

**Abington Quarterly Meeting  
Meeting for Worship to Attend to Business  
Second Month, Seventh, 2021 - held via Zoom**

Attendance: 44 before meeting for worship, 31 after

Friends approved the agenda for meeting for business.

Friends approved the minutes of Tenth Month.

Wanda Wyffels (Abington) followed up on Abington's minute of reconciliation that was introduced during Tenth Month. Abington had a threshing session, and it was decided that there should be more education at the meeting about the Lenni Lenape. Meeting members had Zoom calls and consulted several websites and have greatly increased their understanding of Lenni Lenape history and current culture. Abington MM plans to have another threshing session to talk through the language of the minute, and they will give an update at the next quarterly meeting.

Anne Hill (Gwynedd) thanked Abington for doing the research. When Mary Ellen McNish (Byberry) asked if Abington has connected with Boone in Salem Quarter Wanda confirmed that Boone had been a facilitator. Nancy Gold (Upper Dublin) said that she would like to know more about Lenni Lenape in our area, and Wanda suggested that she look at the Abington MM website for more information:

<http://www.abingtonmeeting.org/anti-racism-what-can-i-do/>. Susan Makler (Abington) reiterated that Adam DePaul's presentation was especially inspiring. His presentation can be found on the Lenni Lenape of Pennsylvania website.

Rebecca Cratin (Plymouth) reminded Friends that Abington Quarter members and attenders can seek funds from the Home and Care Committee if they are facing difficulties due to Covid-19.

Joe Schatz (Plymouth) gave an update about JFC/MSFC. They have recently sent a survey to families about possible alternatives to a residential program. These possibilities include a day camp or a virtual camp. With the results of the survey, the Youth Programs Support Committee will determine the best program. Stephanie Rushie (Horsham) pointed out that they will be looking for a location if they decide to do something in-person.

Karen Shanoski (Norristown) reported about the Nominating Committee's recommendation for Abington Quarter Clerk. The committee includes Karen, Kelly Green, Tom Peterson, and Rebecca Cratin. They wrote a job description for the role of Clerk of the Quarter, which states that the clerk will serve a three-year term, which may be renewable. The committee interviewed several people and had a clearness meeting with Kelly Green when he offered himself for the role.

Friends approved Kelly Green to be the next clerk of Abington Quarter.

Karen asked that Friends consider joining the Nominating Committee. Their next task is to find a person to serve as Assistant Treasurer. Bob Reiff (Unami) clarified that the person would serve as assistant to Tom Armstrong, the current treasurer, and may transition into the treasurer role after a year.

Maia Tapp (Abington) shared from *Prayer of the World*, a meditative poetry and photography presentation that she has created with her husband. She shared the section entitled “Earth Speaks.” (Her creative community’s website: [www.prayeroftheworld.org](http://www.prayeroftheworld.org).)

Clerk’s Note: Following this meeting, Maia confirmed that specific requests for repeating her presentation be sent to her personally: [kathtapp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kathtapp@sbcglobal.net)

Friends joined meeting for worship with Norristown Monthly Meeting.

Friends resumed meeting for business after a break.

Susan Vorwerk (Upper Dublin) gave a presentation about the work of the Communications Committee of the Quarter. They are focused on inreach and outreach through websites, banners, and social media. They are discerning how to move forward post-Covid with the technology we have gained during this time. She shared the structure of Byberry’s monthly meeting website and said that she plans to add an Abington Quarter calendar feed. Her full communications presentation is here:

<https://1drv.ms/p/s!AjgcMuL2eLaUghQNZ58a18fAxALS?e=8cRiam>.

Anne Hill expressed her appreciation for the work of the committee, and Greg Stockbower (Upper Dublin) appreciated Susan’s work for Upper Dublin and Byberry. Susan reiterated that communications are vital to grow our membership and that the committee working together accomplishes much together. Carol Ritting (Gwynedd) echoed the sentiment that Zoom has been so useful to bring people together across distance. Rebecca Cratin encouraged meetings who have not yet updated/created websites to do so. Susan agreed and urged meetings to take the first step and talk with the Communications Committee. Art D’Adamo (Gwynedd) shared the link for Gwynedd’s website under construction ([Gwynedd.ChurchInsight.com](http://Gwynedd.ChurchInsight.com)).

Ana Santoyo (Norristown) said that she is struggling with how to use social media and wondered whether the Quaker community offers tech support. Susan responded that each person on the committee takes one aspect of digital communication and shares it with everyone else. She said that FGC is soon going to do a trial of social media training programs, which can help people personally and in their meeting work. Ann Dillard (Abington) raised concerns about Facebook and also said that we can develop our own education programs. She offered to make some video tutorials. Nancy Gold also expressed reservations about Facebook, and Art D’Adamo suggested looking at the instructional

videos offered on YouTube. Carolee Duckworth (Plymouth) pointed out how technology enabled her to attend Plymouth from her home in North Carolina. She, along with another distant Friend in New Mexico, has since become a member.

