

**Proposed Agenda
Permanent Board Meeting
September 25, 2021**

Worship until 9:30

Orientation (Nia) until 10:30

break

Approval of Minutes (Hannah/Susan)

Presiding Clerk's Report including

- Approval of Sessions Minutes*
- Sessions Planning recommendation
- C and A report until 11:15

Secretary's Report including

- Approval of 2022 Budget (or Bob?) as sent to Sessions, no changes
- Update on Friends Camp
- Approval of Friends Camp budget
- Budget priorities for 2023
- Sabbatical planning and implementation until 12

break

Nominating Committee report

Noticing Patterns report on Sessions

*return to Sessions Minutes if needed

closing worship

**Permanent Board Meeting
Held over Zoom Video Conference
July 17, 2021**

21-64: Opening Worship

Friends opened with a period of worship.

21-65: Roll Call

The recording clerk called the roll:

Present: Leslie Manning, Clerk; Hannah Zwirner Forsythe, Recording Clerk; Peter Bishop, Deana Chase, Chris Gant, Beth Hansen, Ian Harrington, Rebecca Leuchak, Fran Lightsom, Ed Mair, Bob O'Connor, Carole Rein, John Reuthe, Martha Schwope, Sara Smith, Will Taber, Bill Walkauskas, Diane Weinholtz, Donn Weinholtz, Morgan Wilson, Kathleen Wooten, Tom Vargo, Mary Zwirner

Ex-Officio: Scot Drysdale (Finance Clerk); Noah Merrill (Secretary); Bruce Neumann (Presiding Clerk); Elizabeth Reuthe (Secretary's Supervisor)

Visitors: Polly Attwood, Marian Dalton, Susan Davies, Sarah Gant, Elizabeth Hacala, Mey Hasbrook, Janet Hough, Aaron Sakulich, LVM Shelton, Jackie Stillwell, Nia Thomas, Diana White, Honor Woodrow

Regrets: Kim Allen, Travis Belcher, Darcy Drayton, Martin Zwirner Forsythe, Christopher McCandless, Jean McCandless, Bob Murray, Gina Nortonsmith, Anna Raddochia, Elizabeth Szatkowski

21-66: Secretary's Update on Cuba

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, updated Friends briefly on the current conditions in Cuba. A surge in the Delta variant of Covid-19 and a rise in political violence in the country has led to a dangerous and chaotic situation throughout Cuba. Cuban Friends ask for our prayers and ask for us to contact our political representatives to encourage them to waive restrictions to aid being sent to Cuba.

21-67: Approval of June Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting were distributed for review. Friends approved the minutes.

21-68: Secretary's Report

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, reported on his view of the vast scope of work that the Yearly Meeting is undertaking in the coming year. All of the work--ministerial work, financial work, youth work, logistical work--it is all part of the vision and direction that we have discerned for the Yearly Meeting. We take this work into Sessions with us knowing that we have much work to do in many vital areas of faithfully stewarding the kingdom of God on earth. There is a lot of work. What is most ours to do now?

21-69: Sabbatical Planning

Noah Merrill, YM Secretary, presented a plan for the coverage of his proposed sabbatical to be taken between October 2021 and February 2022. More details are in the appended document.

Friends were asked to consider and approve the following plan for coverage of the Secretary's role during his sabbatical:

The Permanent Board appoints Nia Thomas (Northampton, MA, Friends Meeting) and Sarah Gant (Beacon Hill, MA, Friends Meeting) to temporarily assume and share the responsibilities of the Secretary during his coming sabbatical.

Nia Thomas will serve with the temporary title of Acting Secretary for Programs, with primary responsibility and oversight for program and staff supervision, communications, finances, and development. Sarah Gant will serve as Acting Secretary for Pastoral Care and Governance, with primary responsibility and oversight for care for local meetings and the pastoral needs of Friends, legal matters, policy, and institutional governance. Both Nia and Sarah will serve as members of Coordinating & Advisory Committee during this period, will meet regularly together for mutual support and coordination, and will participate in meetings of the Permanent Board.

In support of this work, Nia Thomas and Sarah Gant are authorized to be added as additional signers, if needed, for bank accounts of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, effective immediately. To this end, their names should also be added to the bank resolutions minute for fiscal year 2022.

Further details, priorities, and plans will be clarified in the coming months, in consultation with the Yearly Meeting Secretary, Coordinating & Advisory Committee, the Yearly Meeting staff, and other partners as needed.

Friends gratefully approved the names of Sarah Gant and Nia Thomas to serve together in the Secretary's role during his absence.

21-70: PPC for Finance Committee and Sessions Committee

Bruce Neumann, Presiding Clerk, shared revised Purposes, Procedures, and Composition (PPC) documents for the Finance Committee and the Sessions Committee. These documents are appended.

Friends approved the PPC for the Finance Committee.

The changes to the Sessions Committee (SC) PPC include naming the intention of the committee to reduce barriers to access, emphasizing the role of volunteers in discerning the condition of the body and setting the tone for the next year's gathering, and naming the Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness Working Group as a part of the planning process.

As we consider the revised PPC for SC a year and a half into the Covid-19 pandemic it is clear that we are hungry for more connection and for a way to share our gifts. Friends' concerns about volunteer involvement in the planning for Sessions speaks to our longing to be together in community and to feel that our condition is heard by the wider body of Friends. Those needs must work in tandem with the temporal constraints of planning a gathering for hundreds of Friends. The revised PPC for SC aims to outline ways for Friends to be heard and to make the logistics of planning more feasible for staff and volunteers.

Friends approved the PPC document for SC understanding the need to continue creating space in event planning for Friends to share their bounty of gifts.

21-71: Challenging White Supremacy Working Group Report

Susan Davies, clerk of the Challenging White Supremacy Working Group (CWS) and the interim Anti-Racism Working Group, reported for the interim group. Their written report is appended. Included in the report is the following recommendation:

We recommend that the NEYM Permanent Board invite and support a consultation in the fall of 2021, to include a wide range of voices and experiences that have not yet been heard, particularly youth, more BIPOC Friends, and Friends working on anti-racism at the Monthly Meeting level. The fullest range of voices is needed to develop a vision and next steps for anti-racism work in NEYM. This further consultation is a logical outgrowth of our previously stated commitments as a Yearly Meeting (2003, 2016, 2020), our history of past beneficial consultations, and the learning achieved as part of our initial living into those commitments. We envision the consultation would lead to a plan that would come back to Sessions in 2022 for approval by the body. We recommend that this consultation happen via Zoom over two weekends to make it accessible to as many Friends as possible (and to minimize Zoom fatigue).

Friends had the opportunity to share comments and questions.

Friends emphasized the importance of the consultation being a vehicle for enlarging and deepening our antiracism work--it is not an end goal rather a step in the process. The consultation should be about listening, not necessarily for solution finding, but with spirit open to a path forward if there is a faithful direction that appears.

Many Friends raised concerns about the current framework for antiracism work in the Yearly Meeting. CWS still wants to be laid down, though many members of that group and the interim group anticipate participating in the next steps. The Nominating Committee will take on the shepherding of this work in their role of naming the Friends who do the work of the Yearly Meeting.

Friends approved the proposal for a consultation with a more clear proposal expected in September.

Friends approved laying down CWS with gratitude for their faithful work.

21-72: Nominations

Clerks' Table Nominating brought one nomination to the Permanent Board (PB):

Peter Bishop to serve an additional year as recording clerk, now Class of 2022

Internal Nominating brought one nomination to the PB:

Leslie Manning to serve an additional year as clerk of the PB, now class of 2023

Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee (NC) brought two nominations to the PB:

Susan Vargo to the NC as an at-large member for one year, class of 2022

Honor Woodrow to the NC for a three year term, class of 2024

All four nominations were approved.

21-73: Upcoming Meetings

The Permanent Board will meet on September 25th, November 6th, and December 11th. The Clerk and staff are continually assessing the safety of meeting in person and hope that the November meeting could be a hybrid meeting consisting of some Friends meeting in person with others connecting via Zoom. More information will be available as the calendar progresses and we have a better sense of necessary safety precautions for the Covid-19 pandemic.

21-74: Closing Worship

Friends closed with a period of worship.

**Report to Permanent Board
From the Presiding Clerk
July 17, 2021**

Sessions: From my vantage point, Sessions business was challenging but grounded. We had difficult things to listen to and consider, but Friends stayed present and engaged, and lived into a different format for considering the agenda. And, in the end we accomplished quite a bit.

Minutes: As I prepared the separate document with Sessions minutes needing PB approval, I experienced pangs of guilt for burdening this body with so much to review. And yet it remains clear to me that the important work we were being called to, gathered as New England Friends, was the deeper work that we did engage with. And that the traditional pattern of hearing and approving each minute would have taken away from that deeper work.

Sessions Planning: Again, my sense during our sessions was that the detail work of looking at the Purpose and Procedures for Sessions planning was not the work we were being called to. My proposal to ask PB for a one-year authorization to work with the new proposal met no objection. One piece of the proposal that needs particular consideration is the “Theme and Speakers team.” If approved as an established practice next year, this team would be named by nominating and approved at Sessions. Given the relatively short time between PB initial approval of this proposal and sessions, along with nominating committee’s own restructuring efforts, this did not happen, and is unlikely to happen in a useful timeframe. After consulting with C&A I’d like to ask PB approval for:

- One-year authorization to proceed with Sessions planning using the Purpose, Procedure and Composition document which PB approved forwarding for Session approval. My expectation is that this PP&C would come again to Sessions 2022, for final approval. If there are changes based on our experience with the plan during the coming year, these changes would be brought to PB again for review.
- Permanent Board authorization for the Theme and Speakers team for this year to be named by the Sessions Clerk, the Presiding Clerk, and the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel. This approval would allow us to move forward in a more timely fashion, and allow this team to engage in discernment some time on October. We welcome suggestions for people to engage in this work.
- Sessions clerk: Friends will recall that our newly approved Rising Clerk had been serving as Sessions clerk. Nominating Committee has not yet named a new Sessions Clerk, and I’m happy to report that Rebecca has agreed to stay on in this role for the time being. Nominating is confident of having a new name to bring to PB by December, allowing a transition between the clerks before the planning work gets busy.

Commitment to exploring in-person Sessions: At our C&A retreat this past weekend, we considered the potential of returning to in-person sessions at Castleton University in August 2022. This, of course is a hugely complicated decision which is affected by: the intense desire of many to be together again; the concern of many others about large numbers being in proximity for a period of time; the progress of COVID, the progress of vaccinations; the availability of vaccinations for youth; the extra stress that on-line sessions has put on staff; and the robustness of Castleton’s tech support to accommodate at least some hybrid (in-person plus zoom) events. With all that uncertainty, we also recognize that if our

planning does not early on include consideration of being in-person at Castleton, it may not happen. So, I am sharing with you our commitment to proceed, at least for the time being, with planning for in-person and hopefully hybrid sessions.

Support for Cuba: We understand that there have been many conversations among NEYM Friends, FUM, and FWCC about how to support Friends in Cuba. No plans have taken shape as yet, but I hope to be able to share a bit more by the time of this PB meeting, and possibly a request.

Bruce Neumann

To: Permanent Board

September 25, 2021

From the Presiding Clerk

During our recent Sessions Business Meetings, I chose to use our time for discernment of issues rather than laboring over the language of how we record our time together. Which means there are a large number of minutes that were not approved during Sessions. The Clerks' Table has spent numerous hours both individually and together, going over the minutes, editing and trying our best to capture what seems significant for the permanent record. A few notes for the minutes which follow

- Minutes 2021-08 through 2021-23 were approved by the gathered body and are not included here.
- Given the volume of minutes not approved by sessions, and seeking a way to not have minute approval take over the Permanent Board meeting, I have divided the minutes into a large group which I do not expect need individual attention, and a smaller but significant group where I think it's important for Permanent Board to consider whether the clerks have captured what needs to be said.
- In the attached document, minutes **highlighted in green** are those that I will ask for individual approval.
- All others will be considered similar to a unity agenda – if anyone has concerns other than dots or commas, we can pull the minute from the unity group for individual consideration, otherwise the whole group will be approved as one.
- I would draw your attention in particular to how we have chosen to minute “Open discernment” which stretched over four different sessions. Minute 2021-59 gives a very brief summary, notes that the discernment is, in fact, represented in the actions on Thursday morning, and is further summarized in a Clerks' summary which will be appended but not have a minute number. This summary appears at the end of the formal minutes in this document.
- Minute 2021-37 - NEYM's history with FUM. While it is not our normal practice to include the full text of such an extensive presentation, the clerk's table felt that Frederick's summary of our history was a valuable resource for Friends wanting to understand at least some of the history and context of the situation. By including the full text this becomes easily available for Friends to refer to. I include it not for consideration of the content, (this is a reporting of what Frederick said) but for PB's approval that the text be included in this way.
- Please send dots and commas to me, at clerk@neym.org **Don't take up valuable PB time with small concerns that the whole body does not need to spend time on.** I will update the doc before sending it to Sara Hubner.

Bruce Neumann

NEYM Sessions 2021 - Minutes

Saturday, August 7, 2021

2021-01 Welcome and Introductions

Bruce Neumann (Fresh Pond), Presiding Clerk, opened with a prayer and then welcomed Friends to the 361st annual Sessions.

The Clerk introduced the rest of the Clerks' Table: Recording Clerks Peter Bishop (Northampton) and Kathy Malin (Smithfield) and Reading Clerks Adam Kohrman (Beacon Hill) and Gina Nortonsmith (Northampton), as well as the worship Elders for today: Allison Randall (Keene), Fran Brokaw (Hanover), and Marian Baker (Weare). He also introduced the Pastoral Care Team: Sarah Bickel (Beacon Hill), Elizabeth Szatkowski (Portland), Laura Hoskins (Putney), and Carolyn Stone (Wellesley).

2021-02 Land Acknowledgement

Leslie Manning (Durham), Clerk of Permanent Board, shared with us her reflections of the theme of this year's Sessions, "A Time for Healing," and offered an acknowledgement of the land:

We, the people of New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends acknowledge with humility that the land we occupy is and was the home of indigenous people for thousands of years before our ancestors arrived; and that many remain, but not all, of the people, tribes, clans, bands and nations whose names we will never know and whose sacred songs will never again be sung. Although their lands and children were stolen, their language and culture eradicated, cut to the roots, many survive despite this intentional erasure and extermination.

I say this as the great granddaughter of a Dubliner who emigrated here, enlisted in the US Army and served decades in the Indian Wars of the later 1800's; another oppressed person who became the oppressor. May God have mercy on our souls.

We mourn the lives that were taken and honor the resilience of those who remain, resist and rematriate their lives and traditions. We are deeply grateful for their love and care for Turtle Island, which is home to us all and for their prophetic witness. We seek to become better neighbors and relations by rejecting our systems of domination, and learning new ways of living together on this earth, our mother.

