

Making a Vibrant Community Serving Harrisburg Meeting Through Committees

Preface – update this with Diane

During this time of social distancing because of the Covid-19 pandemic the Meeting's committees are focusing their efforts on addressing racial, ecological, economic and social justice issues in the power of the Light. We are doing this internal work as individuals and as a community.

2019-2021 Nominating Cycle

"Members are expected to serve on committees of the monthly meeting unless disability is a significant hindrance. Acceptance of appointment is a commitment to be diligent, loving, and responsive in carrying out the committee's functions."

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 2002

The work of Harrisburg Monthly Meeting is carried out by its clerks, officers, committees, working groups, and individuals. While all members share the duty and privilege of caring for one another, most monthly meetings find it useful to identify specific duties and responsibilities that can be assigned to committees. Most meetings have at least a committee that works on pastoral care of members and attenders, a committee that cares for the meeting for worship and members' spiritual development, oversight of programs for religious education, and care for the meeting's physical and financial resources.

Faith and Practice tells us that committees serve the monthly meeting not only by carrying on routine delegated functions, but also by doing important background work in preparation for decisions at the monthly meeting for business. They examine designated matters in depth, identify the issues, gather the most useful information, and seek spiritual discernment for recommendations that will be presented to the Business Meeting. When this work is done well, the monthly meeting in session is able to focus quickly on the matter at hand.

For its 2019-2021 committee appointment cycle, Harrisburg Meeting will have the following committees. A brief description of their responsibilities is included to help Friends consider which committees they want to work on.

Caring for Each Other— This committee is responsible for all that we do to support and care for each other as members of our Quaker meeting. These functions have been entrusted to the Caring Committee. (1) being in supportive contact with Friends in need. (2) coordination of hospitality following Meeting for Worship; (3) potluck calendar involving other committees to host the monthly community meal; (4) Christmas ceremony/potluck; (5) membership applications; (6) clearness committee work as requested and/or as we sense a need; (7) review community membership list to check on folks who we have not seen much of recently; (8) clearness and oversight committees for marriages; (9) responding to requests for resignations; (10) greeting guests and meeting community members before and after worship; (11) memorial services for community members who have passed on.

Worship and Spiritual Growth — This committee is responsible for supporting and furthering the spiritual life of members and attenders. As such, it is one of the most important committees a Quaker meeting can have. (1) members organize and coordinate the functions of worship; (2) singing; (3) couples group; (4) women's group and men's group; (5) planning the Fall Retreat; (6) Adult First Day School; and (7) ministering to each other's spiritual development and helping all of us to be more respectful of our spiritual temperaments and modes of worship.

By offering Meeting for Worship, Adult First Day School and other worship experiences via Zoom on a regular basis, the Committee has been keeping our Community spiritually atuned and connected throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Virtual gatherings have enabled us all to receive inspiration from people who live far away or do not usually worship with us. In all our endeavors, love is the first motion.

Nurture — The Nurture Committee provides experiences for children, youth, their parents, including multigenerational activities that engage with the Quaker tradition and bring it into their lives.

Stewardship — This committee has responsibility for finances and for all aspects of the care and maintenance of the meetinghouse, its grounds, and our obligations to any tenants, including managing the meeting parking lot.

Financial Working Group functions under the committee to consider and recommend policy in terms of Meeting fundraising, investments, etc.

Meeting House User Working Group (used to be the Community Outreach Committee) functions under the Stewardship committee and is responsible for the Meeting's relations with all full- and part-time tenants and Meeting House users of our facility. It makes efforts to ensure that users know that we would like them to be part of the Meeting to the degree that they wish to be involved. It receives and responds to all new requests for use of the facility and ensures that those who do use our building are aware of and comply with our guidelines.

Connecting with the Wider World — The committee is the conduit and contact with Friends General Conference, American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Caln Quarter, Christian Churches United, Interfaith Forum, etc. It is responsible for meeting activities and educational programs involving (but not limited to) peace, social justice, climate issues and equality.

Communications – The committee is responsible for the Meeting newsletter, Web site, social media, e-mail lists, roster of members and attenders, advertising, and the meeting library. Its members set policy and provide service and activities in support of all these functions.

Nominating —The Nominating Committee bears the important responsibility of discerning the gifts and leadings of Meeting Community Members. Every two years this committee seeks to fill leadership positions and committee participation in which Friends desire to serve, and to fill committee vacancies as needed.

Community Engagement – The committee is currently structured with two co-clerks. The Co-Clerks are responsible for coordination, implementation, maintenance and communication of the Eco-Justice and Environmental Plan, Community Picnic Plans, Pride Fest/Presence at Festivals, Native Plant Sales and other needs as they arise. The Co-Clerks are responsible for working with the other committees in the meeting to plan and execute the pieces in the Eco-Justice and Environmental plan as well as document activities performed by other committees as set forth by their charges. All Meeting Community Members are welcome and asked to participate as able in the activities coordinated by the Community Engagement Committee. Participation can be activity driven and will function as a “Sprint” activity. Definition of a sprint as set forth by PhilaYM - Sprints allow our community to respond to leadings at the moment. They provide agility in addressing a specific need as soon as it arises and helps to get the job done quickly. They last no longer than 1-6 months; the shorter the better. They can be under the care of any other structure, such as councils, committees, and collaboratives. The community service fund is under this committee.

Officers - In addition to naming clerks or co-clerks for each of these committees, the monthly meeting also approves a clerk, recording clerk, treasurer, and recorder to serve the entire meeting.

The clerk conducts business sessions and, with the assistance of the assistant clerk, sees to the management in good order of the affairs of the Meeting. The clerk carries out the instructions of the Meeting on all matters pertaining to the accomplishment of its business. In addition, the clerk is often in the best position to identify weaknesses or failings in the committee structure and to initiate corrective action.

The assistant clerk assists the clerk as requested, and takes responsibility for special assignments.

The recording clerk prepares minutes for the meetings for worship for business and helps formulate Minutes to be approved by the group.

The treasurer is responsible for the meeting’s financial accounting, paying bills, monthly reporting and periodic investment report and annual report of the meetings financial status.

The assistant treasurer is responsible for receiving, depositing, documenting donations and providing a ledger to the treasurer.

The recorder keeps membership information and records.