

Committee for Friends United Meeting

Greetings Friends from the representatives to the Friends United Meeting from NEYM. This report is an update on our work towards the charge coming out of last year's Sessions as well as a brief overview of the work and health of the organization that is FUM. **We hope that, as background to this report, Friends can reacquaint themselves with [Minute 2021-35](#), from Sessions 2021 -- which gives a concise overview of the history of NEYM's foundational role in FUM, and ongoing involvement.**

At Sessions 2021, the Body charged us with the task of supporting the Presiding Clerk's correspondence with FUM, "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." In addition, the Representatives were charged with the larger task of: "... 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." A portion of that work is specifically bringing together representatives from other yearly meetings for support, encouragement, and conversation - as well as to begin the long-term work of intervisitation.

While the Covid Pandemic prevented "hand delivery" of a letter to the FUM Board, the Representatives did support the Presiding Clerk as he wrote a letter to the FUM Board Clerk in December of 2021. The Representatives followed up with their own letter in February of 2022 communicating, "We are prepared to continue to reach out lovingly and would ask that the Clerks grapple now with how to plan real dialogue across this divide." Because of this ongoing epistolary conversation, the matter was raised in June 2022 Executive Board Meetings. From that came a promise of a conversation between the Clerk and Assistant Clerk of the North American Board and the Presiding Clerk plus Reps from NEYM to FUM. Arrangement of that meeting is in progress as of this writing (June 22, 2022). The General Secretary of FUM, Kelly Kellum, will be visiting Castleton: available for conversations with Friends from NEYM.

During the June Meeting of the FUM General Board NEYM representatives had personal conversations with Friends from other YMs. In addition, there was a sit-down with the General Secretary that was joined by representatives of at least three other YMs. We expect that further efforts on our part will lead to more conversations with a wider variety of FUM friends, seeking for how the divine spirit can lead us.

Meanwhile, the organization is stable, and they will end their fiscal year without debt. This is also true of Ramallah Friends School - a project that is dear to many in NEYM. The African Ministry Office in Kisumu has been reconfigured - projects are being managed by an all-African team! There is faithful work about which we are excited to talk with you! Please find us, Nikki, or Kelly during Sessions to ask us questions!

In Faith and Friendship,

Frederick Martin, Beacon Hill FM (Mass)
Jennifer Smith, Concord MM (New Hampshire)
Kristina Keefe-Perry, Fresh Pond / Three Rivers (Mass)