She closed with a prayer from H. Silver Fox Mette', of the Cherokee people:

*Creator,
I speak to YOU from within my Soul and within my Body,
asking that I may be an instrument of peace.
May others join together to honor Earth Mother,
to keep the skies clean and clear,
that She may be nourished.
May all creatures of the earth benefit*

*from the water which is Her blood,
flowing through her arteries and veins
on the surface and within Her body...
May all creatures within the soil,
within the water, on the land, in the trees
and in the air prosper,
May They and We be of service to Her good health
for future generations.*

*Creator, shine through us as we join in Your Spirit.
Help us all remember, one by one, that we are created
of the Earth, and powered by Your Spirit.
In this remembering, the separation will end
and we will unite in Spirit to restore and care for
our Earth Mother, all Her life forms
and for ourselves.*

2021-03 Junior High Yearly Meeting

Gretchen Baker-Smith (Westport), the Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator, introduced Martin Eller Fitze (Portland), and Alice Peabody (Burlington) who read the JHYM State of Society report.

2021-04 Padlet

Honor Woodrow (Putney) introduced a software tool called “Padlet” which will be available to Friends all week to record and share their reflections on their condition and on our time together.

2021-05 Worship and Singing

We were led into worship with a recording of “Choose Me, Lord” performed by the Free Grace Undying Love Full Gospel Quaker Choir

(Sara Burke (Beacon Hill), John Fuller (Beacon Hill), Alana Parkes (Beacon Hill), Eden Grace (Beacon Hill), Judy Anne Williams (Hanover), Chuck McCorkle (meeting?), Frederic Evans (?)and David Coletta (Three Rivers).

We settled into worship. Out of the silence we heard a message from our Yearly Meeting Secretary, Noah Merrill (Putney).

Frederick Martin (Beacon Hill) and Katherine Fisher (Beacon Hill) closed worship with the song, “You are an Acorn.”

2021-06 Roll Call

The Reading Clerks read the names of each of New England’s monthly meetings by quarter. Friends were invited to wave and say hello as well as entering their names and affiliations into chat.

Visitors, families with new members, and first-time attendees were welcomed.

2021-07 Reflections from the Sessions Clerk

Rebecca Leuchak, clerk of the Sessions committee shared her excitement about the week before us, encouraging us to engage as deeply as we are able.

Note: Minutes 2021-08 through 2021-23 were approved during Sessions

2021-24 Introduction

Bruce Neumann, Presiding Clerk, Adam Kohrman and Gina Nortonsmith, Reading Clerks, introduced the day's activities and reviewed procedures.

2021-25 Elders

The clerk introduced the Elders for today's Sessions.

2021-26 Our Use of Time

This year's agenda sets aside four business Sessions for open discernment. While Friends like to engage with the business before them, we must recognize that time spent on specific structural items is taken away from our time devoted to the really weighty topics. The Clerk's goal this year is to protect that time so that we can have a deep and open sense of discernment about the whole question of who we want to be as a people, not just the momentary issues at hand.

2021-27 Legacy Gift

Mary Link (Mt Toby) and Susan Rockwood (Midcoast), co-Clerks of the Legacy Gift Committee, described the work of that Committee. Since the Legacy Gift Fund was established in 2014 its support has reached Friends in 40 of 62 meetings ranging from New Haven Meeting to Cobscook Meeting in Whiting, Maine, plus 25 related Quaker groups, with over 100 grants totaling over \$580,000 to date. So far this year, a total of \$66,959 was awarded to 10 applicants and there is one more cycle coming up at the end of this month.

Legacy gifts have helped Friends answer urgent calls to witness against oppression, discrimination, and pollution of the earth, or attend conferences with our Time Sensitive Grants. Sometimes, supporting a small, simple step in faithfulness to an initial leading has led to bigger projects and further leadings. Other grants have enabled finite projects, such as helping meetings install solar panels, mini-splits, or more efficient windows to reduce their carbon footprints, or to repair a roof on an historic meetinghouse. Committee members often hear how NEYM's Legacy support has encouraged Friends across New England beyond the financial support.

Over the course of the next few days, a few of the Legacy Gift grantees will speak about their leadings and experience of being supported by Legacy Funds. Andy Grant will speak of his leading toward right-relationship with Indigenous people, culture, and land, and Beth Collea will tell of

Dover Meeting's calling to offer sanctuary and Legacy's grant supporting meetinghouse renovations to make that corporate ministry possible. Orianna Reilly and Christopher McCandless were expected to speak as well, but time and circumstances did not permit.

Mary and Susan thanked Friends for creating this legacy of Spirit through the Legacy funds. Friends are reminded of the upcoming Aug 30th application deadline and asked to reach out to either of the co-Clerks with any questions.

2021-28 Faith and Practice Revision

Phebe McCosker (Hanover) described the work of the Faith and Practice Revision Committee and presented a new chapter on "Personal Spiritual Practices."

The process of writing a new Faith and Practice is about the engagement of the Yearly Meeting in naming where we are as a community in a way that encourages Spiritual vitality and growth. The Committee presents each new draft chapter followed by Listening Sessions, input from the monthly meetings, a re-write, and more input from Friends.

This week the Committee is bringing the chapter "Personal Spiritual Practices" back for preliminary approval. Our faith community depends on the vitality of the personal Spiritual lives of its members. This chapter asks Friends to examine how they keep their Spiritual lives vibrant. It encourages Friends to explore the breadth of opportunity for Spiritual depth that lies before them in their everyday lives. As usual, the chapter has a series of extracts following the text to bring into greater clarity the power of Friends' practice.

Members of the committee read several extracts and queries.

Phebe informed the body of opportunities for listening sessions and an intention to bring a revised Personal Spiritual Practices chapter back to the body at the end of the week.

2021-29 Right Relationship Resource Group

Suzanna Schell (Beacon Hill) presented a report from the Right Relationship Resource Group, consisting of Suzanna, Andy Grant (Mt Toby), Don Campbell (Mt Toby), Sara Smith (Concord), Kim West (Cambridge), and Leslie Manning (Durham meeting and Clerk of Permanent Board).

This group was appointed by Permanent Board in September 2020 to support Monthly Meetings as they reflected on the draft *Apology to Native Americans*. While the group's role was not to wordsmith the *Apology*, they have considered suggestions and questions they received and incorporated some but not all of them. A number of Meetings have minuted their support for the *Apology*, while other Meetings are just beginning or have not yet engaged. You can read all of the [responses on the NEYM website](#).

Although the search for Truth is an arduous path, it opens the way for a restoration of balance and greater joy. Together we are on the journey of a lifetime, and this letter is one step.

Andy Grant (Mt Toby) then read the *Apology to Native Americans*. (The version that was brought for approval on Thursday can be found on [page _____](#).)

Friends received the *Apology*. Discernment on approving it will happen later this week.

2021-30 No Way To Treat a Child

The Presiding Clerk urged Friends to listen to one another with open and tender hearts, recognizing that for some it is very important for the Quarterly Meeting minutes on the mistreatment of Palestinian children to be heard in full while others will find the messages they carry very disturbing.

Carl Williams (Plainfield) read the Northwest Quarter Minute Regarding “No Way to Treat a Child.” Jim Matlack (Midcoast) read the Vassalboro Quarter Minute on the Mistreatment of Palestinian Children.

Friends received these minutes. Discernment on approving them will happen later this week. There was a Pastoral Care breakout room at the end of this morning’s Session for anyone who wanted help grounding after these intense messages.

2021-31 NEYM Earthcare Witness Committee

Kim Stoner (New Haven), Margaret Marshall (Narramissic Valley) and Reb MacKenzie (Quaker City Unity) read the *2021 Minute of Support for Survival of the Earth and Her Inhabitants*. [Find this on page](#)

2021-32 Visitors from Cuba

We had been afraid that this would not be possible, but we have some visitors from Cuba with us this week. These include Kenya Casanova Sales, Jorge Luis Peña Reyes (Presiding Clerk of Cuba Yearly Meeting), and Miledys Batista Sintes.

Monday Afternoon, August 9, 2021

2021-33 Introductions

Bruce Neumann (Fresh Pond) again introduced the Clerks’ Table, the Noticing Patterns group, and the Elders for this afternoon.

2021-34 Opportunity to Hear From Cuban Friends

For decades, Quakers in New England and Cuba have sustained a “Bridge of Love”—also called the *Puente de Amigos*—through mutual support, prayer, and visitation. This year, despite the enormous hardship Cubans are experiencing, five Friends from Cuba, representatives of Cuba Yearly Meeting, are joining us at Sessions as they are able through the facilitation of a dedicated tech and interpretation team.

2021-35 Underlying Truth

The Clerk expressed that what we seek this week is to find some underlying Truth that we might miss in considering topics individually, but which might emerge as we look at them together. What

we did this morning, hearing items of business but holding off on our discernment process, is part of that process.

2021-36 Noticing Patterns

The Noticing Patterns group reminded us that discussions of how the culture of Empire has harmed us can feel overwhelming, especially for those in marginalized groups. Our culture does not typically allow us to take time to find God, but Friends are urged this week to take time for prayer to help ground ourselves and find the spaciousness we seek.

2021-37 NEYM's History with Friends United Meeting

The Clerk called on Frederick Martin (Beacon Hill) to introduce the issues surrounding the relationship between NEYM and FUM.

FUM is an international association of Quaker yearly meetings, that represents one "branch" or "flavor" of the Quaker faith. The various branches of Friends all grew out of the core revolutionary Quaker movement that started in England in the 1650's, but in 19th century England and America, religious changes swept through the whole culture—not just Quakers—and Quakers split into four or five different branches. One of these branches was more activist, more involved in abolitionists work and social reform, more Bible oriented, and began holding programmed worship services and supporting pastors. New England Quakers were almost all part of this branch.

In 1902, this branch organized itself into what they called the Five Years Meeting, which later became Friends United Meeting. New England Yearly Meeting was a founding member. They were trying to strengthen a kind of mainline Protestant theology against the growing evangelical revivalist movements that were sweeping Quakerism along with the rest of the country.

New England Quakers, even in the early 20th century, were not part of the more liberal Friends General Conference. Only in the 1940s did some newly independent meetings in places like Cambridge, Providence, and Hartford start working with FGC.

Another element, separate from FUM, a missionary effort of Quakers from the United States to East Africa. In 1902, NEYM sent two representatives to the Board that organized this effort separately from FUM. It was taken under the care of FUM a couple of decades later. Kenya now has the largest number of Quakers anywhere in the world, and they are members of FUM. The Board and staff have been working to decolonize the organizational structures of FUM for a number of years, but that's another story.

Today, FUM is an association of 37 yearly meetings, 20 of them in Kenya. Four or five FUM-affiliated yearly meetings in the United States are also affiliated with Friends General Conference, including us. The umbrella of FUM's organizational structure includes Friends Theological College in Kenya, Ramallah Friends School in Palestine, and several other programs in East Africa that support Friends, the Belize Friends School; programming for Friends in North America; and an international conference every three years called the Triennial.

Like any nonprofit organization, FUM has a personnel policy. Most of it is about ordinary things

like staff benefits, but it includes what is called a Personal Ethics section, which says that staff are expected to lead lifestyles in accordance with Friends testimonies. Susan Furry, a New England Friend who wore a pink triangle to FUM gatherings in the 1970's, has described the "long-standing but unwritten and unspoken policy: no Gay Friends could work for FUM." An incident in the 1980's caused a firestorm of protest when a gay Friend applied for a position and was rejected. This prompted the Board to adopt the current policy in 1988.

I know this is painful, because it's the policy that New England is demanding change. I'm going to read the part that matters here: "Staff and volunteer appointments and promotions are made without regard to sex, race, national origin, age, physical disability, or sexual orientation. It is expected however that intimate sexual behavior should be confined to a traditional marriage, understood to be between one man and one woman."

Susan Furry points out that this policy "did have the advantage that (though discriminatory) it would actually be possible for a Gay or Bisexual Friend to serve in Friends United Meeting." She goes on to say, "I did not feel the policy was the will of God. I strongly believed and still believe that it was and still is God's will that the policy must ultimately change. But I knew clearly that this was the best that this particular group of Friends could do at that time." She also asked us to bear in mind that in 1988 only six of the monthly meetings in NEYM had approved same sex marriage, most of them just year, one in 1987, and one in 1986. One other note: part of the intent of the policy was to promote gender equality in Africa by restricting patriarchal leadership by men with multiple wives.

New England representatives to FUM hoped this personnel policy would be the start of incremental change, but unfortunately it became frozen in time while out country has only grown more polarized.

Twenty-four years later, in 2012, the personnel policy had to be updated for legal reasons in the state of Indiana. When it came to the section on Personal Ethics, a number of representatives including those from NEYM were not in unity with it. Unfortunately, when there was no agreement on a new policy, the usual Quaker practice left the existing one in place. A note was included in the new personnel manual that the Board is not in unity with that section of the policy.

So from a factual standpoint, this is where we still are.

Because FUM is governed by a Board made up of yearly meeting representatives which worked by Quaker process, change can be held up even when the ground has been shifting for FUM's member yearly meetings in North America.

Out of eleven FUM yearly meetings in the U.S. in 2009, only four were LGBTQ-affirming. Since then, two yearly meetings have split with one side affirming and one side non affirming in each case, and four more have either adopted affirming policies or been open

to their monthly meetings doing so. This prompted many anti-affirming meetings to leave. So, the yearly meetings in FUM overall have become more affirming.

While concerns about the policy had been voiced earlier within New England yearly meeting, the issue came to the fore in Sessions 2009 when it was clear that some Friends felt we should

disaffiliate, while others felt we should stay in relationship. A few of them felt that they could not allow any portion of their money to go to FUM, even through their donations to their monthly meetings which in turn donated to NEYM which donated to FUM.

The withholding mechanism was established as a sort of 11th hour way to move forward. It let us stay in relationship while allowing those whose conscience would not let them donate to FUM remain in relationship with their monthly meeting and NEYM. Some members of Wellesley meeting resigned as they felt that even this measure was not enough.

Yet despite multiple commitments to engage with everyone and seek a better way forward and multiple renewals of the withholding plan, as a body of Friends we've mostly avoided deep engagement. Some Friends have engaged in intervisitation with yearly meetings and are convinced that, while slower than we could wish for, one on one relationships built over time are the way we change people's hearts.

At Sessions in 2019, we considered the withholding policy again after a five-year hiatus and the clerk's sense of the meeting was that we did not have unity to continue the withholding plan. It had been written with a sunset clause, so without unity to reaffirm it, the mechanism ceased to exist. It was allowed to extend to October 2020 to allow monthly meetings to take this into account in their budgets. Then the COVID pandemic came. The Clerks' Table saw we couldn't discern this at our first Zoom Sessions, and Permanent Board authorized a further one-year extension to October, 2021.

2021-38 Monthly Meeting minutes regarding Friends United Meeting

The Clerk then asked that the minutes be read to the body. Brief summaries of each one follow. The full texts can be found beginning on page _____. Partway through the reading of the monthly meeting minutes, a Friend stopped us and asked that Friends consider whether it is necessary to read aloud the excerpt from the FUM policy over and over again, as it is acutely painful to hear it. The Clerk recognized that this Session has been particularly difficult for the LGBTQ folks among us. He concluded with "I hope you will hear the love and affection that your meetings feel. You are us. We are glad you're here. You are beloved."

