

**FIFTEENTH STREET MONTHLY MEETING
HANDBOOK**

**Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends
15 Rutherford Place
New York, NY 10003-3705**

18th January 2007

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A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE FIFTEENTH STREET MONTHLY MEETING

The first Friends who debarked in Manhattan on August 6, 1657, were met with fear, retaliation, and deportation by the New Amsterdam civil authorities, but Friends were meeting in each other's homes by 1672, and in their first meeting house in Green Street (now Liberty Street) in 1696. Increasing membership led Friends to form a second meeting in 1776 with its own meeting house in Queen Street (now Pearl Street). These were both preparative meetings, part of the Flushing Monthly Meeting, until 1795, when they first formed the New York Monthly Meeting.

Friends sold the early meeting houses and built three others, in Rose Street, Hester Street, and Henry Street (this one, in 1805, made of brick!), moving in successive stages northward with the general shift in middle class residence in Manhattan. After the 1828 separation - a division over temperament, theology, and religious and organizational practices - the Orthodox Friends met in the Henry Street meeting house until they had one built at 144 East 20th Street in 1859. The Hicksite Friends, who had met in Rose and Hester Streets, had the meeting house and Friends' Seminary built in East 15th Street at Rutherford Place in 1860.

Friends in the 20th Street and 15th Street meetings came together in the 1950s and later sold the 20th Street meeting house (now owned by the Brotherhood Synagogue). The merged meeting was a preparative meeting (as each had been since a schism in 1828) under what was then the New York Monthly Meeting, which also included the Brooklyn, Morningside Heights, and Washington Square Preparative Meetings. Each preparative meeting held its own business meetings, but only the monthly meeting approved membership and marriage matters and dealt with finances. In 1974, each of the preparative meetings, including 15th street, became a monthly meeting, and the New York Monthly Meeting became the New York Quarterly Meeting, of which 15th-streeters are members. In 1977, the Washington Square meeting, held since about 1960 in New York University rooms at 2 Washington Square North, ceased and was laid down. From 1978-82 and again in 1988 Friends in Staten Island formed what is now the Staten Island Executive Meeting. Morningside Friends

met for years in and about Columbia University beginning in 1960 and now meet in rooms at The Riverside Church. The Flushing meeting, housed in a building in Northern boulevard dating from at least the early 1700s, formed in the mid-1600s during Dutch colonial times, and was a part of the Long Island Quarterly Meeting till affiliating with the New York Quarterly Meeting in 2002. A programmed meeting, with pastor, sermons, and singing began to take place under the care of Fifteenth Street in the 1970s and became the Manhattan Monthly Meeting in 2000.

The present New York Quarterly Meeting meets for worship, business, and some socializing on a Sunday towards the end of January, April, July, and October. Business includes the ownership and care of the Schermerhorn street (Brooklyn) and 15th street meeting houses, the cemetery within Brooklyn's Prospect Park, Friends' Seminary and the Brooklyn Friends' School, the meeting's shareholdings and related matters, and other matters of common concern among Friends in the city.

The New York Yearly Meeting, comprised of about 3,500 Friends in 70 meetings in New York, northern New Jersey, and western Connecticut, operates with administrative offices downstairs at 15 Rutherford Place. Each July, several hundred Friends in the yearly meeting have a week of fellowship, worship, and business at Silver Bay on Lake George in the Adirondack Mountains.

The Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting, although registered with the United States Internal Revenue Service to be deductible for income-tax purposes, is not incorporated. New York Quarterly Meeting is tax-exempt in New York State and tax-deductible as a religious not-for-profit corporation.

HOW TO GET THINGS DONE IN THE MEETING. If you have recently come to meeting please come to the monthly meeting for business, pick up a copy of the monthly newsletter, and listen to announcements after meetings for worship to begin to get acquainted with the meeting, its members, and the way we do things. There are all kinds of committees and

appointments, noted in this HANDBOOK, that take on various meeting tasks, and you are welcome and urged to meet them, to go to committee meetings, which are open except for those of Budget and Collections, Ministry and Worship, Pastoral Care Committee, and Nominating, and to attend some of the small groups of Friends who meet socially from time to time.

HOW TO REQUEST MONEY TO DO WHAT THE MEETING

APPOINTED YOU TO DO. The meeting has agreed that, when a Friend has a leading, he or she should test the leading with an appropriate standing committee or a clearness committee. If those Friends support the Friend's leading, whenever needed and possible, the clerk of that committee will contact the monthly meeting treasurer to discuss possible and appropriate sources of funds. After that, the clerk of the supporting committee will ask the monthly meeting to authorize the treasurer to disburse the funds for the activity. When the business meeting has approved a minute about the disbursement, the committee clerk or the Friend requesting the money can submit a requisition reimbursement form to the treasurer to receive the money.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU NOTICE A NEEDED REPAIR OR

IMPROVEMENT IN THE BUILDING. Please contact a member of the property committee, who will convey the message or request to the quarterly meeting office. If there is fire, leak, or sudden mess to be cleaned that you cannot take care of yourself (mops, brooms, toilet paper are usually in a closet called 4 off the lobby at 15 Rutherford place), please get

a hold of the caretaker on duty. Fire or smoke in the buildings will set off the fire alarms as well.

