

Minute of the Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting
Approved in Meeting for Worship for Business 5/24/2020

We feel pain and sorrow that the Friends Untied Meeting Personnel policy continues to discriminate against LGBT individuals and people who do not meet the narrow definition of marriage outlined in the policy. We hold that the Living Spirit does not discriminate when distributing gifts in the Ministry and that it is right and just to honor the Light within each person and the gifts each person brings, regardless of their sexual orientation. The policy as it stands puts human prejudice at the center of our spiritual meeting. The Spirit leads us to be inclusive and honor everyone's gifts. We ask that the board and executive director of FUM engage in prayer and compassionate threshing to find a way to craft a policy that recognizes the Light within all people and chooses staff based on their capacity to fill the positions and their gifts in the ministry, rather than on the basis of their sexual orientation or marital status.

We recognize that continuing to support this policy causes moral injury, not only to those who are excluded, but especially to those of us that participate in excluding them. We support individuals who can not in good conscience contribute monetarily to Friends United Meeting until this policy is changed. We recognize that FUM does important and valuable work and that we are all part of one spiritual community. We also understand that individual acts of conscience can be the beginning point for creating awareness and challenging us to struggle together as a community to choose a just and moral way forward.

We are deeply concerned that this issue is dividing Meetings and making many Friends feel unwelcome or devalued. People involved in perpetrating any form of oppression would like to have the voices of the people they oppress and their allies go silent, but we can not be silent as long as harm continues to be done in our names as members of the wider Friends United Meeting community.

We ask that New England Yearly Meeting continue to support people and Meetings who feel morally unable to contribute financially to FUM as long as Friends United Meeting maintains a hiring policy that discriminates against LGBT people.

We call on New England Yearly Meeting's representatives to the FUM board to continue to advocate for this policy to be changed and all Friends involved in the management of FUM to prayerfully reconsider the policy which excludes so many of our dear and gifted Friends.