2021-39 Minute from Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting

Minute read by Jeffrey Radcliffe:

While observing that the FUM personnel policy is "inconsistent with the divine community to which we aspire... Fresh Pond Meeting has experienced and affirms the many ways Friends United Meeting effectively witnesses other Quaker beliefs and testimonies." FPMM accepts our membership in and financial support of FUM.

2021-40 Minute from Hartford Monthly Meeting

Minute read by Liesa Stamm:

Hartford Monthly Meeting, recognizing “the complexity of this issue given that Friends United Meeting is an international body representing members from many cultures,” is committed to “the fullest inclusion in our ministry and expression of their humanity” of the LGBTQIA+ community and others. The minute states their intention to withhold FUM-related funds, and to reallocate those funds to LGBTQIA+ organizations.

2021-41 Minute from Midcoast Friends Meeting

Minute read by Diane Dicranian:

“Acknowledging the moral frailty of all of us, nonetheless we believe that [failing to excise the offensive language in FUM’s personnel policy] causes grievous harm, moral injury, and imminent danger to LGBTQ+ persons and their communities. Unless FUM changes its policy, we ask NEYM to withdraw from membership at its 2020 Annual Meeting. Our energy is best invested by partnering elsewhere, and working on behalf of the LGBTQIA+ community.”

2021-42 Minute from Middlebury Friend Meeting

Minute read by Jean Rosenberg:

LGBTQIA+ persons have suffered too long being discriminated against or worse, imprisoned and killed. As Quakers. . .we should be at the forefront of those welcoming our LGBTQIA+ family as truly and fully, our family.

When New England Yearly Meeting halts its contribution withholding practice, Middlebury Friends will allow its members to express their conscience on FUM’s hiring policy by designating a percent of their contributions destined to FUM as a contribution to another benevolence. Meeting will still pay its full dues to NEYM.

2021-43 Minute from New Haven Friends Meeting

Minute read by Katy MacRae:

New Haven Friends believe NEYM should remain engaged with FUM and continue exerting influence on our Friends at FUM with the hope of changing hearts and minds. “We want to support the good work FUM does around the world as they provide a form of outreach that NEYM meetings are not able to do. We also appreciate how FUM has worked to change the power dynamics within FUM away from white supremacy. Let’s not throw out the baby with the bathwater!”

2021-44 Minute from Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting

Minute read by Howard Gentler:

“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.”

2021-45 Minute from Putney Friends Meeting

Minute read by Sheila Garrett:

Putney’s minute asks that we “eliminate the funding mechanism which offsets withheld contributions to Friends United Meeting,” and “explore avenues for funds that would have gone to Friends United Meeting to be redirected to support for the needs of LGBTQ people everywhere.”

2021-46 Minute from South Starksboro Friends Meeting

Minute read by Peggy Kadima-Mazella:

“We want to ensure that our monetary contributions do not go through NEYM to support organizations which discriminate against LGBTQ people, or those in a non-heterosexual or unmarried relationship. For example, while we continue to support communication and dialogue with Friends United Meeting (FUM) we do not wish that any monies we send as a meeting to NEYM be used in support of FUM as long as they continue discriminatory hiring practices.”

2021-47 Minute from Weare/Hanniker Monthly Meeting

Minute read by Marion Baker:

“Some Friends questioned why a discriminatory condition of employment such as this is in FUM’s policy at all. At the conclusion of our third session, some Friends felt that we do not know enough about the inner workings of FUM and the possible consequences of change to fully understand its perspective. While the frustration of Midcoast Friends Meeting speaks to some of us, there is no sense of the meeting at this time that our community is prepared to follow their path. In fact, we feel it is important to pay dues and remain members of NEYM and FUM if we want to have any say in changing policies”

2021-48 Minute from Wellesley Friends Meeting

Minute read by Esther Wheeler:

The minute requests the reinstatement of the withholding policy, noting that it “provides a tangible way to recognize that Friends United Meeting’s personnel policy falls short of the Quaker revelation that there is that of God in every individual,” and observing that “It is not intended as financial leverage, but rather as a witness of faith and conscience.”

2021-49 Minute from Westport Monthly Meeting

Minute read by Marion Athearn:

Westport MM, observing that past discernment around FUM has been contentious and divisive, notes that “we are clear that the path to unity is through listening and being willing to change if that is what we are called to do.”

2021-50 Minute from Worcester Friends Meeting

Minute read by Daron Barnard:

Daron Barnard (Worcester) reading a minute from Worcester MM, shared that the meeting engages in “work to promote social justice in our home community [which] includes initiatives supporting LGBT people, some of whom are asylum seekers fleeing the pervasive and even legislated homophobia in their home countries.”

“We propose, therefore, that NEYM consider reinstatement of a revised form of the withholding option, specifically an option for Meetings to redirect those funds which would be donated to FUM to an alternate organization working for the benefit of LGBT people in Africa”

Tuesday Morning, August 10, 2021

2021-51 Epistle

We heard the epistle from Intermountain Yearly Meeting:

Following our faith into action will present many challenges. If, as our faith tells us, there is that of God in everyone, how will we challenge racism in our midst? How will we do so as “a motion of love”? This kind of work can only be sustained if our faith and our meetings are strong. To that end, time spent at our yearly gathering offers opportunities for nurturing one another and building community. ... Our community is maintained through faith and fellowship with each other as we wait in the Light for the unity that draws us together.

2021-52 Introductions

The Clerk, introduced again the Clerks Table and today’s elders and expressed appreciation for the Friends from Noticing Patterns who meet daily with the Clerks’ Table.

The clerk shared: “Yesterday was a heavy day, with a lot to listen to that was hard to hear. We feel that weight also. As I reflected this morning it came to me that the Sessions Planning Purpose and Procedure, which is on the agenda, is not the work that is before us today. We really want to begin open discernment.”

2021-53 Pastoral Care

In response to yesterday’s reading of the minutes from monthly meetings about the FUM personnel policy, the Pastoral Care Team set up an alternate Zoom room for those of us who are LGBTQIA+ who wanted to step away from business for support.

2021-54 Noticing Patterns

NPWG reported that they are working together and with Spirit to hold all that is arising in Business, across the Yearly Meeting, and through the Noticing Patterns email.

They've received several dozen emails, many of them very long and searching, and they thank you all for your heartfelt reflections and noticings. This is stretching them and suggests needs for connection and community that are beyond their scope and capabilities. They hope Friends can be gentle and patient with them! Please know they are praying over all that is arising, and knowing each of them and each of you sees or knows or feels the parts we do. NPWG does not have nor seek simple answers or noticings on this journey with Spirit and all.

Those on NPWG are also feeling and processing individually what is arising within them and in the body, as they sit together to hear what Spirit is asking of them as they seek to be faithful to their charge. There is much stirring. They are feeling stretched in spirit-held ways and, at moments, up to the limits of their capacity.

As they seek to listen for what they have to offer, they wonder about what is the Spirit-filled and Spirit-led container that all of us here gathered can co-create together, that can hold all at Sessions as we seek to feel, see, hear, know, and wonder what God is calling us toward?

As John Calvi shared last night, ALL can be HEALED, and yet not all will be healed in our time, in this time. Thus, part of what the Working Group wonders is what may need to be different about this Sessions container in relation to time? What allows us to recognize that clock time is at play while reaching and opening to God's time, and to how Spirit is moving among us at this time?

In closing, they shared this prayer from Niyonu Spann, of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and the source of the Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness framework.

May I meet you where you are,

May I never lose my center.

May I meet you where you are,

May we never lose our center.

Reaching back for truth,

Bringing forth the healing;

Healing for the future born of living from the heart right now.

2021-55 Legacy Gift Recipients - Beth Collea

Beth Collea (Dover) shared the journey of Dover Meeting becoming a sanctuary congregation. The project began in 2017, when some Indonesian neighbors were threatened with imminent deportation. Dover Meeting responded with lightning speed to say yes to becoming a sanctuary

congregation and then turned to other area houses of worship for partnership, forming the Seacoast

Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition (SISC).

The spiritual affirmation of the Legacy Gift Committee helped them to receive and stand in God's grace and guidance. And the generous funding made a monumental task seem a little less daunting.

At this point they have activated their building permit and are ready to begin stage one construction. The whole process has been bumpy with twists and turns, but as they look back, all those times of doubt and stuckness drew them together into deeper waters of prayer and patience together.

Beth shared with us five spiritual learnings that have come out of this work:

1. Respond to stuckness by standing in the Light and waiting. Make space and time for grace to work.
2. Frame the leading as a collective testimony, asking *What is the truth we are called to share?*
3. Utilize fully every opening. By leaning into openings as they appeared, they found the Holy One offered a fuller measure of grace. Opening kept inviting them to another opening and another.
4. Signal to others the experience of living into a leading. Other people of faith are eager to hear how we are changed by taking faithful action together.
5. Let this reveal itself over time. Dover Meeting and the SISC are working with other worship groups in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Any individual detained in those states is automatically sent to Immigration Customs Enforcement in Dover NH, which is only six miles from Dover Meeting. It has been providential that they can be a safe haven and the first jumping off point for those released from detention.

2021-56 Clerks Table Nominations

Friends raised a concern that names were offered as nominations for Rising Clerk and Recording Clerk without the opportunity to hear anything about the nominees. In response, Judy Goldberger (Beacon Hill) from Clerks Table Nominating, Bruce Neumann, and Honor Woodrow each spoke about their experiences working with the nominees and their sense of the gifts they bring to these positions.

2021-57 Proposal from the FUM Committee

Kristina Keefe-Perry (Fresh Pond) of the FUM Committee presented a report and proposal from the FUM Committee. The full proposal can be found in the appended documents.

The Committee reaffirmed NEYM minute 2009-53 that said, “Just as Friends have historically witnessed to the Light present among all races and genders, we witness that the Light is present among people of all sexual orientations and gender identities or gender expressions. We experience our sexuality and sexual identity as integral components of who we are as children of God.” and 2019-58 that said “We unite unequivocally in our love and care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Friends, and hold a particular concern for their lives and ministries.”

The proposal included three new initiatives:

- Collaboration and witness with other open and affirming Yearly Meetings
- Establishing a fund (tentatively called the Bayard Rustin Fund) to support LGBTQIA+ organizations in East Africa, Central and South America, India, the Caribbean, and North America
- Examining the ways that homophobia and transphobia lives in the broader culture, in our meetings, and in us, examining and changing our practices and gatherings to become more inclusive.

The full Proposal is appended on [page](#)

2021-58 Introduction to Open Discernment

The Clerk reminded us that at heart, every business meeting is a meeting for worship. We need to hold back from the urgency of naming the thing that is rising quickly and instead settle into worship and treat this as a meeting for worship.

We have seen minutes on *No Way To Treat a Child*, we have the *Apology to Native Americans* and minutes on FUM and Earthcare Witness and a chapter from Faith and Practice. These are parts of the big picture but not the whole of it. We are looking for the underlying Truth that supports them all.

As we enter into worship with a concern for business, the Clerk offered these queries: *Who do we want to be? And what is God calling us to?*

This is an experiment for all of us.

2021-59 Open Discernment

Through the rest of our Tuesday morning session, continuing Wednesday morning, and much of our Wednesday afternoon sessions, Friends engaged deeply with the concerns at hand and the queries proposed by the clerk. Friends responded with messages expressing specific points of view about particular agenda items, with vocal ministry which reflected the underlying connections and concerns, and with prayer.

Friends expressed both frustration that we still belong to an organization (FUM) whose personnel policy discriminates against LGBTQIA+, and a deep desire to stay in relationship with that body. Friends expressed their sense that the *Apology to Native Americans* was an important step in acknowledging our participation in generations of wrong-doing and is an important step in building trust. We heard both deep reservations about AFSC's No Way to Treat a Child campaign, as well as

concern for the violence and injustice that happens to Palistinian children as well as children here in the US and around the world. We heard concern for our planet.

Threaded through much of what we heard were themes of communication and engagement with those we disagree with; and humility, recognizing that we have made mistakes in the past.

While much of this open discernment is reflected in specific minutes on Thursday morning, for a more detailed summary of the views expressed and messages heard, see the “ Clerks’ Table Summary of Open Discernment” on page ___.

Wednesday Morning, August 11, 2021

2021-60 Epistle

We heard the epistle from Aotearoa/New Zealand Yearly Meeting. This episode was chosen to reflect their relationship with their indigenous community, the tōroa.

We rejoiced in the opportunity to be fully present ‘with each other’ after 2020’s online only meeting for worship. While giving thanks for the privileged position of Aotearoa/New Zealand, we were reminded of the perilous state of other nations, especially as we heard of the serious impact of Covid-19 in India.

The value of connection was strongly felt among Friends and we heard how the new use of technology had enabled the Quaker community, as never before, to extend its reach to remote and unwell Friends. ...

Like the tōroa, we now go back to our Quaker communities enriched by the aroha that has embraced this Yearly Meeting, and its attendees, both present and remote.

2021-61 Introductions

The Clerk again introduced the Clerks’ Table and the Elders.

2021-62 Legacy Gift Recipients - Andy Grant

Andy Grant (Mt Toby) spoke about his journey of learning about Native peoples and coming to a deep sympathy for their wisdom and their pain. He spoke of being a white settler descendant through and through. He is learning to love his ancestors, to stand with them in good and bad, and bringing their deeds to light is part of that process as he works to move from being an occupier to being a neighbor with legitimacy. His meeting met him in this leading and ministry, giving him a

clearness process and an oversight committee. Through the grant he has been able to supplement his limited income to pursue this work.

Recently he was able to attend and provide supplies for a Pokumtuk homelands festival in Turner’s Falls, a place where an atrocity was committed that has now been restored as a place of peace and a gathering place of tribes from across the Northeast, helping to sow the seeds for a future work of deep listening and friendship over time. He shared with us his definition of faith: “I

lift my foot, and the path is revealed.”

2021-63 The Work of Transformation

The Clerk acknowledged that all that we have heard has been a lot to take in. It is hard work, and part of why it is hard is because the Clerk has asked us to consider the whole rather than the parts.

The questions we have been asking are *Who do we want to be? What does God want us to do?* We have heard about our relationship with FUM, we’ve heard a proposal from the FUM committee, a couple of minutes about the *No Way To Treat a Child* campaign, the *Apology to Native Americans*, and a minute from the Earthcare Witness Committee. These provide some shape and impetus to the work but the real work is the underlying transformation of hearts, to become a people more aligned with the way God wants us to be. We are being molded by the divine.

This approach is challenging. And yet, time and again Friends have come together to discern, and we are eager to engage deeply in that process.

In our usual practice at business Sessions, we get drawn into the details. Today we are asked to lift our vision and try to imagine a different way of being. The Clerk’s vision is that if we can begin to see this new way, the challenges that we feel around individual concerns can begin to fall away and that through the day we will begin to see where we want to move as a body.

