

1. Saturday Evening

1.1. Opening and Welcome

The presiding clerk, Fritz Weiss (Hanover), opened the meeting with vocal prayer. We often end our meetings with shaking hands, but this year let us begin that way. Let us remember that we are one body, gathered in God's presence..

1.2. Clerks' table

Fritz Weiss introduced the rest of the YM clerks : Rosemary Zimmermann (Bennington) accompanied by her five year old son, Arthur , Peter Bishop (Northampton), Gina Nortonsmith (Northampton), John Humphries (Hartford). The clerk introduced the elders for Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness who are accompanying the clerks this year: Melissa Foster (Framingham), Polly Attwood (Friends Meeting Cambridge), Eppchez Yes (Northampton).

1.3. Roll call

We called the roll of meetings by quarter. Each quarter was assigned a color, and as the name of each meeting from the quarter was called, Friends from that meeting waved a coordinating streamer in the air.

We noted that Lewiston Monthly Meeting, Falmouth Quarter, has been laid down.

1.4. New Babies, First Time Attendees, and Visitors

We celebrated the new babies among us and welcomed first time attendees. Throughout the week the following visitors were introduced and welcomed:

Wendy Cooler Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Laura Everett from the Massachusetts Council of Churches

Carl MacGruder, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting

Mica Estrata, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting

Gail Thomas, Santa Monica Monthly Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting

Anne Collins, Stillwater, OK Monthly Meeting, Quaker Religious Education Collaborative
Liz Yeats, Austin Monthly Meeting?, South Central Yearly Meeting
Dancan Sabwa, East Africa Yearly Meeting North
Elaine Emily, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting
Lyle Miller, Mennonite, Everence Financial Service
Andy Albertini, Director of Development from Ramallah Friends School
Sarah Kennedy, Friends Committee on National Legislation
Su Penn, Red Cedar Monthly Meeting, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Ashliegh Dodd, [researching more information]
Melanie Gifford, Adelphi Monthly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Meg Boyd Meyer, Stony Run Monthly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, former staff from the Ramallah Friends School
Arthur Meyer Stony Run Monthly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, former staff from the Ramallah Friends School
Judith Nandikove, Quaker Religious Education Collaborative, Nairobi Yearly Meeting
George Lakey, Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Adrian Moody, Ramallah Friends School
Gillian Hoskin, Ramallah Friends School
Gloria Thompson, FWCC, Manhattan Monthly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting
Esther Quispe Yujra La Paz, Bolivia-Holiness Yearly Meeting
Emma Condori, La Paz, Bolivia-Holiness Yearly Meeting, Executive Director of the Friends International Bilingual Center
Jim Fussell, Friends Meeting of Washington, Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Frank Barch, Schuylkill Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, FGC visitor, presiding clerk of FGC central committee
Jean Marie Prestwidge Barch, Schuylkill Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, FGC visitor, clerk of FGC's Committee for Nurturing Ministries
Mary Kay Glazer, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Mey Hasbrook, Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Alan Lightner & Sharon Lightner, Gunpowder, Maryland, Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Anne Pomeroy, New Paltz Monthly Meeting,, New York Yearly Meeting
Jackie Stillwell, Right Sharing of World Resources, Monadnock Monthly Meeting
Susan and Peter Landstrom, [no affiliation given]
Marisa Egerstrom, [no affiliation given]
LacinaTangnaqudo Onco, from FCNL here to talk about Native American issues.
Nils Klinkenberg, Beacon Hill Friends House
Nancy Shippen Fresh Pond and Friends Peace Teams
Amanda Kemp, Lancaster Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia YM
Angela Hopkins, Ithaca Friends Meeting, NYYM; Friends Center for Racial Justice

1.5. Introduction to the Theme

Maggie Nelson introduced us to our theme this year, “Provoke one another to love.” This theme is drawn from Hebrews 10:4-5, as quoted in Margaret Fell’s “Epistle to Convinced But Not Yet Crucified Friends.” Fell writes, “Now Friends, deal plainly with yourselves and let the eternal Light search you, and try you, for the good of your souls ... It will rip you up, and lay you open, and make manifest that which lodges in you ... Therefore, dear Friends ... consider one another, and provoke one another to Love and to good works, not forsaking the Assembling of yourselves; but exhorting another, and so much the more ... Dwell in love and unity, in the pure eternal Light; there is your fellowship, there is your cleansing and washing.”

Maggie, expanding upon this passage, mentioned that at the time of Margaret Fell’s writing, the word “provoke” meant to draw out. Her epistle calls us to be vulnerable. It nudges us to bring out more of the love that is within us and reminds us that here, this week, we can do that for one another.

1.6. Youth Programs

Four threads run concurrently through the week of Yearly Meeting Sessions: Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM); Junior High Yearly Meeting (JHYM); Young Friends (YF); and the adult Yearly Meeting. We gave thanks for the presence of our youth programs attendees and staff as they left us to go to their own Yearly Meeting programs.

Although we no longer formally appoint visitors to the youth programs, we have continued to be mindful of intergenerational connection, in ways both formal (intergenerational tables at meals) and informal (casual drop-ins at youth programs, arranged with youth staff).

1.7. Secretary reflections

Yearly Meeting Secretary Noah Merrill witnessed to how he has seen the Truth prospering among Friends over the past year, in New England and beyond.

In his reflections, Noah encouraged us to “live as if the Truth is true,” even though our society tells us to live a lie. We live society’s lies when we believe that we are alone; that we do not need each other; that the only power is power-over; that we are not all infinitely beloved children of God. We are invited into a greater truth: that death is not the end; that there is deep hope on the other side of despair; that we are deeply beloved; that the only real power is the transforming power of God.