The meeting as a whole may carry on any of its functions, or it may appoint committees of its members for particular tasks. Friends are urged to give due weight to the recommendations of their committees. A meeting neither casually rejects nor impulsively revises the proposals of its committees.

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES. The Nominating Committee must seek an individual's consent before proposing that person's name for appointment. This consent signifies a willingness to work with others and to be regular in attendance and responsible for a fair share of the work. The Nominating Committee proposes nominees at one meeting for business; Friends decide upon the names at the next monthly meeting. Appointees hold their appointments until their terms expire or until the monthly meeting releases them from service at their request. When an appointee is released from service before his or her term expires, another person may be appointed to fill out his or her unexpired partial term. The meeting may at times ask appointees to continue serving until the meeting names replacements.

To insure rotation in committee membership and to allow all members and attenders an opportunity to serve, committee members may serve no more than two full three-year terms or five one-year terms consecutively., except that a committee member appointed to serve out a partial term may subsequently serve two full three-year terms. This may happen when

another Friend has been released from service before the expiration of the term.

Friends who request release from committee or other service before their terms have expired should write the requests to the monthly meeting clerk.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION. Committees should meet as soon as possible in January after the December appointment of new members. The convener of a committee is the first person named on the appointment roster. At the first meeting the committee names a clerk, and the new clerk:

- reports that name to the monthly meeting clerk, the Nominating Committee, and the quarterly meeting general manager;
- directs the business at committee meetings;
- informs the quarterly meeting's general manager of the committee's need for space to meet;
- notifies committee members of future meetings;
- holds a mailbox key and picks up mail to the committee from the appropriate mailbox in the hallway at 15 Rutherford Place;
- prepares agenda;
- authorizes expenditures from the committee's budget by the treasurer; and
- electronically submits agenda items and scheduled reports to the clerks by the Saturday before the monthly meeting;
- presents committee business to the monthly meeting.

Committees indicate their financial needs for the coming year to the Budget and Collections Committee, who propose budgets for the monthly meeting's

approval and the treasurer's administration. Committee requests for additional money during the year go at once to the Budget and Collections Committee, who consider and may forward them to the monthly meeting.

COMMITTEES RAISING MONEY. The monthly meeting has agreed that all gifts from money-raising activities associated with the meeting should go to the budget and collections committee's depositor for deposit to the monthly meeting's account, and all associated expense receipts should go to the treasurer for reimbursement. Friends organizing money-raising activities must post signs that clearly identify the specific beneficiary of all donations.

REPORTS OF APPOINTEES AND COMMITTEES to the monthly meeting. We ask Friends whom the monthly meeting has appointed to particular tasks to report periodically. Friends will want to know:

- how often the committee met;
- what the committee discussed;
- what tasks did they set out to perform, and what were any leadings;
- what problems and difficulties the Friends faced;
- how the work went on;
- when they held or attended special programs, meetings, or work, and where;
- anything else describing how the committee or the appointment worked;
- how they spent any allocated money;
- what questions and concerns came up and any guidance needed.

To include such information will serve to educate the hearers and readers, if the report goes to the newsletter, and to bring others into the concerns.

WHO MAY ATTEND. Most meetings of committees are open to monthly meeting members and attenders, but people not appointed to the committee who wish to attend should ask the committee clerk in advance. A visitor's concerns for a committee should come to that clerk's attention well before a committee meeting. Because of the nature of their work, the committees of Budget and Collections, Ministry and Worship, Pastoral Care, and Nominating, and at times other committees, conduct their business among themselves unless they specifically invite others.

Our monthly meeting for business is open to anyone to attend, however, at certain times, the clerk may determine that a matter up for consideration needs the comments and agreement of only the members of the meeting.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES. This handbook offers a description of the responsibilities of officers and committees of the Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting. In the future, the meeting may decide to change some of these committees and appointments, or set up new ones as the need arises. Queries for Friends to raise at such times are:

- Do we really need this committee or appointment?
- Have we approved of a minute that accurately describes the committee's or appointee's responsibilities, membership requirements, and the appointment process?

- Have we set up a schedule for the committee or the appointee to report to the meeting?
- Have we allotted enough money for the tasks at hand?

The monthly meeting encourages any member with a pressing concern to which the meeting can make a unique contribution to bring it to the monthly meeting. If Friends support the concern, the monthly meeting may ask the Friend who brought it forward to gather a small *ad hoc* committee to pursue it under the meeting's guidance, or the monthly meeting may appoint such a committee, with or without nominations from the Nominating Committee. The meeting encourages Friends to meet other members before presenting concerns to see what light they may shed on the matters.

While we welcome and encourage the participation of attenders as well as members in the life of the meeting, membership is necessary to be one of the meeting's officers, our meeting's representative to the fall and spring sessions of the New York Yearly Meeting, and a member of the Pastoral Care, Ministry and Worship and Nominating committees, or persons handling the meeting's money. We count sojourning members of the monthly meeting as full members for participation's sake: we may make exceptions, from time to time, to this rule.

All agenda items and scheduled reports should be given or sent by mail or electronically to the clerks by the Saturday before the monthly meeting, and the recording clerk must have them by the night of the monthly meeting to complete the minutes.