Friends returned to a period of worshipful open discernment.

2021-64 Open Discernment

Friends continued with open discernment. (Summary can be found on [page _____](#).)

Wednesday Afternoon, August 11, 2021

2021-65 Epistle

The Reading Clerks read the epistle from Baltimore Yearly Meeting, read out of the silence.

What is ours to do is grounded in our relationship with each other. Our work is not just making decisions, but the act of “being” a yearly meeting. Being in conflict in community

takes on an aspect of holiness because we labor together, as if “together” is the only option. Community builds hope and, like courage, hope is contagious.

2021-66 Introductions

The Clerk opened the afternoon Session with a prayer and a Cuban song and introduced this afternoon’s elders.

2021-67 Messages from Cuban Friends

Most Friends are aware that we have a long and vibrant relationship with Cuba Yearly Meeting.

Because of the COVID pandemic, they have been unable to travel to be with us this week, but we have several Cuban Friends with us over Zoom. Our translation team shared with us a message from Kenya Casanova Sales, and Benigno Sanchez-Eppler translated the following message from Jorge Luis Peña. Friends were touched by the deep caring and concern that Cuban Friends show for one another.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

Dear brothers and sisters, it is not easy to understand what Cuba is experiencing in the midst of what all humanity is living. I want to give you this message that the Lord inspired, I trust that you can understand and go deep in it.

Cuba had incomprehensible scarcities of basic necessities, but now that the world is turned upside down, it has become even more difficult for us to survive. In order to get by, we have learned to speak without words, to laugh and make fun of our own obstacles.

As Quakers we have built bridges and found ways around the hatred between our governments, because although the sea lies between us, we never believed in borders.

We need change, including a change in our own minds — a change that translates into a clear understanding of God. Although in these times we cannot feel free from threats of all kinds, we can still believe in the promises of the living God. We can smell the stench of death and still yearn for life. We can still feel walls and dream of bridges.

Jorge Luis

Presiding Clerk of Cuba Yearly Meeting.

Early Morning of August 11, 2021

2021-68 The Puente de Amigos Committee

The *Puente* Committee is proposing a minute which is intended as a tool for our collective voice as New England Yearly Meeting to speak against the decades of cruel and coercive policies enacted by the United States government against Cuba, and to bear witness to the humanity of our beloved neighbors to the south.

The United States blockade against Cuba, as well as the recent executive actions of the previous administration, deny the Cuban people access to food, medical supplies and other essential resources and have exacerbated the humanitarian crises of poverty and pandemic. Our Quaker faith compels us to make an urgent appeal to our own government in hope that we can move forward with love and respect for all.

New England Yearly Meeting calls upon the Biden administration and the United States Congress to immediately end the blockade against Cuba, as well as immediately rescind the 240 plus executive actions held over from the previous administration, which are an affront to human rights and dignity. Furthermore we urge the United States government to initiate a normalization of relations between our two countries.

Approval of this minute will be with the assumption that we will send it to the Biden administration. We will also send it out widely to the monthly meetings, and members of New England Yearly Meeting so that they in turn can forward it to their own Congress members.

Friends approved.

2021-69 Letter From the Presbyterian Church Office of Public Witness

The Clerk shared a letter he and Yearly Meeting Secretary recently received from the Presbyterian Church Office of Public Witness addressing concerns in Cuba. They have signed it on behalf of New England Yearly Meeting, feeling it was fully in line with previous minutes and policies. The letter has also been signed by a range of faith-based organizations including the Friends Committee on National Legislation and Friends United Meeting.

The text of the letter is appended on **page _____**.

2021-70 Open Discernment

The Clerk thanked Friends for a grounded meeting this morning. There was much to be heard and absorbed. He reminded us of the foundational question, *Who are we called to be?* and of some of the answers we heard: we need healing; we are encouraged to be finely tuned listeners, strange, truthful, and annoying; if not here, where? If not now, when?

Friends continued with open discernment. (Summary on **page _____**.)

2021-71 Closing

Prayers were shared and Friends closed with worship.

Thursday, Morning August 12, 2021

2021-72 Epistle

We heard the epistle from South Central Yearly Meeting.

We are challenged to be bold and love fiercely as we sought guidance from the spirit to address the crises of today that we, as people have a shared faith, must meet with integrity, unity, love and peace.

God has richly blessed and ordained our work, we continue to be in community with you, each other, and friends all over the world as we work with that sacred time when peace may prevail on earth and in the hearts and minds of those who inhabit it. Sandra Cronk once wrote, Peace is a

gift, but it does not come magically through our passivity. Only in our faithful response to God's call, do we receive God's peace.

2021-73 Introductions and Announcements

The Clerk apologized for what he recognized as his poor eldering the other day. Someone had been reading a prepared statement in a business meeting. In other circumstances he would have recognized that as calling for a one-on-one conversation, not a calling-out. Also, while we hope that Friends speak from their heart in worship and business, the line between preparation and spontaneous speaking is fuzzier than we might like to think.

He introduced this morning's Elders, expressed gratitude for the presence of our visitors (though sadly there wasn't time to recognize them individually) and for the tech team without whom we could not make these Zoom Sessions happen.

2021-74 Noticing Patterns

We received a report from the Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness Working Group. [\[provide link to the full report here\]](#):

They expressed gratitude for the deep and faithful engagement of Friends in this work. Examples of faithfulness were legion during our Sessions. They also noted themes, drawn from many Friends' emails, that reflect patterns that fall short of faithfulness. The themes identified were:

- NEYM Friends hold groups of people in prayer and in their hearts, yet a polarity between preferred groups and other groups is often noted.
 - NEYM Friends notice language that impacts groups negatively.
- NEYM Friends are concerned about insensitivity to the needs of, or the poor accommodation of, neurodivergence.
- NEYM Friends are concerned about expectations and rules of engagement being unevenly applied by the Clerk in Meeting for Business.
- NEYM Friends are concerned about inappropriate uses to which beliefs, values, or practices of certain groups, traditions, or cultures are put.

The Working Group noted the challenge of trying to change the dominant culture in which we all are steeped. Noting the grief that we have experienced from old wounds, as well as the pain that comes from being complicit in a culture that uses wounding to control others, the Working Group invited us to consider sharing our grief with one another rather than denying or hiding it. They asked us, in the words of Ross Gay, "What if we joined our sorrow? What if that is joy?"

Finally, the group invited us to let go of our perfectionism and concern with appearances, to turn to one another instead in humility and love. They invited us to let go of our quarrels, given that we cannot yet clearly see our goal. They invited us to be guided by the inner teacher to do the next right thing; to enter a process of healing for our most teachable selves; to proceed in faith, one step

at a time, in our journey toward reconciliation and Truth.

2021-75 Faith and Practice Revision Committee

The Faith and Practice Revision Committee brought back the chapter on Personal Spiritual Practices, with some revisions. Phrases were added about spiritual writings and wisdom from other traditions, and extract 7 was rewritten.

Several people sent the Committee extracts, which they appreciated. There had been a suggestion to include extracts from very young children, but most of those will fit better in the chapter on Families and Children.

Friends **approved** the chapter. As with all of the chapters, this is preliminary approval. Friends are asked to use it in place of the 1985 Faith and Practice so that the Committee can receive further feedback before they bring the chapter back for final approval when the whole book is ready.

2021-76 Sessions Committee Purposes, Procedures, and Composition

Recognizing that we have not had a chance to get back to the Sessions Committee proposal, the Clerk intends to ask Permanent Board to grant one-year approval so that the work of planning next year's Sessions can happen. The proposal will come back to Sessions next year for approval by the body.

2021-77 Earthcare Witness Committee

Friends **approved** forwarding the Earthcare Witness Committee's minute to monthly meetings for their consideration. The Minute appears on page ____.

2021-78 FUM Personnel Policy

The clerk observed that several of the Monthly Meeting minutes about FUM suggested they might correspond with the General Board, but he also noted his understanding that the Board does not consider minutes from Monthly Meetings, only Yearly Meetings. The Clerk named his willingness to write to the FUM Board, expressing our sense of dismay at the continued

existence of the offensive portion of the personnel policy and our understanding of the Light in all.

Friends approved.

It was suggested that in addition to sending the letter, that it be hand delivered by one or more Board representatives, allowing the possibility of conversation.

2021-79 FUM Committee Proposal: Bayard Rustin Fund

The Clerk brought our attention to the proposal from the FUM Committee suggesting the establishment of the Bayard Rustin Fund. This fund would be held by NEYM and would accept money from individuals and Monthly Meetings to be

distributed to organizations working towards LGBTQIA+ wellbeing. He also noted that if Friends also approve a mechanism for directing contributions away from FUM, that those monies would go to this fund.

A Friend pointed out that FGC also has a fund called the Bayard Rustin fund that is very different. Should this one have a different name? (The Clerk clarified that we're approving the creation of the fund. If it's determined by Permanent Board that it should have a different name, they can do that.

The more direction Permanent Board can receive, the better they can carry out the work. The Clerk of Permanent Board asked the FUM Committee to meet regularly and report to them at least once.

Friends approved the proposal as it appeared in the Advance documents: The Bayard Rustin Fund for Support and Action:

- The Yearly Meeting will establish the NEYM Bayard Rustin Fund for Support and Action. Rustin (1912-1987) was a pillar of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. Raised a Quaker, Rustin studied Towards Greater Inclusivity and

Safety for LGBTQIA+ Folk and Families. Brought by the 2020-21 FUM Committee (Representatives to the FUM Board and Triennial) nonviolence with Gandhian activists in India, organized the first Freedom Rides, co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (with Dr. King), and helped to plan the 1963 March on Washington. Rustin's leadership was often behind the scenes because, as a gay man in the 1960's, he was often discredited for his sexuality. Rustin worked tirelessly for civil rights for all people until his death and is a fitting namesake for this Fund.

- This project of the Yearly Meeting will be funded at an initial amount as determined by the Permanent Board in consultation with the Treasurer and the Finance committee, and can receive additional monies from individual Friends and Meetings. This proposal is for a "revolving" fund, where the full amount contributed in a given year is available for distribution as a grant/grants, rather than a permanently endowed fund.

- A working group of five people (including at least one FUM Board rep four others with gifts and experience of encouragement, support, and prophetic witness) will direct the donations of this fund, while working carefully with the YM Treasurer, Finance Committee, and YM Staff.

- The donations will be used to support LGBTQIA+ organizations in East Africa,

Central and South America, India, the Caribbean, and North America. The Fund might assist Monthly Meetings in their witness as well as target support to initiatives that resist current anti-trans youth legislation by increasing the visibility of efforts and opportunities for collaboration across NEYM.

- Individuals and Meetings can make gifts to this fund.

2021-80 Clerk's Proposal Regarding FUM Funding

The Clerk summarized for us the context of this proposal. We have heard 12 minutes from monthly meetings, in all of which we heard the pain felt over the discriminatory aspect of the FUM personnel policy. We also heard that a number of these monthly meetings feel the need for a way to express their conscience and keep any part of their NEYM contributions from going to FUM. Division over this exists within many monthly meetings, not just between them.

Where the previous 2009 withholding mechanism was ambiguous in its intention regarding withholding for conscience' sake or as financial leverage, and where it withheld funds from FUM but did not specify the use of those funds, this minute is clear that the purpose is solely to allow a mechanism for those who cannot in good conscience support FUM, and directs funds to be used for the benefit of LGBTQIA+ Friends and others.

In a sense, this proposal is an act of pastoral care for those who are in pain and feel they cannot have any of their money go to FUM.

While a change of personnel policy would be welcome, a change that is based on financial leverage without the change of heart would be a hollow victory. The

following proposed minute, if approved, would allow monthly meetings to redirect funds which would otherwise go to FUM. The minute names that this is for conscience' sake. While the old withholding mechanism provided a separate fund to make up the difference, the Clerk's best sense is that Friends do not feel the need for this now. Any individual can give to FUM at any time.

The proposed minute follows:

Since at least 2009 NEYM has struggled to find unity regarding our membership and the nature of our relationship with Friends United Meeting (FUM). While there are multiple issues, the heart of our struggle is FUM's personnel policy which does not allow LGBTQIA+ and other Friends in active relationships to be employees of FUM.

On several occasions we have minuted our love and respect for LGBTQIA+ Friends in our midst, and have celebrated their service to our own Yearly Meeting. Yet we remain deeply divided on continuing our membership in an organization with such a discriminatory policy. Some would prefer that we disaffiliate, while others observe that staying in relationship allows us to stay in conversation and work for change.

Lacking unity on this fundamental question, we seek a way to stay in relationship within NEYM, to honor our differences, and to express that our love for each other is greater than our disagreement. Out of concern for individuals and Monthly Meetings who, as a matter of conscience, cannot contribute to the financial support of FUM, NEYM will allow Monthly Meetings to direct that some portion of their contribution to the Yearly Meeting that would otherwise have gone to FUM, go instead to a new fund, provisionally named the Bayard Rustin Fund. As further expressed in minute 2021-79, these funds will be distributed annually to organizations working for the well-being of LGBTQIA+ people, including Friends. The accounts manager will subtract from NEYM's annual remission to FUM the total amount diverted to the Bayard Rustin Fund.

On remittance of contributions to NEYM, the monthly meeting treasurer should include a letter to the Yearly Meeting Treasurer expressing the desire for this, and naming the amount to be directed to the fund, which should not exceed the percentage that NEYM's budgeted contribution to FUM is, of the line named "Total expenses" in a given fiscal year's budget.

This mechanism for directing funds will remain in effect until the Personnel Policy changes, or until Friends find a new way forward.

We ask our FUM Board representatives to continue to work towards changing this policy, remembering that it is Spirit that changes hearts, not our own efforts. We also recognize the need for Friends in New England to continue to examine what faithfulness and integrity require of us.

There is strength in our diversity, and deep love and integrity in our shared will to honor our differences.

Many Friends were happy with the proposed minute. One described it as "a balm to my soul" that would allow her to continue to give money to the Yearly Meeting and her Monthly Meeting without contributing to a homophobic organization. Others felt that the issue is our association with a group that discriminates, and nothing we do with money addresses that. Some Friends felt that we're doing what Empire has taught us when we use money as a tool of persuasion. A Friend challenged us,

asking if those of us exercised enough to witness by withholding funds would also witness through visitation and listening, as John Woolman did when he visited slave owners. Friends expressed at the end that they had felt us beginning to move from a place of rigidly held beliefs toward a place of humble self-reflection.

Seeing hands still raised, the Clerk reminded us that this proposal is imperfect. It does not commit us to doing any other work, externally or internally, but it is his sense that this is what we need right now. This work is not done. Approving this minute allows monthly meetings to breathe. It allows Friends to stay in relationship with FUM. It allows us to move forward and continue to consider what it is that we are led to do.

Friends approved the minute with a few Friends standing aside. Further discussion clarified some points of the minute but did not change the clerk's sense that the minute had been approved.

