

Message from Interim Clerk of Ministry and Counsel

While care for the spiritual life and ministry of Yearly Meeting has long been the purview of the Committee on Ministry and Counsel, it has recently felt that this form was not serving our body as well as we needed it to. Following on the work of the Structural Review Committee and others and the recommendation of the Ministry and Spiritual Life Working Group under Permanent Board, the M&C Committee has been set aside for two years to allow space for new life to rise and new initiatives to take shape for the care of the spiritual life and ministry of our Yearly Meeting.

The initial fruits of this experiment are seasonal gatherings to be held three times a year. The first, held May 8, was 'Tilling the Soil of Our Monthly Meetings'. Friends engaged around the ways Spirit and ministry move and are nurtured in our local meetings. Eighty one Friends, in large groups and small, worshiped, heard presentations and explored the factors supporting vibrant faith in our meetings. It was a rich time of sharing and learning. Our next gathering will be on November 13, with a focus on the call to ministry and its challenges. In planning this, the host team acknowledges the tension alive among Friends today between our belief in the equality of all Friends and the importance of naming, raising up and nurturing each person's unique gifts. One hope for this second session is to better understand the experiences of Friends who have been changed through living into a call to ministry and through this better understand our own calls to faithfulness. At this time we anticipate this will be a fully online gathering. We hope you will join us.

Other aspects of work traditionally carried by M&C have already largely been covered by other groups or in newly defined roles, e.g. Worship Coordinator for Sessions. You can find further background to this experiment posted here: <https://neym.org/nurturing-ministry-spiritual-life-experiment>

As we live more fully into this period of exploration and experimentation, I will be watchful for possible unmet needs and additional ways to support and nurture the spiritual life and ministry of our Yearly Meeting. I invite you to join in this experiment, through participation in the seasonal gatherings and through sharing your thoughts and understandings about how we, as a Yearly Meeting, can best live into God's call for us. Please be in touch, mc-clerk@neym.org.

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