

Scarsdale Friends Meeting

Minutes for Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business 7/13/14

Present: Carol Homes, Mary Eagleson, Ruth Bryan, Carol Wilkinson, Fred Hoffman, Galia Toronto, Norma Ellis, Eunice Laughlin, Sue Weisfeld, Bowen Alpern (recording clerk), and Virginia Blanford (clerk)..

1. Meeting began with open worship. Out of the silence the clerk read the following words from Augusto Ponzio, an Italian philosopher:

All states are the result of war. War establishes boundaries in order to replicate itself.

The clerk also read Scarsdale Meeting Query #17:

Are we faithful in maintaining our testimony in favor of the peaceful settlement of differences and against war and all preparations for war? Do we live in the virtue of that life and power which take assay the occasion of all wars?

- 2) Mary Eagleson presented an announcement about the AVP training at the meetinghouse on the weekend of 8/8-10/14.

- 3) Ruth Bryan reported for the **committee on Ministry and Counsel**.

1. We are working on a setting up meetings between Gaby Savory Bailey, the Young Adult field Secretary for New York Yearly Meeting, and two different groups of friends, one made up of the people who grew up in the meeting, and one made up of parents of young children. We are hoping for a weekend, with a Saturday night gathering of the former group, and a Sunday afternoon meeting of the latter, with childcare provided.
2. We were asked to consider whether we thought it was a good idea to split Ministry and Council up to two separate committees, and we do not recommend it at this time.
3. The clearness committees have met with Robert Rose and Malumba, the men from Sing Sing who have requested membership in Scarsdale Friends' Meeting, and will be meeting with them again.

M&C was reminded that the business meeting is expecting a report on whether newcomers who sign the guest book are being followed up with.

4. Mary Eagleson read the following proposed response to the NYYM Priorities Working Group report. One Friend noticed that the report does not address work being done by Friends to end suffering in the world. Do monthly meetings value this work? One Friend does not support the Priorities Working Group report but does not want to interfere with the adoption of this response by the meeting. Other Friends also expressed some reservations about the

Priorities Working Group report while supporting the proposed response, which the meeting adopted.

Friends' first impression of the report was that it was overly long and complicated. However, they acknowledged that much work went into the working group's listening to monthly meetings and distilling what they heard. In its bare outline form:

We Envision a Yearly Meeting Deeply Grounded in the Practice of Our Faith

Priority: Develop programs to teach and share our spiritual skills with each other, and to help meetings to revitalize themselves.

We Envision a Yearly Meeting Made Up of Strong, Vital Monthly Meetings

Priority: Develop programs to help sustain our monthly meetings financially and to increase membership.

We Envision a Yearly Meeting Gathered Together into One Body

Priority: Pursue greater contact and spiritual relationship among Friends.

We Envision a Yearly Meeting that Nurtures Our Children, Youth, and Young Adults

Priority: Develop First Day School curricula to build skills for working with our teens, helping rejuvenate First Day Schools, and providing support for parents of young children.

We Envision a Yearly Meeting that Witnesses to the World on Our Behalf

Priority: Be an active voice for Friends' faith, values, ministry and witness in the world.

We Envision a Yearly Meeting that Is Accountable and Transparent

Priority: The Yearly Meeting holds itself accountable to the above priorities, ensuring their faithful fruition.

Friends generally supported these priorities. However, there were some cautionary notes voiced.

“[W]e--and most meetings--are composed of a less wealthy and much busier membership, with few dollars and even less time to devote to anything beyond our own monthly meeting.”

“I would like to see us addressing the larger question--what is the Religious Society of Friends for in this time and place--as well, but I don't see that as interfering with our acceptance of these priorities.”

“[M]y own preference would be for Yearly Meeting to look at itself skeptically, to consolidate or abandon committees that overlap, and to create a structure that reflects only the priorities in this report, with helping Friends find spiritual centers, and helping the world better understand the value of Quakerism, at the center.”

“[The report] is what we have said we, at this time and place, aspire to be, and in some cases, actually already are.”

“[I]f we -- as monthly meetings -- approve this document, we are committing ourselves to giving more of time, energy and money.”

“[Our yearly meeting’s financial] problem is a revenue problem, not an expenditures problem. There is nothing left to cut that would not impinge on the ability of the yearly meeting to carry out the priorities identified by the working group.”

- 5) Sue Weisfeld announced that Peace and Social Concerns has approved holding a dinner on October 18th to raise funds to purchase socks and underwear for residents of nearby homeless shelters.
- 6) Scarsdale Friends Meeting may be expected to host Quarterly Meeting on August 3rd. The clerk will investigate this. [Recoding clerk’s note: Quarterly Meeting was held at Amawalk Meetinghouse as scheduled.]
- 7) Our next meeting for worship with a concern for business will be on 9/14/14.
- 8) Meeting ended in silent worship.