Reasons given for standing aside included the sense that approval of the minute had been a little rushed, frustration that the mechanism does not include a second fund for making up the difference, and a continued concern over using money as a tool of empire.

2021-81 FUM Committee Proposal: Collaboration with Other Yearly Meetings

The clerk brought to our attention a second proposal from the FUM Committee which encourages collaboration and witness with other open and affirming Yearly Meetings. Several Friends voiced the opinion that collaboration with open and affirming yearly meetings is not enough, but we also need to be reaching out more widely. The Clerk noted that there is not time for further refinement of the minute. He asked if we can approve it as it stands.

Friends approved the proposal as it appeared in the Advance documents:

*Collaboration and Witness with Other Yearly Meetings: The four united yearly meetings: Baltimore YM, New York YM, Canadian YM, and New England YM (those affiliated with both FGC and FUM), have expressed support for LGBTQIA+ Friends, families, and their gifts. In the last decade, new groupings have emerged in North America and joined FUM with the explicit stance of affirming the sacred worth of all: The New Association of Friends in the Midwest and North Carolina Friends Fellowship. In addition three older FUM-affiliated groupings: Wilmington YM, Great Plains YM, and Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends, have Open & Affirming stances. These meetings and associations are all affiliated with Friends United Meeting and share an interest in coordinating and collaborating in their efforts. **This proposal directs our FUM Board Reps to convene a meeting of representatives of these Yearly Meetings and Associations for the purpose of mutual encouragement, support, strategy building, and development of a plan for wider intervisitation.***

2021-82 Apology to Native Americans

Andy Grant (Mt Toby) of the Right Relationship Resource Group read the *Apology to Native Americans*, which includes revisions suggested during open discernment. The full Apology can be found on page _____.

Andy was clear that the work of the RRRG continues. The letter is not an endpoint; it is a commitment to a permanent change in our attitudes and our behavior. Exploring how to move forward will be an ongoing process, without which the *Apology* would be meaningless.

We were reminded that not all Quakers share European ancestry and Friends with varying racial and ethnic identities will have different standpoints in relation to the *Apology*.

Friends approved the *Apology* with one Friend standing aside. The Clerk will consult with the Right Relationship Resource Group about next steps and then communicate with monthly meetings about how to move forward.

2021-83 FUM Committee Proposal 3 - Transforming Internalized Homophobia within New England Yearly Meeting

We were invited to examine the ways that homophobia and transphobia lives in the broader culture, in our meetings, and in us. The faithful call of our time is to continue to learn how gender-justice, sexuality-justice, racial-justice, and climate-justice are interconnected and how we can interrupt patterns of separation, exclusion, and oppression to work for equity.

We were not able to fully engage with this concern during our time together. The clerk expects to explore with Coordinating & Advisory and perhaps Permanent Board whether there's work that we want to engage in.

2021-84 No Way To Treat a Child

Regarding the two Quarterly meeting minutes on No Way to Treat a Child, the Clerk sensed a concern for children, not only in Palestine but in the US and abroad, but did not sense any unity about the two Quarterly Meeting minutes or any other work the body might be led to right now.

There is a newly established working group under Permanent Board, the Israel Palestine Working Group (IPWG), charged with helping Friends in New England live into the minutes in 2017 and 2019 about the Middle East. While we have not approved these Quarterly Meeting minutes, the concern and need for engagement is not going away and Friends can expect to hear more from IPWG.

2021-85 Clerk's Closing Remarks

“We came together with grief in our hearts. From a year and a half pandemic and the multitude of

ways that has influenced us, we sat together and heard a lot of difficult minutes and we have done some really good work together. Thank you, Friends, for showing up. Thank you for listening. Thank you, God, for the way that you speak to the body through individuals. I think our work for 2021 is finished.”

We closed with a moment of silent worship and a prayer.

“Holy Spirit you have engaged with us deeply this week, We felt your work among us. Thank you for your presence in the faces, and the voices, and the smiles of those who are here.”

Thursday Afternoon, August 12, 2021

Closing Celebration

2021-86 Clerk’s Welcome and Introductions.

The Clerk welcomed us all to the Closing Celebration for the 2021 Sessions of New England Yearly Meeting. He introduced the Elders for this afternoon.

2021-87 Songs

The Wayfare Singers, Jennifer Hogue, Susan Davies, Debbie Colgan, and Sandy Sweetnam (all from Cambridge) shared several songs with us.

2021-88 Worship

Friends settled in for about twenty minutes of silent waiting worship.

2021-89 Reports

Sarah Sprogell, who filled the new position of Worship Coordinator, shared her reflections on this role, the experience of working with the planning team, and the joy of bringing together Friends to anchor our times of worship.

Fran Brokaw who, along with Holly Baldwin, served as Home Group facilitator shared her impressions of how Home Groups served the Friends who joined them.

Emma Turcotte, filling another new position, Coordinator of BIPOC opportunities, spoke of how meaningful these several opportunities were for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Friends in attendance at Sessions.

Elizabeth Hacala, Events Coordinator shared some numbers and her impressions from behind the scenes of Sessions planning.

2021-90 Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle

Willard Peabody, Abbie Haineswood, and River Bachand-Price read the Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle, written during the pre-sessions JYM retreat.

2021-91 Friends Camp Report

Given the unreliability of internet service at Friends Camp, Anna Hopkins submitted a video report, with many images of kids having a great time.

2021-92 Reflection on the Week

Honor Woodrow shared some reflections based on the Padlet exercise she had introduced in our opening celebration, and read some further reflections posted in the chat.

2021-93 Gratitude

David Coletta, Gretchen Baker-Smith, Gina Nortonsmith, and Elizabeth Hacala shared their appreciation of the near-countless people who played a role in helping sessions to happen

2021-94 Slide Show

We watched the slide show Nia Thomas had put together for the opening celebration, with some additional pictures.

2021-95 Song

Peter and Annie Blood-Patterson sang “If not now” By Carrie Newcomer

2021-96 Closing

Out of a few minutes of grateful worship, Presiding Clerk Bruce Neumann closed our 361st annual sessions with the words “Purposing to meet again, August 6, 2022, Friends closed with worship. Go in peace, Friends.”

Appendix:

Clerks’ Summary of Open Discernment

at the 2021 Annual NEYM Sessions

The FUM Personnel Policy

We heard unequivocal love for LGBTQIA+ Friends and were united in our condemnation of the discriminatory personnel policy of FUM. We also heard deep love expressed for those of us whose lives are nourished by our connection with FUM.

Many Friends spoke of how hurtful the discriminatory FUM personnel policy is to them personally. For some of us, just hearing the policy read out loud was acutely painful. We recognize the important work being done by FUM around the world in places like Ramallah and Cuba and Kenya, but many Friends felt that supporting FUM in doing that work was using “evil means toward good ends.” Contributions of money to FUM was the most controversial aspect of this issue, but some felt money to be a side issue. For them, our continuing association with a

discriminatory organization was unacceptable regardless of funding and the withholding policy was only a panacea, a way for us to feel better without solving the issue.

Many Friends found the words “cultural humility” spoke to them this week. The phrase appears in the *Apology to Native Americans* but the idea is also woven through the report from the FUM Committee. A Friend who works with Quaker women in Africa said she hopes we can change our attitudes toward African Friends and not think about them just as causing problems. She spoke of times that change came in Africa, not by putting pressure on the men but by working with women and youth (who often have a very different attitude toward LGBTQ+ Friends than the older men do). She is concerned that in diverting funds from FUM to an alternate fund, American Quakers will show the typical American attitude of “We know what’s best,” sending money to groups doing good work but then ignoring the African Quakers or putting them down

One Friend spoke of hearing a death threat against gays, lesbians, and their allies while attending the second FUM General Board meeting in Kenya in 2006. Although he felt as clear a leading then as he had ever felt about speaking in meeting, he said nothing. He apologized to us now for his unfaithfulness. What kept him in his seat was that he was afraid of his anger and did not know how to say loving words while shaking with anger.

By the end of the week, we could feel movement from a place of rigidly held moral beliefs towards a place of humble self-reflection. The theme of engagement was strong throughout Sessions. If

we’re not leaving FUM, then we need to engage. We directed the Clerk to write again to the FUM Board about their personnel policy. While we approved the minute from the FUM Committee asking our FUM Board representatives to reach out and build relationships with other welcoming and affirming yearly meetings, we were reminded of the importance of reaching out to Friends in Indianapolis, Des Moines, or North Carolina. Those are the Friends we’re most likely to stereotype as generic Protestant evangelicals, while they in turn often stereotype us as east coast elites.

Friends who’ve served on the FUM Board made it clear that the lack of visible movement on the FUM Board doesn’t mean that no work has been done. A Friend compared our situation now to that of the Israelites making their sixth trek around the walls of Jericho, feeling like it wasn’t working and wondering why they were still trying. We heard that the FUM Board was set to bring the personnel policy to the Triennial in Kenya in 2020, but that meeting was postponed and then made virtual with a drastically minimized agenda. The policy got dropped from the agenda, but FUM had demonstrated willingness to listen. The African Board has also publicly condemned violence against gays and lesbians.

Again and again, we were reminded that many Friends here in Session identify with FUM, and FUM Friends everywhere are kin. “Don’t *other* us,” we were told. A Friend with a travel minute described himself as our “living letter,” invested with a spiritual and historical authority to carry our concerns as he visits other parts of the FUM family. He is “out” with them as gay-affirming and finds himself invited into their praying hearts. Sometimes he is pulled aside by the parent of a gay child in a homophobic yearly meeting and finds himself baptized in their pain as they are baptized in the comfort that comes through him. He begged us not to “defang the power of Spirit” in his Travel Minute by walking us out of the family.

Other Friends reminded us that FUM is not a monolithic organization making decisions disconnected from us. It is not that *we* are in disagreement with *them*; it is the diversity of Friends around the world with which we're laboring, a diversity which shows up in our monthly meetings and in our NEYM annual Sessions

We were challenged: those Friends who want to break connection with FUM, is this what God is calling us to do? Or is this something we can do because it puts us on the right side of history and makes us feel better?

We were challenged: those of us exercised enough to witness by withholding funds, would we also witness through visitation and listening, as John Woolman did when he visited slave owners?

We were challenged: can we find a way to give voice to our objections without using the means of Empire? How can we reject the tools of power on the one hand and use them on the other?

We were challenged to keep from making this into a political convention, but to sink down to the seed and listen for the often-messy guidance of Spirit.

A great many Friends welcomed the reinstatement of a withholding policy and the new proposal to redirect moneys that would otherwise have gone to FUM to a fund (tentatively called the Bayard Rustin Fund) which would support work to help LGBTQIA+ people. One friend described the FUM Committee's proposal as a balm to her soul that will allow her to continue giving money to the Yearly Meeting and her monthly meeting without contributing to a homophobic organization.

A number of Friends spoke against allowing individuals to "make up the difference" and let NEYM still make its full contribution to FUM. The minute that we approved will reduce NEYM's contribution to FUM by the amount withheld by monthly meetings. Individuals are still free to contribute to FUM directly on their own.

A Friend talked about the asylum work she has been involved with. We are giving resources to help people get out of Uganda but once they get to the US, they don't necessarily have a welcoming network. They need a place to live without it costing money while they seek asylum, and NEYM could create a network to provide this, showing our support and care in other ways besides struggling within the Quaker movement.

It's hard to hold all these things together in their contradictions and complexities but we're urged not to cut ourselves off. We are reminded that it is Spirit that changes hearts, not our own efforts.

Apology

Much of the open discernment was also about the *Apology to Native Americans*. One Friend who identified herself as Native American told us that in her tribal community there's a need for such an apology. It's not going to be perfect, but if we don't start now, then when and where? If approval of the apology languished for another whole year, it would break her heart.

Another Friend talked about how, though her grandmother was Lakota Sioux, it was only a few years ago at a Pendle Hill Conference that she learned about pieces of her culture that had been lost to her. She finds comfort and strength in the saying, "They tried to bury us. They didn't know

we were seeds.” She came to Sessions because she respects the work that we’re doing here. “It’s no easy thing, and you’re doing it, and I am grateful.”

A Friend who works with the Wabanaki people told us that when she attends public hearings or goes to rallies that she’s been invited to, what she hears over and over again is, *What matters is that you're here, that you're standing with us. We see you.*

No Way to Treat a Child

Friends did not find unity on AFSC’s *No Way to Treat a Child* campaign. One Friend objected that the “children” aren’t really children; the youngest is 14 and most are 16 or 17. He compared the accusation that Israel is the only country that tortures children to the antisemitic blood libel in times past, and called it an exaggeration to say that verbal abuse and questioning without parents being present are torture. Another Friend who was a former staff person of AFSC reminded us of a Minute from several years ago (2017-46) which asked us to support organisations that bring Israelis and Palistinians together and to examine the antisemitism and islamophobia that underlie the conflict. She expressed her concern that the AFSC campaign we’ve been asked to endorse will increase the antisemitism of our culture.

Another Friend expressed concern that the quarterly meeting minutes on *No Way to Treat a Child* did not adequately recognize how trauma begets trauma. What’s happening in the Middle East is complex and cyclical and as people largely of white European descent and Christian backgrounds, we are not the experts.

Another Friend who identifies as a Jew with deep commitments to Israel, shared a message which made connections between several of our business items: “So I know that we can make mistakes. And I know . . . that Israel can make mistakes. We may be wrong in what we decide today and tomorrow but I’m hoping that we can hold together that commitment to stay in loving supporting dialogue with FUM, that we can take responsibility for the harm that we’ve done to Native peoples, that we can join in the voices that ask Israel to live up to its promise to be a Promised Land and a place of hope and care for all of its people, and that we can continue to work to support the LGBT and questioning Friends in our community and all over the world including in Cuba, Kenya, and Uganda.”

Earthcare Witness

We were urged to remember that, while we are holding heavy messages this week, our very planet is in danger. Given the magnitude and urgency of climate change, Friends urged us to listen to the plea from the Earthcare Witness Committee and to examine our own carbon footprints as well as the big picture of climate change.

Who are we?

The Clerk asked us several times throughout the week, *Who do we want to be? And what is God calling us to?* Some of the answers included:

- We are a Yearly Meeting with deep historical roots. As we come together to labor over contemporary issues, we have role models to look to from 300 years ago.

- We are a founding member of FUM.
- We hope we can be a meeting that centers both the love of God and the love of our neighbor.
 - We're called to be the people who pause and ask questions, *Who is in this room and who is not? Who is being ignored? Who is not being treated like a valued child of God?* • We are all called to be people who listen for a Truth that the cultures around us aren't telling us.
- Who are we called to be? We're called to be strange and truthful and annoying and finely tuned listeners to the voice of Spirit, and to the voice of our friends who are listening to Spirit.

Purpose, Procedure, and Composition of Sessions Planning

Purpose:

The Sessions planning team exists to plan the schedule and events that make up the annual gathering of Friends in New England. The various events which comprise our annual sessions should reflect a careful consideration of the spiritual condition of the wider body, considering where there is life, where there is not, where there are breakthroughs, patterns and examples of the Spirit; what needs careful attention and care, and what needs lifting up and celebrating.

