur at our upcoming September PB meeting. This is not a perfect document but it speaks to where we are now and we hope to proactively update it as policies change. With deep gratitude Friends look forward to studying the updated handbook and discussing it at the September meeting.

#### **19-59: Treasurer's Report**

Shearman Taber, Treasurer, shared some pieces of the report that he will bring to Sessions this week. Included in this is the correction to reports at the end of FY2018 that inaccurately inflated our reserve levels. The actual numbers were as expected but the end of year report was inaccurate. Shearman's full report is in the advanced documents for Sessions.

#### **19-60: Nominations**

Leslie Manning, clerk of Sessions Committee, brought forward the nomination of Adam Kohrman for the Site Selection Committee.

Friends approved this nomination.

Will Taber, clerk of Internal Nominating Committee, brought forward several nominations:

Nat Shed to serve on Personnel Committee, class of 2022

Sarah Gant and Janet Hough to serve on Internal Nominating Committee, class of 2022

Kristna Evans to serve on Yearly Meeting Nominating at Large, class of 2022

Katherine Fisher to serve on Clerk's Table Nominating Committee, class of 2022

Friends approved these nominations.

#### **19-61: Memorial Minute**

Friends heard the memorial minute for Sandy Issacs. Friends approved forwarding the minute to Sessions.

#### **19-62: Closing Worship**

Friends closed with a period of worship eagerly anticipating the joyful week to come.

*Sarah Gant*

*Presiding Clerk report to Permanent Board*

*August 2019*

Dear Friends

As I considered this report I remembered a lyric from Leonard Cohen's song "Anthem" *"Forget your perfect offering/there is a crack in everything/ that's how the light gets in"*.

As I anticipate Sessions 2019 I am excited, and I am concerned. One model of culture / organizational change proposes four repeating phases – Awareness, Analysis, Action and Reflection. This year we are moving from the wonderful strong minutes we have approved on the spiritual response to the climate crises, on complicity with white supremacy, on repudiation of the doctrine of discovery, on financial sustainability, on migrant justice and on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. These were minutes of analysis, and we are this year we are considering what to do. Action. There are particular challenges to communities and organizations in the action phase. This is when we learn if we understood the minutes in the same way, this is when there is a vulnerability to agendas, and particular perspectives with a potential for conflict, and this is when we are apt to forget that there is a next step of reflection and learning. That action plans do not conclude the process of change. These are filters I've been sharing as I meet with groups bringing business to us and filters which I expect will inform what I am listening for as clerk. One of the antidotes to the potential conflicts over agenda's and understanding is to find ways to celebrate the intention and the work so far. There is much to celebrate. I trust you have read the advance documents.

There is no perfect way forward. We seek the foolishness of God rather than the wisdom of humans.

C&A has met three times since Permanent Board last met. We are forwarding a management proposal for the Mosher Book and Tract Fund to PB; if approved it will be brought to sessions on Tuesday morning. We have begun a conversation with the Puente committee about the Puente policies and how they might change to reflect the change in circumstance. We have considered how to respond to an invitation from The Massachusetts Council of Churches for a ecumenical gathering on September 20<sup>th</sup> "May we Forever Stand" acknowledging the 400 years of history of Black Resiliency in this country.

I have been enriched by the opportunity to serve the YM as clerk for the past four years. This is my last report as clerk to Permanent Board. Thank you for listening to me over the past four years. I am honored to have served with you and am humbled by the dedication and depth of this group.

With love

Fritz Weiss

Presiding clerk

\$10,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.

7. That Anna Hopkins, Friends Camp director; Robert M. Spivey, Friends Camp treasurer; and John Reuthe, Friends Camp Committee clerk, be authorized, individually, as signers of the Friends Camp bank accounts, except those checks for greater than \$10,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.

#### Presiding Clerk and Clerks Table Nominations

The Permanent Board presents the following slate to begin service at the close of Sessions 2019:

**Presiding Clerk:** Bruce Neumann (Fresh Pond)

**Recording Clerk:** Peter Bishop (Northampton)

**Recording Clerk:** Rosemary Zimmerman (Bennington)

**Reading Clerk:** John Humphries (Hartford)

**Reading Clerk:** Gina Nortonsmith (Northampton)

#### Minute to Authorize Edits and Corrections

Friends authorize the presiding, recording and reading clerks to make and approve edits, clarifications and corrections to the minutes of NEYM Sessions 2018.

#### Time-Sensitive Statements

Listed below is the public statement issued by the presiding clerk and Yearly Meeting secretary since 2018 Sessions, in keeping with Minute 2015-57.