Amelia thanked the Communications Committee for all its work.

Mary Ellen McNish (Byberry) shared that there are preliminary conversations among Upper Dublin, Byberry, and PYM about growing membership. Our current health and economic crises offer an opportunity for outreach. Byberry was successful in obtaining a six-figure grant from a Quaker foundation to help them with outreach. Mary Ellen suggested that Upper Dublin could apply to the same foundation, and that outreach could flow to the Quarter. She emphasized that the goal is not to grow our meetings so that they are simply big but because they are so important to their communities. Kelly Green asked what the grant asked for specifically, and Mary Ellen said that the grant was for \$100,000 over two years to hire Susan and create programs for inreach and outreach, with a goal of increasing members by five and attenders by ten. Susan pointed out that the grant also addresses updating meeting technology such as replacing physical answering machines with voicemail. She gave the example of someone leaving messages with meetings throughout Philadelphia to arrange for a memorial service and getting a human voice—Susan's-- on the fifteenth call. Friends expressed support for pursuing this grant. Mary Ellen encouraged Friends to look at the fund's website: the Thomas and Mary Shoemaker Fund, <http://shoemakerfund.org/>.

Amelia reviewed concerns of young adult Friends about maintaining membership as they move away physically from their home meetings. PYM is currently surveying people about the meaning of Quaker membership. The designation "member-at-large" is being considered.

Rebecca Cratin raised the concept of membership as a covenant relationship. You are making a promise to the community and expecting a reciprocal commitment. It is a joyful burden. Ann Dillard mentioned the idea of accessibility, a broader idea than having ramps and handicapped bathrooms. Accessibility in learning involves making material equally available to people who learn differently or have vision/hearing impairments. Within this conversation, it might mean adapting membership for Friends who can't commit to being in a physical location. Ana Santoyo pointed out that, while Zoom can increase accessibility to some, there are others who can't or won't use Zoom. Susan Makler urged us to be open to seeing where an individual is at a given time.

Karen Shanoski wondered whether we need to have geographically based meetings. Meeting for worship might be conducted by a neighborhood, by age range, by interest, for example. This might offer more opportunities to invite people in. She mentioned her own sons who feel very much that they are Friends, yet they have joined no meeting. Ann Dillard suggested that we could have interest groups. Kelly Green said that this was

discussed at Norristown. Members there said that membership offers a way of accepting and supporting an individual on their journey. Every member is equal. They said that they support attenders just as they lift up members.

Carolee Duckworth said that it is unusual for her to join a meeting that already exists. She has been a part of a Quaker worship group that became a meeting. When she moved, she started another Quaker worship group that became a meeting. There is a strong feeling of being a member of a monthly meeting, but there is also the possibility of a group starting and evolving into a meeting. Mary Ellen McNish spoke about this statement in the Young Adult Friends' minute, "The model of membership for life no longer speaks to us." Young Adult Friends are asking to have membership in a yearly meeting instead of in a monthly meeting. Byberry members are concerned that this will weaken monthly meetings and feel that it would be more useful for PYM to support the vitality and growth of monthly meetings. Ana Santoyo wondered what young friends need, and Mary Ellen pointed out the minute put forth by young friends is on the yearly meeting website. Dan Turner (Abington) observed that most of the newer members who have joined at Abington are former members of different faith traditions. He appreciated that when he first attended Abington, he felt comfortable that he could attend without commitment. Susan Vorwerk said that the Young Adult Friends would like to participate at the yearly level, and they will not have the same commitment to maintaining our buildings. She does not think that everyone has to be a member in a meeting, but she hopes that everyone can feel a kinship to the community. People should be able to find a home that resonates with them in a meeting. Karen Shanoski wondered if part of the reason Young Friends resist joining a monthly meeting is because of our process. She observed that this minute was brought forward in July 2019, and we are actively discussing it almost two years later.

Anne Hill said that the Quarter's Worship and Ministry Committee has talked about this minute. She noted that very few meetings have a critical mass of teens and college students. If young people are joining at the yearly meeting level to work on the testimonies, this might be part of our necessary evolution. We can think about how to support them. Judy Inskeep (Gwynedd) pointed out that the minute also addresses young friends who live at a distance from any monthly meeting. Joe Schatz shared how important the Youth Programs have been to his staying connected to his monthly meeting, particularly the inter-generational component of JFC and MSFC.

Cheryl Zabinski (Gwynedd) asked what age is Young Adult Friends. Amelia clarified that it is ages 18-35.

Russ Bishop (Gwynedd) appreciated the concepts of covenant and accessibility and said that Gwynedd has been discussing how to reach out to members who are not joining virtually.

Amelia expressed appreciation for all the contributions to this discussion and noted that this conversation will continue.

Friends closed with a moment of worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Menton  
Recorder

Amelia Diamond  
Clerk