

Accompaniment Group: Advance Document for Sessions 2025

Sessions 2022 approved the creation of the Meeting Accompaniment Group to offer prayerful accompaniment and sustained care for the spiritual condition of the monthly meetings and quarters of our communion, one of the functions of Ministry & Counsel.

At the invitation of a monthly meeting clerk or clerk of Ministry & Counsel, members of the Accompaniment Group worship with and attend to the spiritual life and concerns of the body that invites us into this tender work. We are also sometimes asked for specific resources. Some examples of this since Sessions 2024 include:

- hosting an informational Zoom gathering regarding NEYM's participation in a lawsuit contesting changes to policy guidelines related to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) access to "sensitive locations,"
- coordinating administrative support for quarters with the NEYM office,
- sharing child safety "best practices," and
- facilitating connections among meetings with shared concerns.

Our work begins with awareness through listening. Members of the Accompaniment Group regularly attend the monthly Meeting Leader calls; annual NEYM-hosted events including Meeting Care Day and Meeting for Listening; as well as topical gatherings such as Discernment Day and Sessions Visioning. We read all submitted State of Society reports and the newsletters of local meetings. The clerk serves on NEYM Coordinating and Advisory to regularly update that body on issues engaging our community.

At Sessions 2025, Accompaniment Group will share, as requested, its three-year report on its service to date and some possible considerations to revise its Purposes, Procedures and Composition. At our recent retreat, we also reflected on:

- how to respond to what is requested of us while being fully open to listen for what a meeting might more deeply need and,
- whether we have the capacity to worship regularly with every meeting in New England, perhaps in collaboration with the newly forming Ministers and Elders Group, members of Permanent Board or of Nominating Committee.

Accompaniment Group meets monthly as a whole to hold the spiritual life and good order of our meetings and quarters in prayer and to report on the ongoing work which members of the Group are involved in throughout the months. We are:

Members:

Gretchen Baker-Smith (Westport, Sandwich Quarter)
Sarah Gant, Clerk (Beacon Hill, Salem Quarter)

Hugh MacArthur (Hanover, Northwest Quarter)
Liesa Stamm (Hartford, Connecticut Valley Quarter)
Morgan Wilson (Framingham, Salem Quarter)
Honor Woodrow (Putney, Northwest Quarter)

Ex Officio members:

Rebecca Leuchak, Presiding Clerk (Providence, Southeast Quarter)
Noah Merrill, Secretary (Putney, Northwest Quarter)
Carl Williams, M&C Clerk (Plainfield, Northwest Quarter)