The CLERK. The monthly meeting appoints a member as clerk for a one-year term to:

- prepare monthly meeting agenda (for which, as necessary, items be submitted in writing);
- follow or adapt the calendar of dates for committee reports as set forth in the Handbook, notifying committees in advance;
- direct any external communications he or she receives in an appropriate way;
- carry out the meeting's instructions on all matters to do with its business and sign all documents on behalf of the meeting, unless the meeting directs someone else to take care of certain matters;
- report monthly meeting activities to each quarterly meeting.
- avoid expressing opinions about matters to come before the monthly meeting except with the meeting's permission.
- The clerk is an *ex-officio* member of all committees of the meeting and may attend at her or his discretion, except for Nominating Committee sessions devoted to the nomination of a clerk.

The RECORDING CLERK. The monthly meeting may appoint a member to serve as the recording clerk for a one-year term to:

- record in minutes the unity reached on matters of concern and read the minutes for the meeting's approval;
- keep an accurate set of minutes, dated and signed, showing agreements reached and all matters discussed;
- send copies of minutes to people or committees affected;

- type, copy, and index minutes.

The recording clerk, like the clerk, is not to express opinions about matters before the monthly meeting.

The **ASSISTANT CLERK**. The monthly meeting may appoint a member to serve as the assistant clerk for a one-year term. The clerk and the assistant clerk agree on the assistant's duties, which may be to:

- help set the agenda;
- read reports and letters aloud;
- send letters after the monthly meeting for business;
- communicate about membership changes with the recorder and other meetings to whom transfers are going or from whom they are coming.

Like the other clerks, the assistant clerk does not express opinions about matters before the monthly meeting.

The **TREASURER** is a member whom the monthly meeting appoints for a one-year term to:

- receive and disburse funds as the meeting and its committees authorize;
- keep the account books of the meeting;
- make quarterly summaries to the monthly meeting of financial transactions and an annual summary in January after all the transactions of the previous year have been made;
- provide reports to the Budget and Collections committee, of which the treasurer is a member *ex officio*.

The **RECORDER**. Accurate and detailed records constitute the vital statistics of the membership of the meeting. The clerk, the Committees of Pastoral Care and Ministry and Worship, committee clerks, and any other meeting member should bring additions or changes affecting membership records to the recorder's attention. The monthly meeting appoints a member as recorder for a one-year term to:

- keep records of all membership matters including births, parentage, changes of marital status, new members, transfers, deaths, other removals, and up-to-date mailing addresses; this information may come from mailings, the monthly meeting clerk, the Pastoral Care Committee, the monthly meeting, or members who are in touch with others;
- summarize new information and forward it as needed to the clerk, the Pastoral Care, Budget and Collections, and Nominating Committees;
- inform the Pastoral Care and Ministry and Worship Committees when young Friends reach the ages of 18 and 25;
- keep records in accordance with the yearly meeting's form and records, and inform the yearly meeting office of membership changes as they occur;
- keep copies of all memorial minutes and monthly meeting minutes;
- keep an up-to-date list of members;
- report the previous year's membership changes to the monthly meeting in January.

The **ASSISTANT RECORDER**. The monthly meeting may appoint a member to serve as the assistant recorder for a one-year term. The recorder and the assistant recorder agree on the assistant's duties.

The **HISTORIAN**, whom the monthly meeting appoints for a one-year term, does research necessary to keep a history of the monthly meeting. The historian may tape oral history interviews with long-term members of the meeting in conjunction with the oral history project of the yearly meeting's Records Committee. Other functions of the historian are to encourage the monthly meeting to send its official records to the Friends' Historical Library, at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, in a timely manner and to answer inquiries relating to the history of the monthly meeting.

The **AUDITOR**. The monthly meeting appoints a member in December to conduct a review of the financial records of the meeting to:

- assure that contributions are properly accounted for;
- confirm that expenditures have been appropriately authorized;
- confirm the mathematical accuracy of the financial records;
- report to the monthly meeting upon completion of the audit (recommended for March).

The **E-MAIL CONTACT**. The monthly meeting appoints a member to serve as an e-mail contact for a one-year term to:

- monitor often the e-mail received through the Internet and the monthly meeting's web page;

- forward mail quickly to appropriate committees and persons;
- inform the clerk or other appointed persons when a message needs an immediate reply;
- reply promptly to routine inquiries about the monthly meeting;
- report to the monthly meeting in October (along with Phone Contact and Committee Room Committee).

The **PHONE CONTACT**. The monthly meeting appoints a member to serve as a phone contact for a one-year term to:

- monitor often the phone messages;
- forward messages quickly to appropriate committees and persons;
- inform the clerk or other appointed persons when a message needs an immediate reply;
- reply promptly to routine inquiries about the monthly meeting;
- report to the monthly meeting in October (along with E-mail Contact and Committee Room Committee).

The **ARTS COMMITTEE**, consisting of 5 people whom the monthly meeting appoints to staggered three-year terms:

- nurtures and showcases the literary, visual, musical, and performing arts within the Religious Society of Friends for purposes of Quaker expression, ministry, witness, and outreach;
- offers spiritual, practical, and financial support as way opens;
- organizes artistic programs (publishing, gallery visits);

- coordinates with other monthly meeting committees interested in artistic support, as invited (peace, vigil, shelter concert, etc.);
- promotes and facilitates the monthly meeting's participation in ArtQuake, the New York City Friends' art festival
- reports its activities in March to the monthly meeting.

