

Quaker Travel Documents and Endorsements

This resource prepares meetings to receive and endorse documents carried by Friends traveling between meetings

Letters of Introduction

A letter of Introduction is a document carried by Friends traveling between meetings. It identifies the bearer who is traveling as a Friend or regular attender in good standing. It also provides an opportunity for one meeting to send greetings to another meeting.

Fictional example of a Letter of Introduction

Date

Dear Friends,

Please welcome [John Smith] as he travels among you. [John] is a member of our meeting in good standing. We send you our loving greetings, and commend [John] to your loving care during his journey. We hold [John] in our prayers and trust that God will richly bless your time together.

In Friendship,
Clerk's signature

Clerk

[Sapling] Monthly Meeting, [Woodland] Yearly Meeting

Minutes of Travel

A “travel minute” is a formal document from a monthly meeting on behalf of a Friend, indicating that the bearer has the approval of the meeting to travel in the ministry.

A minutes of travel usually:

- Sends greetings to Friends being visited
- Asks those Friends to give loving care to the visiting Friend
- Confirms that the visiting Friend is a member of the meeting and has the approval of the meeting to travel in the ministry
- Introduces the Friend and the reason for the travel
- Affirms the gifts of the traveling Friend
- Closes with a prayer that the travel is blessed

A minute of travel is endorsed by the clerk with approval of the meeting. If the Friend is traveling outside of the yearly meeting, it is also appropriate for the letter to be approved by the quarterly meeting and signed by its clerk, and then by the yearly meeting and signed by its clerk.

Fictional example of Minute of Travel

Date [14 Ninth Month, 2016]

Dear Friends,

Loving greetings from Friends at [Harbor] Monthly Meeting in [Great Lakes] Yearly Meeting. We commend to your loving care Friend [Allen Broucker], who is a member of [Harbor] Monthly Meeting, and will be traveling in the ministry this next year visiting with Friends.

[Allen currently serves on the on the Ministry and Counsel Committee of our meeting, and is recording clerk of Great Lakes Yearly Meeting. He is also a representative of our yearly meeting to the Central Committee of Friends General Conference where he serves he serves on the Finance Committee.]

[Allen] has shared with the meeting his leading to [travel in the ministry among meetings which are seeking to deepen their practices of spiritual nurture among Friends.] After careful consideration the meeting has found unity to approve this minute of travel.

We hold [Allen] in our prayers and trust that God will richly bless your time together.
On behalf of [Harbor] Monthly Meeting,

Signature, clerk

[Harbor] Monthly Meeting, [Great Lakes] Yearly Meeting

Endorsements of Travel Documents

When a meeting receives a visitor who holds a travel document, it is the job of the clerk or of a designated Friend to endorse the document.

An endorsement includes a few sentences written at the bottom of the letter.

If the document is a letter of introduction, the clerk may use the endorsement to send return greetings to the visiting Friend's meeting.

If the document is a travel minute recommending a Friend and their ministry, the clerk may use the endorsement to:

- Send back greetings to the visiting Friend's own meeting

- Comment on the visit
- Explain how the visit was received by Friends
- Report on the faithfulness of the traveling Friends to their work, to God, and to their meetings

Endorsement is one way of holding the traveling Friend accountable for the right use of his or her gifts.

Endorsed travel minutes should be returned to the Friends, who may carry them to other meetings, before returning to their own.

Examples

Here are some examples of endorsements:

“_____ shared her gift of ministry with _____ Friends Meeting. She offered thoughtful and practical tools and facilitated a safe environment for openness and communication.”

“It was a blessing to have _____ with us for our annual meeting retreat. We thank you for supporting him in his ministry and look forward to the possibility of his being with us again.”

“We spent a delightful weekend with (Visitor 1) and (Visitor 2). By the end of our weekend (Visitor 1) and (Visitor 2) had helped us see ourselves more clearly – our strengths, our apparent priorities, and some ways we could grow. They did this work by joining us in activities that brought out various facets of ourselves, until we felt like they were part of us.

At the same time, they kept their observant stance so that they could take advantage of the teachable moments throughout the weekend. We were truly blessed by their time with us and we thank you for all the support you give to (Visitor 2) throughout the year.”

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