This was sent via e-mail to local meetings and shared on social media. It is also posted on our website.

#### The Love That Overcomes November 3, 2018

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God –Romans 8:38-39

This week, Quaker communities of faith across the six New England states are mourning with our Jewish neighbors the deadliest act of violence against Jews in this country's history. We mourn with all who are targeted by hate. We join our hearts in grief with the grieving. We search for ways to respond to the corrosive evils of anti-Semitism, white supremacy, and the persecution of those labeled as "other," even as we acknowledge our own complicity in these sins. We yearn for justice, for healing, for refuge for those most at risk. In town squares, in places of worship, in living rooms, in legislative offices and detention centers, we unite with countless others to protect people from further violence, violence fueled by false prophets preaching fear.

Each day brings further anxiety, violence, and vitriol, while some charged to be leaders incite the worst in us as human beings. We are surrounded by stories of hatred, division, and despair. And yet, we know this: The story of Love will endure.

This week, in the face of the mass murder of Jews at prayer, Jewish doctors and nurses treated the man who opened fire in the Tree of Life Synagogue. A stranger in a parking lot cradled the 12-year-old boy whose grandfather was one of two black people shot and killed by a white man outside Louisville, Kentucky. As some deny the basic humanity of transgender people

and people seeking asylum, communities respond with acts of radical love, inclusion, and sanctuary. In these and so many unnamed acts, amidst such suffering, we see the infinite Love of God.

It is the testimony of the Religious Society of Friends that God is at work healing the brokenness of the world and the brokenness within each of us. Nothing can hold back the unshakeable power of Love in this time, and throughout all time. What matters in this moment—in every moment—is how we choose to participate in this eternal story. Our lives must proclaim that this Love is stronger than all fear.

We commit to live today trusting in this Truth. The words we say and the choices we make in the coming days and weeks must bear witness to Love in concrete acts of connection and care, in our homes and neighborhoods, in our schools and workplaces, in the coming elections, as communities of faith, as people who call this country home, as those seeking refuge and those offering it. We must waste no opportunity to love.

We must seek the grace to keep free from the politics of rage, division, numbness and dehumanization, even toward those we may perceive as enemies. We must nurture in each other the courage to come together across difference, to resist hopelessness, to renounce a worldview that treats anyone as disposable, to affirm that the Spirit of God dwells in everyone. With each person, in each moment, each place—this movement grows.

This is the time for a politics of presence, of radical relationship, of mutual aid and reconciliation. It's a time to be witnesses, storytellers of the broken-hearted Love that overcomes the powers of fear. Let the walls of separation come crashing down.

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

FRTZ WEISS, PRESIDING CLERK

NOAH MERRILL, SECRETARY

### Summary of Next Steps from the Clerking Structures and Practices Working Group

Last August at Sessions, Friends identified the concern that the leadership of our Yearly Meeting does not reflect the diversity of Friends in New England. In response, Permanent Board created a working group to investigate the barriers to service within the Yearly Meeting (see the charge of the Clerking Structures and Practices Working Group at <http://bit.ly/2YD1544>). Over the winter and spring, the working group conducted many interviews and gathered our observations and recommendations into a report, which was shared with and affirmed by Permanent Board in May. If you have not done so already, we recommend that you read the full report (see [page 29](#)).

In our report, we lifted up that significant changes are needed in structural, financial, and cultural areas and that in order for barriers to truly be eliminated, an integrated and long-term approach is essential. We identified that the "bigness" of the work that we expect from our volunteer leaders is a significant barrier to service. One of the key ways to address this "bigness challenge" is to prioritize the work that is most important and to be plain-spoken about what we are prioritizing at a given time. In addition, we named that we need to make our pathways to leadership accessible and intentional. We identified ways that our current nominating practices can create or reinforce barriers to service. In response, the Nomi-

*How does this support racial justice and other forms of justice?*

nating Committee has already begun incorporating many of our recommendations into their practices and goals for the coming year, which involve a much more robust emphasis on growing leadership through intentional training, mentoring, and creating more short-term and project-based opportunities for service (see [page 39](#)).