The **BUDGET AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE** consists of six members whom the monthly meeting appoints to staggered three-year terms.

The committee:

- sends letters to members and attenders to encourage contributions in support of the approved budget;
- appoints one of its monthly meeting members to receive and deposit promptly all collections;
- appoints one of its monthly meeting members to keep files of contributions and other records;
- reports to the recorder and the Pastoral Care Committee changes of address and other pertinent information;
- sends to the Pastoral Care Committee a list of members who have not contributed in the previous three years;
- recommends and monitors the financial policies, procedures, and practices of the monthly meeting;
- keeps the monthly, quarterly, and yearly meeting treasurers informed about the monthly meeting's financial state and ability of the meeting to meet future contributions to the quarterly and yearly meetings;

- receives from the quarterly meeting's audit and budget committee each fall the figure of the monthly meeting's share of the contribution to the New York Yearly Meeting, if that is the yearly meeting's procedure;
- prepares a budget for first presentation to the monthly meeting in December and for final approval in January.

- The **COMMITTEE ROOM COMMITTEE** consists of up to four members whom the meeting appoints for one-year terms to:
 - set up and arrange the committee room and office;
 - allocate shelf and cabinet space for the monthly meeting's committees and appointees to use;
 - see what budgetable technological equipment Friends would like to use in the room, get it, and set it up to work;
 - keep up and replace all such machinery, when needed;
 - supply the room with office supplies as needed;
 - arrange with Ministry and Worship and the Pastoral Care Committee to provide and change outgoing messages on the monthly meeting telephone;
 - manage and update the monthly meeting computer web site or have someone do these things;
 - communicate with the New York Quarterly Meeting office about the scheduling of meetings and other use;
 - publicize the room's availability to meeting members and attenders for their use to support Friends' activities;

- arrange for the room's cleaning, trash removal, and painting or to do it themselves;
- report to the monthly meeting in October.

The **DEATH PENALTY ABOLITION COMMITTEE** consists of four to six people whom the monthly meeting appoints to one-year terms to:

- inform themselves and the monthly meeting of capital punishment issues, in part by keeping a space on the bulletin board, submitting items to the meeting's newsletter, and providing literature for the library;
- initiate, support, and join acts of witness against the death penalty, including publicizing and supporting programs already under way in the New York Quarterly Meeting, and encourage other Friends to do so;
- raise prayerful concern for those whose lives are spiritually injured or cut short by sentences of death, including those who support the death penalty and collaborate in imposing it;
- seek ways to educate and witness to repentance and reconciliation and against revenge, testifying against any nation's claim to the right to kill or torture;
- report to the monthly meeting in May.

The **DIRECTORY COMMITTEE** consists of two people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms. From the monthly meeting's membership rolls and mailing lists, which they also maintain, and through direct inquiry, they compile and have printed by April of each year a directory of members and attenders, as well as Friends' groups and institutions. Money

for printing comes from the DIRECTORY-printing seed-money restricted account; the Library Committee is responsible for selling the directory, whose proceeds go into the DIRECTORY-printing seed-money restricted account.

The **GREETING COMMITTEE** consists of eight or more people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms to:

- greet people arriving for meetings for worship;
- encourage prompt seating in the meeting room;
- welcome newcomers, answer their questions about the various meetings for worship, children's classes, and other activities, and talk to them during social hour;
- communicate attenders' questions about and interest in the meeting to the Ministry and Worship and Pastoral Care Committees;
- join the Pastoral Care Committee to help people who need assistance to get to and from meeting;
- help other committees maintain neat and orderly displays of literature and announcements on tables and bulletin boards in the entry-way to the meeting house;

The **HANDBOOK REVISION COMMITTEE**, whom the meeting appoints of two or three meeting members from time to time, compiles minutes and previous HANDBOOK entries to present to the monthly meeting for approval for printing for distribution at cost.

The **LIAISON FOR CHILD CARE**, a member whom the monthly meeting appoints to a one-year term, arranges for child care during meetings for worship, monthly meetings for business, called meetings, and other meetings and occasions as the monthly meeting directs. The liaison accounts for the work of any caregiver and, where needed, pays that person from monthly meeting budgeted funds. The liaison attends meetings of the Religious Education Committee.

The **LIBRARY COMMITTEE** consists of three to nine people whom the monthly meeting appoints to one-year terms. At least one appointee must be a meeting member to handle receipts, disbursements, and accounts. The committee:

- maintains the existing library;
- makes all acquisition decisions;
- obtains books for sale at the book table and keeps a separate accounting of this activity;
- publicizes the library and encourages its use;
- helps arrange, with the Committee on Ministry and Worship , for example, any discussions centered on particular books;
- reports to the monthly meeting in November.