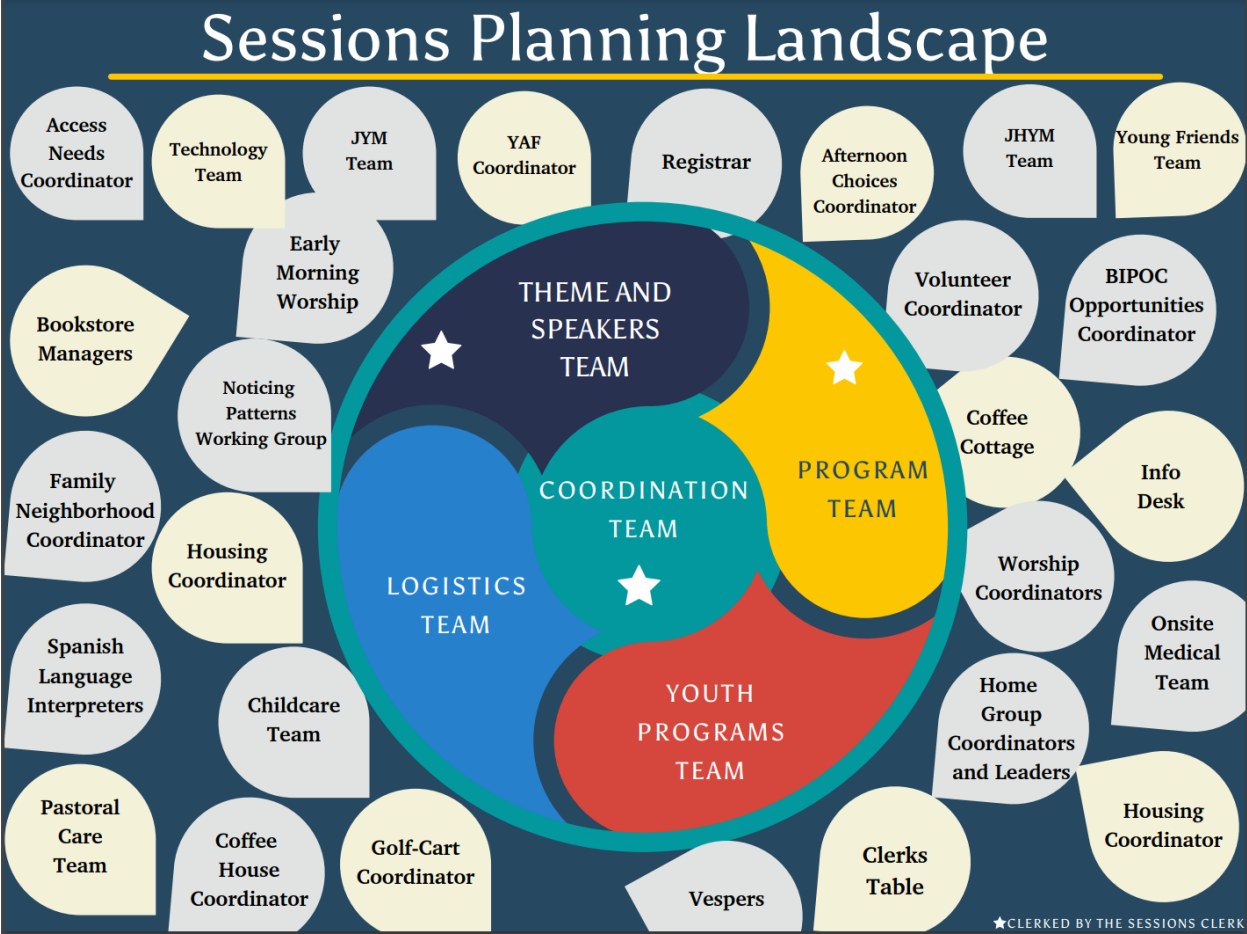
The purpose of Annual Sessions is understood to to be the following:

Friends gather at Annual Sessions to encourage the ministry and spiritual life of the Religious Society of Friends in New England. We seek to gather in ways that are intergenerational, welcoming, and inclusive. We seek to share our experience of how the Spirit is moving, and the ways it is impeded, to learn from each other, to discern how God is leading us as a People, and to experience Divine Love as it appears in our midst and is revealed in our relationships.

We respond to this purpose through: worship, meetings for corporate discernment, workshops, and opportunities for connection, training, fellowship, play, and celebration. At the heart of these events are the meetings for worship with attention to business where we discern how God is leading us as a people.

We seek to plan Sessions in alignment with NEYM's discerned and minuted commitments, including those to anti-racism (2003), challenging white supremacy (2016), and addressing climate change (2018, 2020).

Note: The graphic below, prepared by Elizabeth Hacala is to help in visualizing how the many pieces of Sessions planning will work together. While quite complete, for this year, it is not intended to be authoritative or to be used as a guide for what roles are needed each year. It will not be part of the "permanent" Purpose, Procedure, and Composition document, if approved.



Procedures:

- Throughout the planning, Friends are charged with removing barriers to participation and increasing accessibility for all Friends, paying attention to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, ability and care-taking responsibilities (i.e. those parenting or doing elder or personal care). Planning teams are asked to be mindful, regularly using the following queries in their planning:

How is this program/event/communication accessible? To whom? How is this program/event/communication inaccessible? To whom? How can we make this program/event/communication more accessible? What identities are being centered in how we have planned this program/event/communication? What identities are not centered in how we have planned this program/event/communication? How do we know?

- Sessions planning will occur by designated groups with differing primary functions, which work will be overseen and coordinated by the Sessions Coordination Team. In addition to more general oversight and coordination, the Sessions Coordination Team will draft an overall Sessions schedule for input by the other functional groups. The Coordination

Team also gives final approval to the overall Sessions schedule, and to any needed changes. The coordination team holds the concern for bringing an intergenerational focus to Sessions planning.

- Theme and Speakers Team: This group discerns the theme for the following year's Sessions, and Speakers. It is clerked by the Sessions Clerk.
 - Program Team: Focuses on Adult programming, typically including Business meetings, Plenary, Worship, Bible half-hours, small group opportunities, workshops, etc. Clerked by Sessions Clerk.
 - Logistics Team: The Logistics Team will translate specific needs of Adult and Youth programs into physical (room size and numbers), communication (including advance docs, newsletters), and administrative (registration and housing) needs. Clerked by Events Coordinator.
 - Youth Programs Team: Focuses on the programming that will be offered for youth at Sessions, including needs of families and youth, and recruitment of staff. This group will be convened by the Events Coordinator.
- In September of each year, the Coordination Team, the Theme and Speakers Team, and any others they choose to invite will meet to consider the Sessions which just happened. They will consider sessions evaluation forms as well as personal experience, to learn from the recent event. What went well, what challenges were there? What changes might be useful or necessary? How was the spiritual life of Friends in New England nourished and encouraged? How was the life and experience of monthly meetings considered and supported? What work and learning is not yet finished that should be carried over into next year's Sessions? The conclusions from this gathering should be the foundation and touchstone for all aspects of planning for the coming year. This meeting will be convened and clerked by the Sessions Clerk. The meeting should include those involved in the previous year's planning who are not otherwise continuing in service.
 - Following this meeting, the Theme & Speakers team should meet to consider: their sense of the spiritual condition of the body of Friends who attended (informed by the meeting described above); their sense of how Spirit is moving (or impeded) in the wider body; and wider input, on both potential theme and suggested speakers. This team should distill that sense to a few words or a phrase for the theme, which will be a simple reflection of the work they believe the body needs.
 - This team will then consider what guests should be invited to speak to the gathered body. While most often over the years we have had a plenary speaker on Sunday, and a Bible Half-hour presenter, this group may be led to suggest a different configuration.
 - This team should present the suggested theme and proposed speakers to the Coordination team for approval. The Sessions Clerk should report these to PB for their awareness. Approval by PB is not necessary

- Upon approval by the Coordination Team, the Presiding Clerk, with support as needed from the Events Coordinator, will contact proposed speakers to formally invite them. Upon their acceptance, the Presiding Clerk will hand off responsibility to the Events Coordinator, who will ensure appropriate follow up and connections with Friends as needed in order to confirm elders and make all other arrangements for their service
 - Once the theme, speakers, and elders are confirmed, this team (excepting the Presiding Clerk and the Sessions Clerk) can consider that their work is done for the year
- The Coordination Team may meet occasionally, as needed, through the fall and winter months.
- Beginning in earnest by March, the functional teams and the Coordination team should begin to meet regularly to translate the perceived needs into specific events and fit those events into a schedule. Events should include:
 - Opportunities to gather in worship
 - Business meetings
 - Opportunities for learning
 - Opportunities for sharing and relationship-building
 - Opportunities for performance, celebrations, special events, and play
- In consultation with the Coordination Team and with approval of the YM Secretary, a variety of stipended positions may be established to hold a particular piece of work, (e.g. registrar, housing coordinator, worship coordinator, tech team lead, BIPOC Opportunities Coordinator). Stipended positions will participate in the appropriate functional team, and will be supported by the appropriate staff person, as identified in their role description.
- The NEYM Office Manager will set the schedule for required submissions, including invitation to sessions, program schedule for publication, advance documents, etc.
- The YM Secretary has ultimate responsibility for and oversight of implementation, logistics, financial management, liability, pastoral care, legal, and safety concerns for Annual Sessions.

Composition:

A Sessions Clerk will be nominated by the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee. This individual will clerk the Coordination team, the Program Team, and the Theme and Speakers Team. This person will work closely with the Events Coordinator, creating the planning schedule and the agendas for planning meetings in consultation with the coordination team. This person will hold an overview of the planning process and will facilitate significant decisions, where the Events Coordinator will be more involved in the implementation of those decisions.

Regular participants in each of the following groups will likely include the roles below, but may change based on experience and needs, and will often include the invited participation of other Friends depending on needs for consultation, discernment, and implementation. The Session Clerk, the Presiding Clerk, the Events Coordinator, and the YM Secretary will consult on changes in composition or process that may be needed.

The Program Team consists of the Yearly Meeting Secretary, the Presiding Clerk, the Sessions Clerk, the Worship Coordinator, the Events Coordinator, the Quaker Practice and Leadership Facilitator, and a member of the youth ministries staff.

The Logistics Team consists of The Events Coordinator, the Office Manager, and the Tech Team Lead, and the Sessions Clerk

The Youth Programs Team consists of the Events Coordinator, the Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator, the Young Friends Event Organizer, and the Quaker Practice and Leadership Facilitator.

The Theme and Speakers Team consists of the Presiding Clerk, the Sessions Clerk and 4-6 other Friends chosen by the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee, both for their connectedness to the wider body of Friends, and their ability to prayerfully listen to those Friends' condition.

The Coordination Team consists of representatives from each of the other teams, plus a consistent representative from the Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness working Group.

To: The Permanent Board of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends
From: Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary
Re: Report in preparation for PB meeting on September 25, 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope this early autumn finds each of you well, and brings fresh glimpses of God's presence and love at work in your life and the life of your meeting.

I'm writing this report in the fullness of the two weeks before I will depart for a sabbatical, and so will focus on the status of these preparations, and some key updates.

Update on Sabbatical Preparations

Consistent with the approval of the Permanent Board, I will be away from my service with the Yearly Meeting on sabbatical from October 8, 2021 to February 14, 2022.

As Friends are aware, during the period I am away, the Yearly Meeting Secretary's role and responsibilities will be shared by Sarah Gant (Beacon Hill) and Nia Thomas (Northampton). Sarah is serving part-time as Acting Secretary for Governance and Pastoral Care, with primary responsibility for supporting planning, structural, policy, and legal matters, and needs for consultation and support for local meetings. Nia is serving (continuing her full-time staff role, with expanded responsibilities) as Acting Secretary for Programs, with responsibilities for overall programming, staff supervision, financial oversight, and communications.

Sarah (sarahgant@neym.org) and Nia (nia@neym.org) will meet regularly to coordinate, both together and with Friends serving the Yearly Meeting in a variety of roles. Both have begun (as of the recent C&A retreat last weekend) participating in meetings of the Coordinating & Advisory Committee. In particular, Nia and Sarah will share responsibility for health and safety decisions, particularly related to the COVID pandemic, and NEYM protocols relating to in-person activities.

As part of recent in-person staff and C&A retreats, both undertaken with great care for testing and public health concerns, we've had the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and opportunities presented by my time away. I'm looking forward to the fruits of this season of adaptation and newness, which I trust will help us learn and grow in meaningful ways that benefit the YM long after I return.

Consistent with the authorization from Sessions, Nia and Sarah have now been added as signers of the bank accounts of the Yearly Meeting, along with Bob Murray as Yearly Meeting Treasurer and Bruce Neumann as Presiding Clerk.

The list of Yearly Meeting commitments needing shepherding and support in the coming months is long. Among many other initiatives, in partnership with other C&A members, Nia and Sarah will be devoting particular attention to continuing care and support for local meetings, and those serving them, during the continuing pandemic (for example, Sarah and Nia will co-host monthly calls for meeting leaders); supporting the planning process for Sessions 2022, as we work toward

the hope of an (as much as possible) in-person Sessions next August; continuing listening and preparation for the search and transition in the role of Children & Family Ministries Coordinator, as Gretchen Baker-Smith prepares to retire following Sessions 2022; ongoing care for the many ways in which the Yearly Meeting is seeking to foster justice, wholeness, equity, inclusivity, and healing; the integration of our processes for naming and nurturing gifts through the newly merged Nominating Committee; and ongoing reflection and experimentation in how the life of the Spirit is liberated in our communities and the wider world, through the gatherings on ministry and spiritual Life. More on all of this work in the coming months and year.

While there is still much to do to prepare in the next two weeks, and while there will no doubt be unexpected challenges and surprises, each day I believe we're strengthening a solid foundation to make this time as smooth and consistent as possible. I have great trust in the collective capacity of Nia, Sarah, the Yearly Meeting staff, and each of the Friends serving as part of Coordinating & Advisory Committee to support and shepherd the work of Friends in the coming months. And your patience, support, flexibility, and encouragement—as members of the Permanent Board—will also be an even more essential part of caring for the Yearly Meeting during this time. Thank you in advance for your service, diligence, listening, and faith.

Some recommendations for discernment and action

At our meeting on Saturday, I've been asked to bring forward several items which are the fruit of the work of many hands across the Yearly Meeting.

Following consultation with the Clerk of the Permanent Board and Coordinating & Advisory Committee, I will briefly present the NEYM budget for fiscal year 2022 (the clerk of Finance will be available to answer questions), and after a brief report on the process, introduce the Friends Camp Treasurer to bring for approval the Friends Camp budget for fiscal year 2022.

On behalf of the Coordinating and Advisory Committee, I will present the recommendation for funding priorities to guide Finance Committee in the FY2023 budget process beginning in the new year. After discernment this fall, Coordinating & Advisory Committee united in recommending to the Permanent Board that, for the FY2023 budget process, the Yearly Meeting maintain our existing commitments to two funding priorities in the FY2022 budget: 1) Increasing staffing for development, communications, and administration to free the Secretary to nurture meetings and ministry, and 2) offering honoraria to support Friends serving in volunteer leadership roles.