To those of you who have been following “big picture” conversations over the years, our recommendations will hardly come as a shock. In fact, looking back at the report made five years ago by Structural Review (<http://bit.ly/2S5erDv>), you will see that the specificity of the recommendations before us now is possible because of the foundation that had already been laid. As these “big picture” conversations have continued across different groups and committees within the Yearly Meeting, we sense that there is momentum at this time to move forward with bold and necessary changes. Throughout the year, we have been struck by the enthusiasm and readiness to name what is no longer working, to adopt new practices, and to experiment together in order to move towards our vision. Although we are well aware that our recommendations are not a comprehensive “solution” to all the leadership challenges we face, **we sense that we are ready to move these recommendations forward to the appropriate parties for implementation.**

As the clerk of the Clerking Structures and Practices Working Group and in my new staff role as Quaker practice and leadership facilitator (see my full job description at <http://bit.ly/2xABH37>), I have been asked to serve as the thread-holder for these recommendations, carrying them forward to appropriate parties with sufficient context, coordinating communication between groups as needed, and maintaining the momentum by following up and gathering information for reports back to Permanent Board and to Sessions next year. In this way, I will help “keep an eye on the ball.”

**In addition to approval of moving these recommendations forward for further refining and implementation, we ask Sessions to specifically minute the following:**

1. That the Yearly Meeting has an ongoing commitment to diversity as we strive to nurture everyone’s gifts and create inclusive leadership pathways and opportunities that will foster a broad exchange of diverse ideas and perspectives. We commit to supporting the leadership development of all Friends, regardless of economic background, race, age, gender, sexuality, or disability.
2. That although carrying out these recommendations in full may take a number of years, **a progress report should be given to Sessions next August** with updates gathered by the Quaker practice and leadership facilitator (Nia).
3. That the **overall responsibility** for responding to the concerns raised in the working group’s report **rests with Permanent Board**, who will bring business items to the body as appropriate.
4. That, as possible **within budgetary constraints**, the Finance Committee, treasurer, and Yearly Meeting secretary shall **ensure funding for the recommendations** in FY2020 and incorporate these recommendations into planning for future budgets.
5. Because the wide breadth and unarticulated priorities of Ministry and Counsel’s work was identified as a complex and long-term barrier to effective leadership within that committee, we ask that **Ministry and Counsel of-**

**fer support to Permanent Board in creating a working group charged with exploring and naming how NEYM currently supports ministry and the spiritual life of Friends in New England.** This working group shall identify where support for ministry and spiritual life currently happens and where gaps exist; they shall also offer recommendations for structures and manageable leadership roles that would best serve the current needs of Friends.

6. We affirm Coordinating and Advisory’s role in routinely examining how current structures contribute to the overall vitality and purpose of the Yearly Meeting and, additionally, their particular role in communicating structural questions, concerns, and suggestions to the body in their reports to Sessions. We ask that, during the triennial review of committee purposes and procedures, **Coordinating and Advisory** (who manage that process) **pay careful attention to how committee structures can best facilitate effectiveness in the work of NEYM**, in light of the concerns and recommendations from our report.

On its surface, these next steps may seem like they are about the far-away internal structures of the Yearly Meeting. Don’t be fooled: these next steps are really about our shared, day-to-day work of building a healthy Society that is well-equipped to faithfully draw out and share the bounty of gifts with which God has blessed us. In the Permanent Board minutes, the original report from our working group was described as “a road-map for culture change” within the Yearly Meeting. The next steps outlined above are the detailed driving directions which will allow us to navigate tricky turns ahead.

As we give some Friends serving in leadership roles specific directions, let us remember that we each play a role: We grow in our use of gifts not from the “top” down but within all of our practices and relationships which each other. We create space for more Friends to lead when we are continually open to re-imagining structures and practices. As we affirm these next steps, let us all contribute to the leadership culture we yearn to see by honoring our priorities, noticing the contributions each Friend makes, giving honest and constructive feedback, responding creatively to perceived limitations, and experimenting boldly.

On behalf of the Clerking Structures and Practices Working Group,

—NIA THOMAS

### Earthcare Ministry Committee Proposed Minute for 2019 Sessions

“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create” (Isaiah 65:17-18)

As God’s agents of the “new heavens and a new Earth,” and Friends of Jesus, we are called into bold ministry in restoring a healthy and just place for all to live.

At 2018 Sessions Friends reached unity on a minute (2018-36) calling for each of us to reduce our carbon footprints by 10% over the ensuing year. This was, as far as we know, the first time a U.S. religious denomination has set such

*How does this support racial justice and other forms of justice?*



## Support for Ministry of Publications

### Background

In August 2018 the Permanent Board recommended formally laying down the NEYM Publications and Communications Committee, which had been inactive for several years.

Friends gathered at Sessions did not approve the recommendation in the absence of clarity about how the important ministry of publications was being or would be carried forward by the Yearly Meeting. Friends at that time expressed a strong desire for the Yearly Meeting to support the ministry of publications, as well as a recognition that “publications” has evolved and includes forms, tools and media that have changed significantly, even in recent years.