The **MINISTRY AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE** consists of six members of the monthly meeting whom the monthly meeting appoints to staggered three-year terms. The committee fosters the spiritual growth of the meeting

membership, enhances religious life and fellowship, and arranges and strengthens corporate worship. They:

- oversee everything to do with the quality of the meetings for worship, including eldering, the cultivation of inspirational, helpful, and prophetic speaking during those meetings;
- set up worship, discussion, and study groups for personal growth and spiritual development;
- arrange for the instruction of attenders about the meeting and the Religious Society of Friends;
- draw up the yearly State of the Meeting report, covering the whole life of the meeting, and, after soliciting the Pastoral Care Committee's concurrence or recommendations for change, present a first draft of it to the monthly meeting in January, and a draft for approval in February;
- meet with the Pastoral Care Committee regularly;
- nominate members as representatives to the New York Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

The NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND COMMITTEE. Two or three members whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms function as advisers to the editor, who gathers and edits news items and produces the meeting newsletter, a monthly calendar of meetings and other occasions and news about members, attenders, New York Quarterly and Yearly meetings, and other Friends' organizations.

The **NEW YORK CITY FRIENDS IN UNITY WITH NATURE**

COMMITTEE consists of four people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms to:

- provide timely forums within the Religious Society of Friends to help Friends become informed on urgent environmental and conservation matters;
- plan special programs throughout the monthly meeting;
- report to the monthly meeting in July.

The **NOMINATING COMMITTEE** consists of six members whom the monthly meeting appoints for staggered three-year terms. The Pastoral Care committee proposes two nominations for this committee to the monthly meeting each November. Members are eligible for one reappointment.

- The Nominating Committee nominates all officers, committees, and representatives of the meeting unless the meeting specifically approves of a minute that declares a different means of nomination. In making its recommendations the committee should:
- take into account its general knowledge of the meeting's members and attenders;
- consider what qualities are needed for the various positions;
- try to involve all members and regular attenders in the meeting's life;
- confer with proposed nominees, clarifying what the service or appointment in question entails, before they bring names to the monthly meeting for appointment.

The monthly meeting hears a preliminary list of nominations in November and acts on them in December. Appointments take effect immediately upon the monthly meeting's approval.

The Nominating Committee should keep an up-to-date committee list and nominate people to fill vacancies as they occur for approval at the following monthly meeting.

Nominating Committee members may neither nominate themselves nor serve as members of Ministry and Worship, the Pastoral Care Committee, clerk, recording clerk, or assistant clerk.

When a committee vacancy occurs that, after diligent efforts on the part of the Nominating Committee, no person will fill, the Nominating Committee reports this to the monthly meeting. If a large number of vacancies impede a committee's work, the monthly meeting should consider discontinuing the committee or assigning its function to another existing committee.

Nominees to monthly, quarterly, and yearly meeting positions must be members and attenders who are attending worship regularly and taking part in the monthly meeting. The Nominating Committee should consult committee clerks about members' attendance and participation and not renominate infrequent attenders and non-participants.

In March the Nominating Committee suggests meeting members for the monthly meeting to nominate to the succeeding New York Quarterly Meeting.

The **PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE** consists of nine monthly meeting members or sojourning members whom the monthly meeting appoints to staggered three-year terms. Their function is Pastoral Care of the meeting, so they:

- communicate with all members at least once a year;
- contact inactive members (those who have not contributed financially to meeting for the last three years or those with whom the meeting has lost touch) with a concern to restore their interest;
- encourage members to take part in the meeting's work and assist new members to become active in the meeting;
- encourage all members to care for one another, foster the well-being of those ill or incapacitated, arrange for visits and material help when needed, and help Friends to and from meeting who need it;
- assist in reconciliation when differences arise between members of the meeting, calling for assistance from the quarterly or yearly meeting if necessary;
- arrange clearness committees to meet with members who request them;
- make decisions on requests for financial assistance from the monthly meeting's funds to attend conferences;
- extend, where appropriate, an invitation to become members to those who seem ready;
- consider requests for membership or for transfer or termination of membership and present these to the monthly meeting for action, giving the request from the applicant, other monthly meeting, or member to the clerk of the meeting (since the meeting can consider such a request only with the letter or certificate present), and nominate for meeting approval Friends to welcome new members;
- consider requests by adult members of the meeting for membership of their minor children;

- communicate with young Friends reaching the age of 18 and again at 25 to inquire if they wish to reaffirm their commitment as members;
- consider requests for marriage under the care of the meeting before they present these to the monthly meeting for action, and assist in the conduct of weddings under the meeting's care;
- assist families in funeral and burial arrangements and the conduct of memorial meetings under the meeting's care; prepare memorial minutes when necessary for circulation to the quarterly and yearly meetings;
- The Pastoral Care Committee also:
 - nominates two members for service with the Nominating Committee at the November monthly meeting and nominates to fill vacancies when necessary;
 - meets regularly with the Committee on Ministry and Worship .