C&A is making this recommendation now for three reasons: 1) early approval this year—instead of in November, as in recent years—removes a significant additional task from C&A in the coming busy months, while the Secretary will be on sabbatical; 2) the commitment last year to increasing funding for staff support will not be implemented until the Secretary's return from sabbatical, and some of the funding previously approved for this purpose may instead be used to support the sabbatical in the coming fiscal year; and 3) both of these previously-approved funding priorities involved multi-year commitments, and so will need to be sustained in the coming year's budget, meaning that there may be little room for further increases in the coming year without substantially increasing income beyond current projections and plans.

It is important to note that approval of continuing these priorities still allows flexibility for necessary adjustments to the proposed FY2023 budget once the budgeting process begins early in the new year; the approved funding priorities provide guidance that the Finance Committee is asked to ensure is honored, amidst many considerations.

I will also bring, with support from the Coordinating & Advisory Committee, an oral presentation and recommendation for action on a sensitive matter, which I trust Friends will consider prayerfully and with care. Our general counsel, Brian Riley (Wellesley), who has been involved in responding to this concern, will also be with us to support our discernment.

Celebrating generosity

With joy and grateful remembrance, the Yearly Meeting has received a generous, unrestricted bequest of \$48,245 from the estate of Martha Miles Gordon of Wellesley Friends Meeting. Martha passed away in February of 2020; a memorial meeting for worship to honor her life was held in November 2020. After consultation with the Treasurer, and in keeping with our usual practice when receiving unrestricted bequests, this gift has been placed in the Yearly Meeting's unrestricted operating reserves.

With gratitude

I find I have few words to express the gratitude and care I feel as I prepare for sabbatical, both for the opportunity to take this time of prayer, rest, reflection, and renewal, and for the many Friends who, in ways great and small, have committed their gifts, time, energy, and resources to make it possible. I look forward to the growth and learning of the coming months, and to continuing this journey of faith, transformation, and discovery in the new year. I would be grateful for your prayers. You will be in mine.

May Grace guide us home.

###

New England Yearly Meeting						
FY2022 Operating (Non-Camp) Budget Proposal						
version 4-10-2021 approved by Finance Committee						
Category	FY2020		FY2021	Δ FY21 to FY22 Budgets	FY2022 Proposed Budget	Notes
	Actuals	Budget	Budget			
<i>(italics = affected by pandemic)</i>						
Income						
4010 Individual Contributions						
General Fund Contributions	165,252	194,500	204,225	-	204,225	
Equalization Contributions	31,109	21,000	26,000	-	26,000	
4010 Individual Contributions Total	196,361	215,500	230,225	-	230,225	
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions						
General Fund Contributions	317,721	350,000	350,000	-	350,000	
Equalization Contributions	16,361	27,000	23,000	-	23,000	
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions Total	334,082	377,000	373,000	-	373,000	
4030 Organizations Contributions	1	0	0	-	0	
4050 Interest and Dividend Income	9,487	9,000	9,000	-	9,000	
Total 4070 Books & Other Sales Income	1,143	17,000	17,000	-	17,000	
4080 Retreat Program Fees	17,172	50,000	47,000	-	47,000	
4085 Sessions Program Fees	47,145	201,000	211,050	10,250	221,300	
4090 Change in Fair Market Value	-724	0	0	-	0	
4099 Net Assets Released To/From	1,815	0	0	15,000	15,000	1
Total Income	606,482	869,500	887,275	25,250	912,525	
Expenses						
5000 Staff						
Total 5000 Staff	402,514	406,231	431,519	20,593	452,112	2
5100 General & Administration						
5110 Administration						
5120 Bank Expense	5,296	6,000	7,000	-	7,000	
5130 Contracted Services	30,830	31,896	30,900	1,000	31,900	2
5135 Accounting Services	4,000	4,000	2,500	-	2,500	
5140 Legal Services	5,262	5,250	2,500	-	2,500	
5145 Infrastructure			5,000	-	5,000	
5150 Liability Insurance	5,240	4,000	5,100	150	5,250	
5160 Payroll Service	5,266	4,500	5,200	-	5,200	
5170 Recruiting Expense		0	0	-	0	
5180 Rent	9,350	9,350	9,350	-	9,350	
5190 Misc. Expense	634	0	0	-	0	
Total 5110 Administration	65,878	64,996	67,550	1,150	68,700	
5200 Office						
5220 Archives Office Expenses		0	0	-	0	
5220 Cleaning Services	265	265	265	-	265	
5230 Maint - Equip & Hardware	0	1,250	1,250	-	1,250	
5240 Postage	5,226	3,750	3,750	-	3,750	
5250 Office Equipment	1,043	3,250	3,250	-	3,250	
5260 Office Supplies	921	2,000	2,500	-	2,500	
5270 Printing & Copying	5,402	14,500	14,500	-	14,500	
5280 Software & Updates	12,609	7,000	7,000	-	7,000	
5290 Telephone	3,502	4,500	4,500	-	4,500	
5295 Misc. Office	174	0	0	-	0	
Total 5200 Office	29,142	36,515	37,015	-	37,015	
Total 5100 General & Administration	95,020	101,511	104,565	1,150	105,715	

Category	FY2020		FY2021	Δ FY21 to FY22 Budgets	FY2022 Proposed Budget	Notes
	Actuals	Budget	Budget			
5300 Travel & Conferences				-		
5310 Travel - Committee	1,276	2,500	3,000	-	3,000	
5320 Travel - Clerk	792	4,000	4,500	-	4,500	
5330 Travel - Programs	1,328	4,600	3,700	-	3,700	
5335 Travel - Representatives Travel	3,115	10,000	6,700	-	6,700	
5350 Travel - Staff	7,514	17,500	17,000	-	17,000	
5360 Travel - Ministries	500	400	400	-	400	
Total 5300 Travel & Conferences	14,525	39,000	35,300	-	35,300	
6000 Programs				-		
6110 Sessions Room & Board	11,115	175,950	181,140	5,710	186,850	
6112 Retreats - Room & Board	0			-		
6114 Room Rental	8,063	20,000	20,000	(2,470)	17,530	
6150 Food Expense	5,613	18,000	18,000	(570)	17,430	
Total 6112 Retreats - Room & Board	13,676	38,000	38,000	(3,040)	34,960	
6125 Program Expenses	0			-		
6105 Honoraria - Speakers/Wkshp Ldrs	11,563	19,500	22,000	15,000	37,000	1
6115 Equipment Rental	0	6,000	6,000	-	6,000	
6121 Supplies and Other Expenses	5,630	9,300	9,300	-	9,300	
6165 Pre-Sessions Expense	56	1,000	1,000	-	1,000	
Total 6125 Program Expenses	17,248	35,800	38,300	15,000	53,300	
6130 Committee Expenses - General	3,035	11,950	6,350	-	6,350	
6134 Childcare	180	2,000	2,000	-	2,000	
Total 6130 Committee Expenses - General	3,215	14,450	8,350	-	8,350	
6160 Program Support	0			-		
6163 Friends Camp	2,355	2,220	2,220	-	2,220	
6167 Religious Education & Outreach		0	2,000	(2,000)	0	3
Total 6160 Program Support	2,355	2,220	4,220	(2,000)	2,220	
Total 6000 Programs	47,608	266,420	270,010	15,670	285,680	
6140 Books & Other Sales Expense	0	0	0	-	0	
6142 Books	0	15,000	14,500	-	14,500	
6147 Consignment Sales	36	0	0	-	0	
Total 6140 Books & Other Sales Expense	36	15,000	14,500	-	14,500	
6200 Support of Other Organizations				-		
6310 FGC	13,075	13,075	13,075	-	13,075	
6320 FUM	10,992	13,075	13,075	-	13,075	
6325 FWCC	13,075	13,075	13,075	-	13,075	
Total 6310-6325 FGC+FUM+FWCC	0	39,225	39,225	-	39,225	
6328 Ramallah Friends School	100	100	100	-	100	
6335 AFSC	300	300	300	-	300	
6340 FCNL	750	750	750	-	750	
6345 QEW	300	300	300	-	300	
6350 Friends Peace Teams	100	100	100	-	100	
6355 FWCC 3rd World Travel	500	500	500	-	500	
6360 QUNO	200	200	200	-	200	
6362 Quaker Voluntary Service	100	100	100	-	100	
Total 6330 Friends' Organizations	2,350	2,350	2,350	-	2,350	
6590 Ecumenical Organizations	0			-		
6592 State Councils of Churches	3,172	4,000	4,000	-	4,000	
6594 Natl Council of Churches	150	150	150	-	150	
6596 NE Ecumenical Network	150	150	150	-	150	
6598 World Council of Churches	100	100	100	-	100	
Total 6590 Ecumenical Organizations	3,572	4,400	4,400	-	4,400	
Total 6200-6590 Support of Other Organizations	43,064	45,975	45,975	-	45,975	

Category	FY2020		FY2021	Δ FY21 to FY22 Budgets	FY2022 Proposed Budget	Notes
	Actuals	Budget	Budget			
6600 Publications				-		
6610 Yearly Meeting Minute Book	0	1,000	0	-	0	4
6620 New England Friend (Sessions Issue)	0	3,000	4,000	(4,000)	0	
Total 6600 Publications	0	4,000	4,000	(4,000)	0	
Total Expenses	602,766	878,137	905,869	33,413	939,282	
Net Operating Income	3,716	-8,637	-18,594	(8,163)	-26,757	
Other Income						
9940 Other Income - Transfers from other funds	18,721					
Total Other Income	18,721					
Other Expenses						
9950 Other Expense - Transfer to other funds	29,000					
Total Other Expenses	29,000					
Net Other Income	-10,279					
Net Income	-6,563					

Notes:

- 1 Finance Committee proposes phasing in funding of the Honoraria Supporting Volunteer Leadership over three years; for FY2022 the full \$15,000 would come from reserves, in FY2023 \$10,000 and in FY2024 \$5000 would come from reserves. The expense will be tracked in a new subcategory "Honoraria - Volunteer Leadership" not shown here.
- 2 Most of the increase addresses the priority for support of monthly meetings and ministers by increased support staff; this increase can be used in either 5130 Contracted Services or 5000 Staff Salaries & Benefits. Small COLA increase.
- 3 Supporting the 2022 Nurturing Faithfulness program priority using reserves as a one-time Continuing Project rather than in the operating budget.
- 4 Publication of New England Friend Sessions Issue now tracked in 5270 Office: Printing & Copying.

Friends Camp FY2022 Proposed Budgets

Presented to NEYM Permanent Board for Approval Ninth Month 25, 2021

Operating Budget

The last two years have been challenging ones for Friends Camp. In 2020, after families had already signed up and tuition deposits had been received, we made the difficult choice to cancel camp in South China altogether due to COVID concerns. When we communicated our decision, we were extremely fortunate to find that many families were willing to donate part or all of their deposits to help keep the camp afloat. That, together with a vigorous special fundraising effort, allowed us to end the year with only a \$17,000 deficit.

As pandemic conditions and our confidence level improved, we chose to operate camp in 2021. State health regulations restricted the number of campers we could accept, however. For the protection of our campers and staff we had to operate well below our normal capacity, knowing our normal income sources would not be able to offset our expenses. With the help of a transfer of \$17,000 from the NEYM operating division to offset our loss from 2020 and the forgiveness of a Round 1 Paycheck Protection Program loan in the amount of \$47,000, though, we are now forecasting a small surplus for 2021.

The proposed operating budget for 2022 (executive and full versions attached) is based on the assumption that the resurgence of the pandemic will be under control by camp season, and that we will be able to operate without restrictions on the number of campers we can accept. The aftershocks of COVID will continue to rumble for the next couple of years, however. We have had a disruption to our regular conveyor belt of new campers. While we do expect to significantly increase camper sign-ups over this year, we do not believe we will be able to fill camp to the near-capacity levels we were experiencing before COVID. The operating budget proposed today projects a surplus of \$27,000. This is possible only because we expect to receive forgiveness of a Round 2 Paycheck Protection Program loan in the amount of \$65,000.

How does this bode for the future? As we look ahead, we will no longer have PPP funds available. We project we will continue to increase camper enrollment, but do not expect to reach our pre-pandemic levels until at least 2024. Long-term projections can be only very rough, but as of now we expect a deficit in 2023, which the projected surplus in 2022 will more than offset. After that, we are planning for a modest surplus each year which will allow us to rebuild our reserves. See the attached budget projection table.

Capital Budget

The proposed capital budget for 2022 (attached) covers the projects which are highest on the camp's priority list. Funding will be provided almost entirely through the budgeted depreciation line item in the operating budget and a proposed grant, requiring only a small draw from our reserves.

Submitted on behalf of Friends Camp by Robb Spivey, Friends Camp Treasurer.