There is also a clear need to address the appropriate stewardship and use of the Mosher Book and Tract Fund (MBTF), which had been officially under the care of the former Publications and Communications Committee since a previous reorganization several years before. The MBTF makes a modest amount of money available each year for the limited purpose of “printing and circulating books and tracts inculcating and developing the principles of the Christian religion as preached and promulgated by the early Friends.” The Fund has not been used since 2014.

For the purposes of clarity, a proposal for the management and oversight of the NEYM Mosher Book and Tract Fund will be separately presented and considered.

Sessions asked Coordinating and Advisory and Permanent Board to return in August 2019 with a proposal outlining in greater detail how the YM would support this ministry.

The following proposal seeks to address the concerns described above in a way that liberates and encourages the ministry of publications for many years to come.

### Proposal

Supporting the publication of Friends’ testimony to the transforming power of God in our lives—both in writing and in other media—is and will continue to be a vital aspect of the ministry of New England Quakers. The document below seeks to articulate policy and process for support of publishing projects by New England Yearly Meeting of Friends.

#### Process for Identifying and Coordinating Support for Publications

The Yearly Meeting office manager will serve as the primary point of contact for all prospective publications projects. The office manager will receive inquiries, assess scope, and match projects with resources as appropriate. The office manager will also welcome referrals or suggestions on publications projects, including from local meetings, quarterly meetings, Yearly Meeting committees, and Friends active in public ministry. The office manager or secretary may take initiative to approach prospective authors to encourage them to consider a publishing project.

- Friends who are interested in publishing relevant content (or suggesting that content created by others be published, or that content on a specific theme be created) are encouraged to contact the office manager, who will help the inquirer to determine what support is needed.
- After developing a sense of the scope and nature of support the project may involve, the office manager will

consult with the Yearly Meeting secretary about the proposal to determine what support the office can offer.

- The Yearly Meeting secretary will coordinate and, if possible, approve NEYM support for publishing proposals in a manner consistent with the policy on grants, ensuring coordination, consistency, and consultation as appropriate, and seeking further discernment and counsel where helpful or needed.
- Depending on the complexity, purpose, and needs of the project proposed, the office manager may be able to offer editorial support or may refer the caller to individuals who proofread, edit, and design; to a print house; or to Friends publishing houses such as Barclay Press, FGC, FUM, and Pendle Hill.
- The office manager will be a participating member of Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP), maintaining that connection on behalf of NEYM.
- The office manager will maintain a written guide for format and style for print and internet content publications, such as use of abbreviations and acronyms, capitalization, and language conventions.
- Overall policy and standards for publications will be developed by staff, seeking expertise and input as needed, and presented to Permanent Board as needed for review, input, and approval.

#### Publications Resource Group

- The office manager will maintain a list of Friends with expertise relevant to publications projects who have agreed to be contacted by the office manager to consider offering their skills, experience and gifts—either individually or as part of a small team—with specific projects.
- Friends serving as part of this “Publications Resource Group” will serve (as called upon) as an ongoing resource for the office manager in identifying Friends to assist those seeking help with a publication, and for advising on publications-related matters as requested. The members of this group will be selected and supervised by the office manager. Though Friends serving in these roles may never meet together as a whole group, their meaningful service in this way will be publicly acknowledged. This group may include people who are not part of NEYM (such as members of QUIP).

#### Promotion and Education Regarding NEYM Support for Publications

Proposals or recommendations for publications will be publicized and solicited through the NEYM website, social media, and the email newsletter. In these and other ways, NEYM will encourage writers to contact the Yearly Meeting office for help with developing publications and finding ways to share the message of Friends. Invitations to propose projects and information regarding the process will also be included in training for committees and other volunteer service.

### Recommendation for Stewardship and Distribution of the Mosher Book and Tract Fund

The Mosher Book and Tract Fund is a permanently restricted fund of New England Yearly Meeting. Distributions from this fund are to be used for the purpose of “printing and circulating books and tracts inculcating and developing the principles of the Christian religion as preached and promulgated by the

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early Friends.” As a result of growth in principal from several years in which funds were not distributed but instead returned to principal, funds available for distribution in FY2019 total \$3096.30, with a principal of \$85,154.34.

