

## **Draft Proposal for the Renewal of the Permanent Board Charge to the ad hoc Working Group on Challenging White Supremacy**

*For November, 2017, through New England Yearly Meeting Sessions 2018*

- **Sessions 2018:** CWS WG commits to take under its care (with the Presiding Clerk and PB Clerk) the program and content relative to our charge, to be brought to 2018 NEYM Sessions.
- **Accountability:** CWS WG will strive toward a more rigorous collaboration and explicit accountability interchange with more Friends of Color concerning its own work, with the intention to amplify the voices, needs, and experiences of Friends of Color in NEYM, and in our national culture. We want to be mindful of the patterns of racism that we can replicate if we challenge white supremacy without training and skills for holding a healthy group process. We have already experienced the ways in which such unsupported spaces allow white people to say and do things that are harmful to people of color, the ways that white people can shun and exclude other white people, and the ways that we fail to offer opportunities for growth to people of color because we are so focused on whiteness and white people. In the coming months, we seek to offer some initial guidance and support for Friends seeking to do this work so that our gathered spaces support all Friends and actively work to change these deeper patterns of hurt and exclusion.
- **Networking:** CWS WG will continue to gather and communicate the ways monthly meetings and individuals are engaged in interrupting white supremacist thinking and behaviors, promoting racial healing, and taking direct action to address systemic racism. Example CWS activities:
  - Articles in the NEYM newsletter
  - Articles in the RSEJ Crier
  - Direct outreach and informational letters to monthly and quarterly meeting clerks
  - Communicate and promote wider awareness and use of materials such as those developed by the Committee for Racial, Social and Economic Justice and others within and beyond the wider Quaker fellowship.
- **Direct Assistance:** CWS WG will support monthly meetings in their engagement with racial healing and interrupting white supremacy, for example:
  - CWS WG plans to create and share several succinct communicative pieces for use of monthly meetings that have little experience in racial dialogue to forestall the risk of verbal violence, and to illustrate models of thoughtful engagement and response. This stems from a desire both to be present to Friends who identify as white, wherever they are along the continuum of awareness, and also to be deeply mindful of the risk of hurt to Friends of Color from unskilled communication.
  - Begin development of a CWS “Circuit Riders” initiative consisting of pairs of trained individuals drawn from among & beyond the CWS WG, who are available to assist monthly meetings to initiate and progress in constructive dialogue and action.
  - Design a training session for Spring 2018 for NEYM Friends interested in spearheading or sustaining engagement, e.g., such as direct visits to meetings via

Circuit Rider program, or as individuals engaged in other types of direct action and support.

CWS WG plans a committee retreat in late January or early February of 2018 to more fully develop a vision for NEYM as it carries this work forward. To help inform this vision, Lisa Graustein developed the graphic below as an expression of where we found ourselves as a yearly meeting at the close of Sessions 2017. The committee retreat will provide the time, space and opportunity to embrace our vision and charge together, and to make concrete plans to move forward.