**Friends Camp / New England Yearly Meeting
Proposed FY2022 Operating Budget
Executive Summary**

9/2/2021

	<u>FY22 Budget</u>
INCOME	
4100 Summer Program Fees - net of camperships	\$ 382,856
4200 Contributions and Grants Received	55,000
4300 Other Operating Income (includes PPP loan forgiveness)	94,624
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 532,480</u>
EXPENSE	
5100 Staff Expense	\$ 299,124
5200 Summer Program	87,502
5300 Property Expense	71,040
5400 Administrative Expenses	42,950
5600 Off-Season Programs	4,000
5700 Miscellaneous Expense	-
5710 Donations to Other Organizations	850
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 505,466</u>
NET OPERATING INCOME	<u><u>\$ 27,014</u></u>

**Friends Camp / New England Yearly Meeting
Proposed FY2022 Operating Budget**

9/2/2021

	FY2022
INCOME	
4100 Summer Program Fees	
4101 Summer Camp Tuition (Gross)	\$ 419,840
Less all camperships granted	(41,984)
4102 Extra Day Between Sessions Fee	-
4103 Teen Session Hiking Trip Fees	-
4104 Camper Transportation Fees	-
4130 Release from Campership Funds	5,000
4142 Staff Children Discounts Granted	-
4143 Auction Discounts Given	-
Total 4100 Summer Program Fees	\$ 382,856
4200 Contributions Received	
4201 Contributions from Individuals	\$ 38,000
4202 Contributions from Monthly & Quarterly Meetings	5,000
4211 Contributions from NEYM	2,500
4221 Capital Fund Income	-
4231 Grants Income	9,500
Total 4200 Contributions Received	\$ 55,000
4300 Other Operating Income	
4311 Off-Season Rentals	\$ 18,000
4321 Merchandise Sales	9,624
4331 Interest and Investment Income	2,000
4341 Misc Operating Income	-
4351 Paycheck Protection Program Loan Forgiveness	65,000
Total 4300 Other Operating Income	\$ 94,624
7110 General Campership Fund	
7111 General Campership - Transfer from Equity Account	
7112 General Campership - Contributions Received	\$ 5,000
7117 General Campership - Release to Camp Tuition	(5,000)
7119 General Campership - Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7110 General Campership Fund	\$ -
7120 Codman Academy Fund	
7121 Codman- Transfer from Equity Account	\$ -
7122 Codman Academy- Contributions Received	-
7127 Codman Camperships Given- Release to Camp Tuition	-
7129 Codman- Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7120 Codman Academy Fund	\$ -
7140 One Child at a Time Fund	
7141 OCAT- Transfer from Equity Account	\$ -
7142 OCAT- Contributions Received	-
7147 OCAT Camperships Given- Release to Camp Tuition	-
7149 OCAT- Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7140 One Child at a Time Fund	\$ -

**Friends Camp / New England Yearly Meeting
Proposed FY2022 Operating Budget**

9/2/2021

	FY2022
7150 Level Ground Fund	
7151 Level Ground - Transfer from Equity Account	\$ -
7152 Level Ground - Contributions Received	-
7157 Level Ground - Release to Camp Tuition	-
7159 Level Ground - Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7150 Level Ground Fund	<u>\$ -</u>
7210 Capital Fund	
7211 Capital Fund- Transfer from Equity Account	\$ -
7212 Capital Fund- Contributions Received	-
7217 Capital Fund- Release to Current Year Projects	-
7219 Capital Fund- Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7210 Capital Fund	<u>\$ -</u>
7220 Grants	
7221 Grants - Transfer from Equity Account	
7222 Grants - Grants Received	\$ 9,500
7227 Grants - Released to Current Year Projects	(9,500)
7229 Grants - Transfer to Equity Account	-
Total 7220 Grants	<u>\$ -</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u><u>\$ 532,480</u></u>
EXPENSE	
5100 Staff Expense	
5110 Year-Round Staff	
5111 Director Salary	\$ 59,835
5112 Pension Plan - Employer (10 %)	5,984
5113 Health & Disability Insurance - Employer	9,178
Total 5110 Director	<u>\$ 74,997</u>
5120 Support Staff	
5121 Maintenance & Cleaning	\$ 30,000
5122 Kitchen	21,600
5123 Seasonal Leadership Staff	17,400
5124 Nurse	11,520
5126 Winter Assistant Director/ Office Work	14,040
Total 5120 Support Staff	<u>\$ 94,560</u>
5130 Counselors	
5131 Counselor Salaries	\$ 87,000
5132 International Staff Agencies	-
Total 5130 Counselors	<u>\$ 87,000</u>
5140 Staff Development	
5141 Professional Development- Director & Year-Round Staff	\$ 2,000
5142 Staff Orientation & Safety Training	5,000
Total 5140 Staff Development	<u>\$ 7,000</u>
5150 Travel, Meals and Lodging	

**Friends Camp / New England Yearly Meeting
Proposed FY2022 Operating Budget**

9/2/2021

	FY2022
5151 Director Travel, Meals, and Lodging	\$ 1,400
5152 Summer Staff Travel, Meals, and Lodging	2,500
Total 5150 Travel, Meals, and Lodging	\$ 3,900
5160 Other Staffing Expense	
5161 Workers Compensation	\$ 12,000
5162 Payroll Taxes	18,467
5163 Staff Hiring Expense	1,200
5165 Staff Time Off Expenses	-
Total 5160 Other Staffing Expense	\$ 31,667
Total 5100 Staff Expense	\$ 299,124
5200 Summer Program	
5210 Kitchen Expenses	
5211 Summer Food	\$ 50,489
5212 Housekeeping & Kitchen Supplies	3,000
Total 5210 Kitchen Expenses	\$ 53,489
5220 Summer Vehicles & Transportation	
5221 Summer Van Rental	\$ 9,500
5222 Summer Vehicle Fuel & Tolls	1,000
5223 Summer Vehicle Insurance	1,000
5224 Charter Bus (NEYM Sessions)	-
5225 Other Transportation Expense	-
Total 5220 Summer Vehicles & Transportation	\$ 11,500
Other Summer Program	
5231 Medical Supplies	\$ 2,000
5241 Program Supplies (Arts, Aquatic, Sports etc.)	7,000
5251 Merchandise	6,000
5261 Summer Laundry	7,513
5271 Stayover Between Sessions Expenses	-
5281 Teen Session Camping Trips Expense	-
Total Other Summer Program	\$ 22,513
Total 5200 Summer Program	\$ 87,502
5300 Property Expense	
5310 Depreciation	
5311 Depreciation- Buildings	\$ 25,000
5312 Depreciation- Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment	12,000
Total 5310 Depreciation	\$ 37,000
5321 Buildings & Grounds Supplies & Services	22,000
5330 Utilities	
5331 Telephone & Internet	\$ 2,100
5332 Heating Oil	-
5333 Trash Removal	1,200
5334 Electric	4,200
5335 Propane	1,500
Total 5330 Utilities	\$ 9,000
5341 Winter Office Rent	3,040

**Friends Camp / New England Yearly Meeting
Proposed FY2022 Operating Budget**

9/2/2021

	<u>FY2022</u>
Total 5300 Property Expense	\$ 71,040
5400 Administrative Expenses	
5411 Property and General Liability Insurance	\$ 12,000
5421 CampMinder Online/ Camp Brain	5,000
5430 Accounting	
5431 Credit Card and ACH Fees	\$ 4,500
5432 Payroll Expenses	3,000
5433 Accounting Services	1,000
5434 Bank Service Charges	-
5435 Professional Accounting Review	1,700
5436 Interest Expense	-
Total 5430 Accounting	\$ 10,200
5441 Memberships and Subscriptions	4,000
5450 Marketing	
5451 Printing	\$ 1,800
5452 Website Design & Changes	500
5453 Advertising Expenses	2,500
5454 Newsletter	1,600
Total 5450 Marketing	\$ 6,400
5461 Office Supplies and Services	3,200
5471 Fundraising Mailings	1,250
5481 Postage	900
5491 Other	-
Total 5400 Administrative Expenses	\$ 42,950
5600 Off-Season Programs	
5611 Off-Season Food	\$ 2,000
5621 Off-Season Staff for Retreats & Gatherings	2,000
Total 5600 Off-Season Programs	\$ 4,000
5700 Miscellaneous Expense	
5701 Reconciliation Discrepancies	\$ -
5702 Bad Debt Writeoff	-
5709 Other Miscellaneous Expense	-
Total 5700 Miscellaneous Expense	\$ -
5710 Donations to Other Organizations	
5711 Donations to Local Organizations	\$ 100
5712 Simple Meal Donation	750
Total 5710 Donations to Other Organizations	\$ 850
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 505,466
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ 27,014

Friends Camp Projected Budgets

9/2/2021

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Percent Enrollment	84%	90%	95%	95%
Tuition Increase from Prior Year	3%	3%	3%	3%
Cost of 1 2-week session	\$ 1,140	\$ 1,174	\$ 1,209	\$ 1,246
Gross Tuition	\$ 419,840	\$ 469,210	\$ 510,136	\$ 525,440
Less Scholarships	(36,984)	(38,094)	(39,236)	(40,413)
Net Tuition	\$ 382,856	\$ 431,117	\$ 470,900	\$ 485,027
Contributions Received	55,000	46,865	48,271	49,719
Other Income	29,624	30,513	31,428	32,371
PPP Received & Forgiven	65,000	-	-	-
Total Income	<u>\$ 532,480</u>	<u>\$ 508,495</u>	<u>\$ 550,599</u>	<u>\$ 567,117</u>
Expenses	<u>\$ 505,466</u>	<u>\$ 520,630</u>	<u>\$ 536,249</u>	<u>\$ 552,336</u>
NET INCOME	<u>\$ 27,014</u>	<u>\$ (12,135)</u>	<u>\$ 14,350</u>	<u>\$ 14,781</u>

Friends Camp FY2022 Capital Budget Proposal

9/2/2021

Expenses

	Amount	Timeline
Fire Road 41 Major Repair/ Rebuild (FC Net)	\$ 18,000	Fall 2021
Kitchen Floor Repair/ Upgrade	9,800	Fall 2021
4 Camper Cabin Roof Replacements	4,800	Fall 2021 and 2022
Generator as Back-up Power Source	9,500	Spring 2022
Owl Cabin Renovation	4,800	Winter 2021-2022
TOTAL	<u>\$ 46,900</u>	

Sources of Funding

Budgeted Depreciation	\$ 37,000
Grant Funding/ Fundraising for Generator	9,500
Reserves	400
TOTAL	<u>\$ 46,900</u>

NEYM
Q3 FY2021 Operating Budget vs Actuals
October 2020 - June 2021

	Q1-Q3 FY2021 Actual	Q1-Q3 FY2020 (previous YTD)	FY2021 Full Year Budget	Q1-Q3 FY2021 % of Full-Year Budget
Income				
4010 Individual Contributions	73,990	81,354	230,225	32.1%
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions	236,549	215,968	373,000	63.4%
4025 Unallocated Income	900			
4030 Organizations Contributions	1	1		
4050 Interest and Dividend Income	-110	73	9,000	-1.2%
4070 Books & Other Sales Income		1,143	17,000	0.0%
4080 Retreat Program Fees	5,547	15,886	47,000	11.8%
4085 Sessions Program Fees	1,035		211,050	0.5%
4090 Change in Fair Market Value	-440	-163		
4099 Net Assets Released To/From	0	0		
Total Income	317,471.29	314,262.01	887,275.00	35.8%
Gross Profit				
Expenses				
5000 Staff	309,813	291,186	431,519	71.8%
5100 General & Administration	60,512	61,745	104,565	57.9%
5300 Travel & Conferences	382	13,565	35,300	1.1%
6000 Programs	4,775	27,843	270,010	1.8%
6140 Books & Other Sales Expense		36	14,500	0.0%
6200 Support of Other Organizations	19,613	19,613	45,975	42.7%
6600 Publications			4,000	0.0%
Total Expenses	395,094.41	413,988.71	905,868.76	43.6%
Net Operating Income	(77,623.12)	(99,726.70)	(18,593.76)	NA

Bank accounts, credit card accounts, and Pooled Funds statement reconciled through June 30. Pooled Funds income and change in fair market value for Q3 distributed to NEYM funds. Closing journal entries done for Q3, moving net income for Q3 for each fund to equity account for that fund. Fund balances shown in balance sheet are accurate as of June 30.

NEYM
Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2021

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1000 Checking Accounts	180,769
1020 Money Market Accounts	189,103
1050 Certificates of Deposits	0
Total Bank Accounts	369,872
Accounts Receivable	
1200 Accounts Receivable	0
Other Current Assets	
1075 Pooled Funds	2,005,782
1100 Accrued Receivables	(124)
1110 Due to/from Friends Camp	1,848
1150 Prepaid Expenses	382
1190 Misc due to/from	0
1499 Undeposited Funds	0
Total Other Current Assets	2,007,888
Total Current Assets	2,377,760
TOTAL ASSETS	2,377,760
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
2005 Credit Card Elan St Marys	3,318
Total Credit Cards	3,318
Other Current Liabilities	
2010 Accrued Liabilities	0
2110 Federal Taxes	(0)
2120 State Taxes	0
2150 Health Insurance Premium	412
2155 Sect 125 Employee Withholding	4,031
2160 403B Retirement	(1,000)
2170 BSB SBA PPP loan	0
2171 BSB SBA PPP loan 2nd Draw	144,250
Total Other Current Liabilities	147,693
Total Current Liabilities	151,011
Total Liabilities	151,011

Equity	
3500 Working Capital	69,856
3600 Board Designated Funds	1,397,952
3700 Revolving Accounts	133,294
3800 Permanently Restricted Funds	702,946
3900 Retained Earnings	0
Net Income	(77,298)
Total Equity	<u>2,226,750</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u>2,377,760</u>

Wednesday, Sep 22, 2021 12:10:37 PM GMT-7 - Cash Basis

NEYM Nominating Committee Report to Permanent Board
25 September 2021

In order for members of the Permanent Board to reflect on nominations and get back to the Nominating Committee with affirmations and concerns, names will be brought for a first reading, and then for a second reading for final approval. In bringing names forward we will describe the needs of the work and what gifts and abilities the nominee brings to meet those needs.

The 'old' NEYM Nominating Committee had several names in process that were not ready in time for the advance documents in August; we recommend the following Friends for service:

First reading:

Friends General Conference representative - Carolyn Hilles-Pilant, Beacon Hill, class of 2024

Service as a representative to FGC can take on many forms. At a minimum it requires familiarity with NEYM, and attendance at FGC Central Committee in October. FGC has a multitude of committees; representatives are encouraged (not required) to share their gifts by serving on one of them.

Carolyn feels called to serve FGC and be part of raising its profile in NEYM. She has spoken with former NEYM representatives and communicated directly with the FGC Nominating Committee. She has participated in the Gathering and is familiar with some areas of FGC work. Carolyn is a seasoned Friend and open to exploring how her gifts will fit together with the needs of FGC. Carolyn is also serving on Faith & Practice Committee and after careful consideration feels that she can manage both.

[note: at this time there are no others serving as FGC representatives from NEYM]

Finance committee recording clerk – Kathleen Wooten, Fresh Pond, class of 2024

The recording clerk of Finance Committee needs to understand the work of the committee, be able to record accurately during meetings and support the clerk in clerking the committee.

Kathleen has demonstrated a concern for the administrative work of the YM. She understands organizational budgets and financial management, and in her work at Friends Meeting in Cambridge, she has enjoyed attending to the nuts and bolts of a Quaker organization. She discussed the needs and expectations of this position with the clerk of Finance Committee, and both are clear to proceed.

[note: none of the current Finance committee members felt called to this work]

Second reading:

Friends United Meeting General Board Representative - Jennifer Smith, Concord, class of 2024

The FUM General Board Representative needs to be a seasoned Friend, able to communicate clearly the Truths experienced by NEYM Friends, open to understanding a wide theological diversity of Friends, able to attend FUM board meetings and serve on board committees, and communicate back to NEYM about FUM.

Jennifer served on the FUM board previously. Colin Saxton, General Secretary at that time, recently described her as a sensitive, excellent board member; not an

opinionated person; a good team player. He would welcome her return. He also voiced that he doesn't want to put her in a situation that is harmful for her because there are diverse beliefs on the board and it could be challenging. Nominating has reflected carefully on this concern.

Jennifer in her discernment has given careful attention to how her gender transition might be received, especially given the issues that some others have found during FUM service that led them to step back. Nominating committee is recommending Jennifer because of her gifts and who she is as a whole person, not because of her gender transition and the concerns voiced by NEYM Friends with the FUM personnel policies. After Jennifer's name was raised at sessions, several Friends contacted Nominating with concerns which have been addressed in our discernment.

The newly approved integrated Nominating Committee will have its initial meeting Sunday, 26 September 2021. Thank you to everyone for the careful preparation of the new Purpose, Procedures and Composition. We are excited to begin this next phase of our journey together.

With God's abundant love,
Jacqueline Stillwell
Clerk, NEYM Nominating Committee