Currently the Mosher Book and Tract Fund (MTBF) is under the temporary oversight of the Permanent Board. **This proposal recommends that Permanent Board retain this overall responsibility and oversight, delegating responsibility for proposal development and funding recommendations to the office manager and Yearly Meeting secretary.**

- As part of their ongoing work supporting publications, the office manager and secretary will consider prospective or ongoing publications projects of which they are aware which would substantially benefit from funds available for distribution from MBTF consistent with the Fund’s purposes.
- While there will be no formal widespread solicitation of proposals, the availability of MTBF funding will also be publicized on the Yearly Meeting website and periodically in the email newsletter, so that Friends can suggest further creative uses for these funds.
- At least once per fiscal year, the office manager and secretary will review potential publication projects and make a recommendation to Permanent Board regarding the use of MTBF funds available for distribution in the current fiscal year.
- In reviewing potential projects and developing proposals to Permanent Board, the office manager and secretary may consult with Friends with relevant experience, and with members of Coordinating and Advisory Committee for seasoning and discernment.
- Final approval from Permanent Board will be required before funds are dispersed.
- News of how funds are used will be featured in the Yearly Meeting newsletter (and in other media as appropriate), and will be reflected in the minutes of the Permanent Board and in other related communications.

### Friends General Conference Activities over the Past 5 Years

FGC has been busy and led by Spirit during the last 5 years, listening to the needs articulated by meetings and individual Friends to focus the work we are called to do on the needs Friends identify. Some elements of the work are ongoing, others represent a change in emphasis; all are aimed to help nurture the spiritual vitality of Friends.

*The Gathering* Traditionally held yearly during the first week of July with a broad range of workshops, activities and opportunities for Friends of all ages and relationships with Quakers; 800–1100 Friends from all over the world attend. (See [fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering](http://fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering) for more details.)

*Institutional Assessment of Systemic Racism* In response to ongoing experiences of systemic racism reported by Friends of Color over many years, FGC undertook a detailed and systematic study of systemic racism within FGC as an organization. The report details suggestions for way forward in addressing the documented concerns; a standing committee which will undertake implementation of the needed changes has been appointed and begun work. (See [fgcquaker.org/news/october-report-institutional-assessment-racism-task-force-recommendations-fgc-central-committee](http://fgcquaker.org/news/october-report-institutional-assessment-racism-task-force-recommendations-fgc-central-committee).)

*Help Your Meeting Challenge Racism* Materials and suggestions are available to support Meetings undertaking work toward eradicating racism in the meeting. (See [fgcquaker.org/services/help-your-meeting-challenge-racism](http://fgcquaker.org/services/help-your-meeting-challenge-racism))

*Welcoming Friend* This limited-term pilot project, funded in part by the Tyson Memorial Fund and designed to collect, share and encourage best practices for welcoming people new to the meeting is just coming to an end; a report is forthcoming in the fall and relevant materials will be available on the web in the Spiritual Deepening Library and as an e-retreat. The Committee for Nurturing Ministries (CNM) hopes to continue this important work.

*Spiritual Deepening* This program, developed and contributed to by more than 100 volunteers from across the U.S. and Canada includes two components: the Spiritual Deepening Library and e-retreats.

- The Spiritual Deepening Library includes hundreds of free resources, print materials, and suggestions for their use by both meetings and individuals presented in an accessible, user-friendly format. There are materials suitable for children and adults individually and together, and many are newcomer friendly. Visit [fgcquaker.org/spiritual-deepening/library](http://fgcquaker.org/spiritual-deepening/library) to explore the available materials and to see the many ways to take advantage of this rich resource.
- E-retreats on four different topic areas are now available and being facilitated on a rotating basis with several more in development for the coming year. Visit [fgcquaker.org/eRetreats](http://fgcquaker.org/eRetreats) to see more details on the available retreats.

*Religious Education* The Sparklers continue to choose and design appropriate materials for use with children in First Day Schools and at home. They have provided topically focused, age-appropriate materials for the Spiritual Deepening Library.

*Online Toolboxes* These are collections of materials for focused use, helping individuals who want a pre-organized approach to building a new meeting or growing one that is already in existence.

- New Meeting: [fgcquaker.org/deepen/outreach/new-meetings-project/new-meetings-toolbox](http://fgcquaker.org/deepen/outreach/new-meetings-project/new-meetings-toolbox)
- Grow our Meeting: [fgcquaker.org/grow-our-meetings-toolkit](http://fgcquaker.org/grow-our-meetings-toolkit)

*Identification of Priorities by Central Committee* Central Committee in 2017 spent considerable time in discernment of FGC’s top priorities. They are: The Gathering, the Ministry on Racism (including implementation of the Institutional Assessment), Youth, The Yearly Meeting Connector Role (which includes your Yearly Meeting Visitors), and the Spiritual Deepening Program.