The **PEACE COMMITTEE** consists of six to eight people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms. Any other interested members, attenders, and visitors are welcome to attend committee meetings. The committee makes visible the historic peace testimony of the Religious Society of Friends on relevant current peace and social action issues. The committee's charge to help Friends transform faith into action may lead them to:

- educate committee members and the meeting about local, regional, and national peace issues through information from many sources, including the American Friends' Service Committee and the Friends' Committee on National Legislation;

- maintain a peace bulletin board in the meeting house;
- act on peace issues when and as the monthly meeting specifically directs;
- organize letter writing campaigns, encouraging members to write to elected officials asking them to take appropriate actions;
- prepare letters for monthly meeting approval to send to government officials;
- raise money for specific social concerns;
- participate in quarterly and yearly meeting peace activities;
- inform the meeting of diverse peace activities and encourage the membership to participate;
- cooperate with other pacifist groups in appropriate activities and conferences;
- support training for Friends in military and draft counseling;
- promote military anti-recruiting efforts and counter military recruiting efforts with truthful information;
- help individuals test and fulfill leadings concerning peace issues;
- meet at least once a month;
- The committee reports to the monthly meeting in April.

The **PROPERTY COMMITTEE** consists of six people whom the monthly meeting appoints for staggered three-year terms to:

- formulate policies to guide the New York Quarterly Meeting general manager in the upkeep, workings, and scheduled use of the premises at 15 Rutherford Place;

- provide oversight to the quarterly meeting general manager in property maintenance, repair, and security and budgeting for these matters, long-range planning for capital improvement (including the costs), scheduling the regular use and rental of the meeting's property, collecting appropriate financial contributions from space users, record keeping, and general administration;
- plan for capital improvements: list possible projects, decide in June on which should be done in the next calendar year, arrange with the general manager to receive bids for them; attend the November meeting of the quarterly meeting's Audit and Budget Committee with their requests for capital expenditure so that the Audit and Budget Committee can decide on which requests to put into the budget that they recommend to January's quarterly meeting; apprise the monthly meeting of the progress of such projects as they may affect its members;
- keep track of the various projects they have chosen to undertake (major repairs are done during summers due to use of the building by Friends' Seminary and others; smaller ones are done during other school vacations);
- receive and act on written requests for use of rooms in the meeting house and 15 Rutherford place (which should indicate date, time, space requested, nature and sponsorship of the occasion, number of people involved, and any other pertinent information) in consultation with the quarterly meeting general manager, as needed;

- review proposed operating expenditures and approve the general manager's annual budget in October before forwarding it to the quarterly meeting's Audit and Budget Committee;
- review maintenance and capital spending for the buildings every three months;
- meet representatives of the Friends' Seminary building management to plan maintenance and long-range capital improvements, the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's property committee, and other committees as needed;
- with the agreement of the quarterly meeting general manager, appoint one of its meeting members to carry a set of keys to the building and code for the security alarm system for emergencies and to assist caretakers.

They report to the monthly meeting in February and October and to the quarterly meeting once a year (see the New York Quarterly Meeting HANDBOOK) about their work and about their plans for space use, for building improvements, painting and decorating, carpeting and lighting, and for budgeting and allocation as they and the general manager think about them so as to bring Friends along in their thinking and to receive suggestions early on.

The **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE** consists of all the First day School teachers and three at-large members who are not involved in the day-to-day functioning of the children's classes. The monthly meeting appoints three people to be at-large members for staggered three year terms.

The at-large members appoint the teachers in June for one year terms that begin in September. The committee:

- sets up a curriculum for each of the children's classes and may draw upon the yearly meeting Religious Education Committee's resources;
- meets once a month to plan programs and to solve problems, inviting parents to attend (with child care provided) to express their feelings, ask questions, and make proposals regarding the children's classes;
- reports to the monthly meeting in June.

The **RETREAT COMMITTEE** consists of up to three members whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms to ascertain whether Friends wish to hold a weekend retreat (in or out of town), and, if they do, to:

- arrange for a program, accommodations, food, child-care, transportation;
- collect and expend money to carry out such gatherings;
- receive requests for financial help to attend such gatherings and forward them to the Pastoral Care Committee, who make the allocations;
- report to the Pastoral Care Committee, the treasurer, and the monthly meeting each month during the process of organizing the retreat.

The **SHELTER COMMITTEE** consists of up to nine people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms. The committee assures the smooth operation of the meeting's overnight shelter for people who are homeless. Their charge is to:

- provide a safe and caring environment, a comfortable place to sleep, something to eat, and friendship for up to twelve men and women who

are homeless - our shelter guests - coming from a neighborhood center every night of the year;

- train and schedule volunteers to staff the shelter;
- arrange potluck meals and invite people interested in becoming volunteers;
- communicate with the neighborhood center about the needs of shelter guests;
- provide a list of suggestions where gifts of clothing, etc., may be made to people who are homeless (but not accept or distribute clothing);
- keep informed of New York City's Department of Homeless Services' policy that may affect the shelter;
- keep up and clean the shelter closet, the equipment and appliances, and arrange for extra up-keep and cleaning;
- keep the shelter stocked with linens and other supplies that the guests may need;
- occasionally solicit money for extra equipment or food for shelter guests;
- maintain financial records and pay many shelter bills directly or with the help of or reimbursement by the monthly meeting's treasurer;
- communicate with the quarterly meeting office about space and personnel needs;
- report to the monthly meeting in May.

The committee also disseminates information to shelter volunteers and to the monthly meeting when appropriate about seminars, training programs, and community action groups concerned with the problems of homelessness.

The **SOCIAL HOUR COMMITTEE** consists of three or more people whom the monthly meeting appoints for one-year terms, and helpers pro tem. They arrange the social hour after meetings for worship on Sundays and may engage a person to do the work.

REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FALL AND SPRING SESSIONS OF THE NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING. The New York Yearly Meeting requires the monthly meeting to appoint at least one member as a named representative. The monthly meeting may appoint an additional member for each 75 members or major portion thereof. The representatives serve staggered three-year terms beginning at the end of the summer session of the yearly meeting.

They ought to read the section in **FAITH AND PRACTICE** to do with the yearly and representative meetings. Their function is to attend the fall and spring business sessions of the yearly meeting and to report to the monthly meeting in May and January on actions taken at them.

A representative unable to attend a particular meeting must notify the monthly meeting in advance so that the meeting may name an alternate.

The **LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS' COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION**, whom the monthly meeting appoints for a one-year term, collects information from the Washington office to print in the meeting's newsletter, post on the lobby notice board, and announce after meetings for worship.

The **LIAISON TO POWELL HOUSE**, whom the monthly meeting appoints for a one-year term, posts program announcements from Powell House on the lobby notice boards and in the meeting's newsletter.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE EVENTS OR RELIGIOUS COALITIONS. Individual Friends support a variety of organizations and coalitions that work for a just and peaceful world. From time to time, this monthly meeting holds the same view of a situation, and takes the same action, that non-Friends' organizations take. In cooperation with other organizations, the meeting may co-sponsor speakers, concerts, weekend conferences, or even fund-raising dinners.

However, our unity is strained when we, as a monthly meeting, undertake long-term connections with outside organizations for which we cannot take responsibility. Therefore, as a general rule, we rely on individual Friends to enter and leave coalitions as their judgment requires and to bring us reports of their activities so that we, as a meeting, may take timely action of our own. If a member or members of the meeting feel a strong leading that the meeting should be part of a coalition that holds to principles central to Friends, the clerk will be happy to furnish a list of procedures that must be fulfilled before such a proposal can be brought to the monthly meeting (as approved in a minute of April, 1984).

TRAVEL AND CONFERENCE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR APPOINTEES. The monthly meeting pays expenses for people who travel under appointment as its representative or for one of its committees. It also

provides financial assistance for individuals (especially our children) to attend Friends' gatherings.

The annual monthly meeting budget includes a fund for travel and conference attendance based on estimates for the coming year's travel provided by committees and the meeting clerk. The clerk authorizes outlays from this fund for meeting appointees, and committee clerks do the same for committee appointees.

Only the Pastoral Care Committee approves and authorizes financial assistance from budgeted funds and other moneys for people who need it to attend conferences, other meetings, and the monthly meeting's retreats.

Appointees may receive a travel advance (applications available from the Pastoral Care Committee) or have the treasurer reimburse them after travel.

Friends should submit applications for advances to the authorizing clerk, who sends the approved application to the treasurer to issue the appropriate check.

To receive reimbursement afterwards, applicants must keep all receipts to submit with their request. Appointees who wish to contribute their expenses to the meeting may file a report of expenses for the meeting's use in planning future budgets.

Appointees should apply for travel advances as early as possible. Requests for financial assistance to attend a conference should go to the Pastoral Care Committee two months before needed, but no later than the last scheduled meeting of that committee before the conference.

We expect Friends who use monthly meeting funds to attend conferences or other meetings or activities to speak afterwards to the monthly meeting about those activities and their interest in them.

HOW TO REQUEST REIMBURSEMENTS FROM THE MEETING.

The Budget and Collections committee has a form for this. Pick it up from the treasurer or on the committee room computers. Please attach your receipts or bill to a form and give, e-mail, or mail it to the treasurer at the monthly meeting address on the cover. Committee clerks or members who need regular reimbursement may fill out repetitive information on the form electronically or in writing, and make copies. For an advance, the clerk of the committee that supports the advance should give the form to the treasurer, clearly specifying the person who should sign for and receive the money. If the advance is not from the committee's budget, the committee minute approving the advance should also accompany the form. Once the funds from the advance are used, the recipient must give the receipts to the treasurer. If the recipient has not used all of the money advanced, the Friend must return the remaining money to the 15th street Monthly Meeting.

A WORD ABOUT THE NEW YORK QUARTERLY MEETING. The Friends' meetings in New York City have formed the quarterly meeting to own and manage the Society's buildings, schools, cemetery, and trust funds. Consequently, most building matters – room-scheduling, repairs, supplies, and upkeep – need the knowledge of the quarterly meeting office general manager's staff so that activities in the buildings may take place without hardship to others working there and to the benefit of participants.

BUILDING HOURS AND HOLIDAY CLOSINGS AT THE MEETING HOUSE AND 15 RUTHERFORD PLACE: The meeting house is generally open for Friends to hold meetings for worship, committee meetings, and to do

the meeting's work on Sundays between 9 AM and 3 PM (the caretaker's regular hours), later to accommodate sessions of the monthly meeting and quarterly and yearly meetings when these take place at 15th street. (On Sundays between 4 and 7 PM, the Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship has use of the meeting house for their own meetings, so we try to be out of their way when they are meeting.) It is also generally open for the above meetings and work by appointment with the quarterly meeting office on Mondays-Fridays between 5 and 9:30 PM, when the caretakers must clean up and start to leave, and on Saturdays between 9 AM and 4:30 PM, the caretaker's cleaning and leaving time. When Friends' Seminary is in session, generally weekdays from 7 AM till 5 PM and sometimes on Saturdays, Friends must get the say-so of the quarterly meeting office to use or visit the meeting house.