*Matching institutional goals and financial expenditures to balance spending and crafting a sustainable budget* In pursuit of greater fiscal sustainability in the face of declining contributions, FGC has sought and implemented many ways to decrease expenditures while maintaining the integrity and value of the programs offered.

*Consideration of a Feasibility Study for a major fundraising campaign* Central Committee is looking carefully at FGC’s organizational priorities and how these might underpin a campaign. You can talk to your FGC Representative or Yearly Meeting Visitor to learn more.

*Clerking workshop for high school and adult young Friends* Each year the AYF and HS Gathering Programs clerks attend a

*How does this support racial justice and other forms of justice?*

accept continuing revelation when it comes to our way of organizing, relating to each other, and doing business?

—NIA THOMAS, CLERK

### Student Scholarship Granting Subcommittee

Begun in spring of 2016, this is the fourth year of our student scholarship grant awards program. The Committee received 15 eligible applications and awarded grants to a total of \$27,236.75, which has spent the balance that was available in the account. The program, as was planned at its creation (Minute 2015-30), is now at its end. This was the final award year. Awards were made to those who have connections with New England Yearly Meeting, applications coming from both young and old and for a wide variety of educational purposes. The Committee expects with its work completed that it may be laid down.

—REBECCA LEUCHAK, CLERK

### Archives & Historical Records

Since 2018 Sessions this committee worked closely with the Permanent Board, the Treasurer and the Finance Committee to resolve the committee's concern regarding the remaining funds from the sale of the *Bloudy Tenent*. We are grateful for the strong sense of commitment and support for our work. The committee focused on ensuring that the backlog of unprocessed records can be processed as quickly as possible. With the approval of a one-time grant of \$7500, SCUA is able to hire students and a graduate student to systematically work through the approximately 50 uncatalogued boxes. This work is underway.

We look forward to meeting the needs of monthly and quarterly meetings with a part-time outreach archivist to answer questions and to work with SCUA (Special Collections and University Archives, UMass) and meetings to ensure that all are submitting records to the Archives. We have defined the work required and are working with the Yearly Meeting secretary to be in a position to fill this role in the new fiscal year.

The committee is also drafting a section of Faith and Practice as an update to the sections previously devoted to records for Yearly Meeting and quarterly and monthly meetings. The draft will be provided to the Revision committee.

After one year of operation under the Memorandum of Understanding with SCUA, both Rob Cox, Director of SCUA, and the Committee were happy to affirm that no changes to the memorandum are currently needed.

As part of this report, we include Rob Cox's annual report from SCUA from January 2019:

During the past calendar year, the staff completed the physical reorganization of the collection and pressed forward with verifying and reconciling the old Statler finding aid with the current collection. So far we have not found any glaring omissions or discrepancies, but as we continue with adding detail we will know more. Book cataloging was nearly complete at the time of last year's report, with a few remaining volumes added as time has permitted.

**Processing** A significant portion of the more detailed processing has centered on the records of individual monthly and quarterly meetings. We have compiled a standardized vocabulary for referring to the meetings

(a "name authority list," in archive-speak) and we have developed a rough organizational scheme, in consultation with our peers at Swarthmore. Although each collection is unique in some regards, and the quantity and quality of content varies widely, we are doing our best to develop an arrangement scheme that can be simultaneously consistent, comprehensive, and flexible.

With that plan in hand we are developing finding aids for the individual meetings. At last count, we have generated 52 finding aids for monthlies, including all of the Wilburite monthlies. Reflecting the nature of these collections, finding aids vary considerably in detail and extent, but we have endeavored to include a capsule history of each meeting and hope to be able to add images of meetinghouses, members, or other significant (photogenic) features. Ideally, we would solicit and would welcome help from individual monthlies in contributing to their own histories. We chose not to complete the physical rehousing for many of these collections, although that goal is on the docket. When we have completed the finding aids, we will turn to the backlog accrued while the NEYM collection was at the Rhode Island Historical Society. The integration of this material will greatly expand the monthly collections, and only when we have a more complete picture will we want to make decisions about physical rehousing.

In addition, we have made considerable inroads into processing the separate collections swept up in the NEYM archives. We had already reprocessed the collections of Moses Brown, the Providence Society for Abolishing the Slave-Trade, and several others, issuing finding aids for each and doing some token digitization. In 2018, we added an important collection for Henry H. Perry (supervisor of the three AFSC-run Civilian Public Service Camps in Massachusetts during World War II). We also processed and digitized the papers of Caleb Foote, a Quaker-influenced war resister during World War II who was incarcerated on the west coast

**Digitization** The processing work noted above is an essential first step to digitization. Support from the Yearly Meeting to hire scanners and/or metadata workers for this would be gratefully received. [This processing work has been funded with the \$7500 grant mentioned in the Archives Committee report. -ed.] Until we begin systematic work, we have been chipping away at smaller subprojects: digitizing two interviews (ca. 2004) with elderly members of the United Society of Friends Women, and other items as requests arrive. Henry Perry is queued up for digitization when we have staff available, and I have begun to explore digitizing records pertaining to the Quaker response to the Revolutionary War. A more systematic approach is needed and is the clear next step.

I again am grateful for a hard-working, dedicated committee.

—CAROL FORSYTHE, CLERK

### Coordinating and Advisory

The approved purpose of the Coordinating and Advisory (C&A) committee is to "shepherd the work of the Yearly Meet-



such tensions as they arise rather than become stuck in those tensions in counterproductive patterns.

**5. Daily space and workshops** at Sessions where Friends can reflect, process, and explore the patterns that we are noticing. There will be two workshop opportunities and daily facilitated drop-in times at a designated location.

- *Workshops:* On Monday evening, for the first hour of workshop time, we will have the opportunity to reflect with our plenary speaker Lisa Graustein and Hal Weaver for a deeper conversation on race, justice, and patterns of oppression. Those in attendance can join us for the first hour only or, for those able and wishing to make a deeper dive into this work, stay for an additional hour and a quarter. During this second section, we will give people tools for noticing, for developing an increasing capacity to hear critique, and for lovingly calling each other into greater equality and humanity. The second workshop will be crafted in response to what is happening at Yearly Meeting. We envision a hands-on look at patterns we are noticing this year at Sessions.
- *Drop-in Space:* Some Friends are going to want more time and space to dig into this work than meeting for worship for business allows. We will have pairs of facilitators, appointed by the working group and/or Ministry and Counsel and/or Permanent Board, to allow Friends to discuss and explore all that this new practice and commitment to noticing patterns of oppression lifts up. The facilitators, working in teams of at least two, will ensure that the processing stays productive and encourages growth and that Friends who may be triggered or upset get connected with care. This will require coordination with the Pastoral Care team at Sessions. We will provide this space as an alternative Anchor Group and for a daily drop-in time during the dinner hour.

In faith,

—THE WORKING GROUP ON NOTICING PATTERNS OF OPPRESSION AND FAITHFULNESS

### Treasurer's Report

Because of the continued generosity of our membership, the Yearly Meeting continues to be in good financial health. Despite continuing to approve deficit budgets, the Yearly Meeting is operating with minimally adequate reserves. At the beginning of this fiscal year we had reserves of \$212,000, which were \$13,000 over that required by our policy.

Five years ago we began intentionally adopting a series of significantly deficit budgets to maintain our level of services as we started an effort to increase our income. The current budget provides for an approximate \$8,000 shortfall, as does the proposed budget for next year. The 5-year plan called for us to begin running operating surpluses this year to restore our reserves to a more comfortable level. This is not a warning of impending doom, but rather should be seen as a reminder that we do need to continue to increase our contributions to the Yearly Meeting to adequately provide for the programs and expenses we consider vital.

#### Pay-As-Led and Equalization

One of the most frequent questions I am asked is whether it was important that meetings continue supporting the Equal-

ization Fund. The answer is YES!!! The continued success of the pay-as-led approach to registration fees depends on the continued support of the Equalization Fund by meetings and individuals.

Participating in Sessions is a vital way for each of us to experience the wider Yearly Meeting community and develop the ties with members of other meetings which helps to strengthen and expand the web of Quakerism in New England. The meeting contributions are a way for them to support their own members participation in Sessions as well as assisting meetings with fewer resources. Contributions to the Equalization Fund are the one tangible measure of support for the pay-as-led approach, making visible the support for those of us who cannot afford the total costs and helping them to participate in the life of our Yearly Meeting.

#### NEYM Contribution to FUM

In 2009, and in response to Friends concern about the Friends United Meeting (FUM) personnel policy, NEYM adopted a temporary policy of allowing monthly meetings to withhold the portion of their budgeted contribution to NEYM which would go towards the NEYM contribution to FUM. At that time a number of meetings implemented that provision, which reduced our contribution to FUM by about \$800 per year. In the past year two of our larger meetings have begun withholding, which I estimate will this year make our contribution to FUM \$1900 less than the budgeted amount.