The office building (15 Rutherford place) is generally open for Friends to meet and do the meeting's work during the same hours as the meeting house and Monday-Friday after 9 AM. To accommodate Friends and others with jobs in the building, please schedule your use well beforehand with the quarterly meeting office. If the quarterly meeting office is not in charge of booking the room – perhaps in the Friends' Seminary or the AFSC or yearly meeting offices - you have in mind, a staff member there will be able to tell you whom to call.

The buildings are generally shut on 8 to 10 federal or state holidays during the year.

There is an alarm system throughout the buildings that is set to keep equipment secure, and unscheduled use of various rooms may set off the system and create consternation where none was intended.

HOW TO SCHEDULE A ROOM AT THE MEETING HOUSE AND 15 RUTHERFORD PLACE. To schedule use of a room, please telephone the quarterly meeting office at 1-212-777-8866 and leave a complete message or write it to leave under the door at the quarterly meeting office. For uses not part of the meeting's work there are fees, which the office staff will make clear to you. Before you call the office, please read the section just above on **BUILDING HOURS AND HOLIDAY CLOSINGS.**

HOW TO ARRANGE FOR A MEMORIAL MEETING. To schedule the use of the meeting house for a memorial meeting for someone who has died, please telephone the quarterly meeting office, as noted just above in **HOW TO SCHEDULE A ROOM AT THE MEETING HOUSE.** The Pastoral Care Committee and the clerk of the monthly meeting are available to help Friends who wish to hold a memorial meeting as a meeting for worship. Please make arrangements for memorial meetings as early as possible.

HOW TO ARRANGE FOR A WEDDING. The New York Quarterly Meeting office will schedule a wedding that is not under the care of the meeting in the same manner as any other gathering in the meeting house. Please see the instruction above on **HOW TO SCHEDULE A ROOM AT THE MEETING HOUSE.** Please begin to make the arrangements as much beforehand as you can to make sure that the meeting house will be free when you would like it and so that the office staff will be able to assist.

Marriage under the care of the meeting is different from merely using rooms in the meeting house. The monthly meeting considers requests for marriage under its care in accordance with state-sanctioned marriage

procedures in the New York Yearly Meeting book of discipline, FAITH AND PRACTICE. Since these procedures include interviews with clearness committees, and since the Pastoral Care Committee appoints these committees, couples requesting marriage should expect that there will be some weeks or months before the monthly meeting approves the requests. The monthly meeting clerk and the Pastoral Care Committee are available to help. The clerk has the explicit directions to change New York State marriage licenses to conform to Friends' procedures and usage (to list the members of the oversight committee of the marriage rather than a single officiator, for example).

The monthly meeting will consider requests for marriage between persons of the same gender under the same procedures used for marriages between men and women, though current federal and state laws do not recognize these marriages.

THE CEMETERY. The quarterly meeting's cemetery is in Prospect Park, in Brooklyn, and available for Friends' and others' burial by arrangement with the quarterly meeting's cemetery committee and the quarterly meeting office. Visitors are welcome by appointment beforehand through the Cemetery Committee at **718/768-8298**.

We encourage Friends to use this handbook as a guide. Work that needs to be done must get done, within or without a committee, and we must understand that truth and wisdom will not be bound into a book, a guide, a minute, or a single message.

CALENDAR OF REPORTS AND APPOINTMENTS

Committees and appointees make recommendations to the business meeting as they are ready. They may also offer an annual report, which is often the main source of information for the meeting about a committee's work.

Committees should take care to report fully on their work. A report ought not merely publicize a committee's accomplishments; it should also examine its shortcomings and suggest ways to overcome them.

JANUARY	Recorder's statistical report for the previous year; representatives' report from fall's yearly meeting session; treasurer's annual report; state of the meeting report (first draft); Budget and Collections committee presents final draft of the proposed budget.
FEBRUARY	Property Committee report; state of the meeting report (final draft).
MARCH	Auditor's report; committee reports: arts and nominations for the April quarterly meeting.
APRIL	Peace Committee report; treasurer's first quarter report, including collections to date.
MAY	Representatives report from spring's yearly meeting session; committee reports: death penalty abolition, shelter.
JUNE	Committee report: religious education.
JULY	Treasurer's second quarter report; committee report: Friends in unity with nature.
AUGUST	None. Monthly meeting does not meet in August.

- SEPTEMBER** Appointment of hospitality committee for the fall yearly meeting session (if held at Fifteenth Street).
- OCTOBER** Committee report: property, committee room and e-mail contact; treasurer's third quarter report, including collections.
- NOVEMBER** Committee report: library; nomination of officers, committee members, representatives; Pastoral Care recommendations for the Nominating Committee.
- DECEMBER** Approval of officers, committee members, representatives; appointment of auditor; appointment of hospitality committee for the January New York Quarterly Meeting (if held at Fifteenth Street); Budget and Collections committee presents first draft of proposed budget.