That 2009 minute also established a restricted fund that would receive contributions from individuals and meetings which were to be used to make up the amount being withheld. Because of the generosity of a few individuals, the "make-up" fund has had sufficient monies to cover the amount withheld. Thus each year we send two checks to FUM, along with a letter explaining the issue NEYM has with the FUM personnel policy and the reason for there being two checks. Because of the large increase in the total withholding, I expect there will not be enough in the "make-up" fund to cover the total withholding.

#### Funding Archives Activities

Last year I reported that Permanent Board, under the impression that the work related to moving the archives to the Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) at the University of Massachusetts had been completed, transferred the money from the sale of the *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* to the General Fund. That action turned out to be a bit premature. There still were boxes with miscellaneous material which needed to have their contents inventoried. In November, Permanent Board approved making funds available to complete the work which has now been done.

Now that SCUA is ready to receive those records meetings have been holding during the transfer, we need to learn which records they are most interested in and the preferred formats. And that will be the first major task for the archivist as we reactivate that part-time position. As a regular contractor, the Archivist position will be funded through the general budget.

—SHEARMAN TABER

### FY20/21 Budget Commentary

The Finance Committee of New England Yearly Meeting is pleased to present our proposed FY2020 budget for your consideration. We also present a draft FY2021 budget for your reference, but not approval. As was the case in FY2019, the

*How does this support racial justice and other forms of justice?*

## Memorial minute for Sandy Isaacs

Sanford Michael Isaacs died on January 24, 2019 in his Jaffrey, New Hampshire home. His four children and his friend Mimi Bull were by his side in his final days. It was a time of gratitude for a loving family, his charming engagement with caregivers, and a simple, quiet letting go of the rich life he deeply enjoyed. He died three years after Nancy, his beloved wife of 57 years, and is buried at home beside her, at the edge of a field facing Mount Monadnock.

Born March 18, 1930, son of Irving Isaacs and Frances Gerber, Sandy was a Bostonian in fact and in manner. A graduate of MIT, he fashioned a professional life that drew on his enthusiasm for and great facility with technology.

Sandy's life was guided by his commitment to peace and social justice, which led him and Nancy to find their spiritual home in the Religious Society of Friends. They were members of three successive Quaker meetings: Cambridge Friends Meeting in the 60's, Wellesley Friends Meeting in the 70's and 80's, and Monadnock Quaker Meeting in their retirement. Sandy was an activist in many progressive causes. He offered draft counseling during the Vietnam War, helped support Quaker groups in prisons, advocated for NH Death with Dignity legislation, and he and Nancy harbored war resisters in their home in Weston, MA. He also helped start New England Yearly Meeting's Israel-Palestine working group, and was a long-time member of Permanent Board. Once they moved to New Hampshire, they helped found - and stayed active with - the Jaffrey Democrats.

When an older women's group called the Crones formed in the meeting, Sandy started the Duffers. Neither group had a sustainable number of participants, so the two merged into the Quaker Readers, a book group that meets in Friends' homes (it was often the Isaacs'). After Nancy died, he maintained the level of hospitality they had both loved to extend. He happily invited anywhere from one to ten people for dinner several nights a week, and enjoyed dazzling guests with his use of a blow torch to put finishing touches on an entrée. Their house remained a hub of the meeting through the rest of Sandy's life.

Sandy had interesting views on lots of things, and intriguing solutions to engineering and organizational puzzles. He relished a lively, challenging conversation, appreciating rather than taking offense when anyone managed to pull the rug out from under one of his ideas. His feistiness and strong opinions occasionally got him in hot water, but more often than not he would reconsider and move to make amends.

He was known to lavish great thought and care on projects important to him. Wanting to fix a nice place where he could sit by Nancy's grave and look at the mountain, he asked a naturalist friend to help him find the best patch of moss on his property. Some of this he transplanted to cover the grave. His friend told him he would need to water the moss every day, which he did faithfully. Moss can be tricky to transplant, but by the following spring the site was covered with a soft, thriving carpet of green.

Sandy often addressed people (and dogs) as “Friend.” One member of Monadnock cherishes a memory of him having greeted her on her second visit to the meeting. “Hello, Friend,” he said, which helped her know she belonged in this community.

It’s impossible to talk about the final years of Sandy’s life without mentioning his beloved side kick, a black standard poodle named Jamie. Jamie was the last of a line of poodles who lived with the Isaacs over the years. Jamie served as a lifeline for Sandy after Nancy’s death; where Sandy went, Jamie went. This led him to propose Monadnock create a welcoming space for well-behaved dogs in the meeting house, although unity wasn’t reached.

Sandy was a true original. He lived with integrity and enthusiasm. His presence in Monadnock Quaker Meeting was a blessing.