

**Chestnut Hill Monthly Meeting
Worship and Ministry Committee**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017
Submitted January 2018**

Overview

We see our work as focused around three main areas:

- Coordination and support of organized worship experiences, including caring for the quality and depth of worship and of vocal ministry.
- Deepening the spiritual life of the community through opportunities for fellowship and education.
- Supporting the ministries of meeting members.

Highlights of this year have included:

- Offering a class on spiritual journeys.
- Organizing a Seekers' Corner in the library.
- Developing a safety plan for emergencies during worship.
- Taking on sponsorship of Katy Hawkins's Shine yoga program.
- Providing support for Sarah Sharp's trip to India and Nepal.
- Developing an information card about meeting for worship.
- Holding a committee retreat focused on the spiritual implications of white supremacy.

As we look forward into the new year, some areas of focus are:

- Investigating opportunities for worship through music.
- Exploring the potential of worship as activism with EQAT.
- Discerning our committee's role in the anti-racism work outlined in our Meeting's recent minute.

We are grateful for the support and input of the Meeting community and we invite your continued involvement in our work.

Full Report

Our most visible presence in the Meeting community is our coordination and support of organized worship experiences. As part of this:

- A designated committee member holds the meeting for worship in the Light on First Days, and takes responsibility for closing worship, welcoming guests, and making announcements. We take this role very seriously and strive to be spiritually grounded, welcoming, and informative, while also being clear and concise.
- As part of our care of meeting for worship, we have developed a safety plan to address any emergencies that might develop in the worship room.

- Additionally, we coordinate one or more Friends to “serve as elder” at meeting for worship for business, holding those proceedings in the Light.
- Other regular worship experiences under our care include midweek meetings for worship (coordinated by former committee member Esther Gilbert) and early worship on 4th First Days (coordinated by Jon Landau and former committee member Beth Zelasky). We are profoundly grateful to these Friends who support the work of our committee by facilitating more and various worship opportunities.

Our less visible, but no less important role is to ensure the quality and depth of worship in all of these worship opportunities. We devote a portion of each committee meeting to discussion of recent vocal ministry and at times we resolve on taking steps to address concerns. Although we have at times engaged individuals about their vocal ministry, in general we have preferred to focus on deepening vocal ministry through deepening the spiritual lives of the community in general through opportunities for spiritual fellowship and education. As part of this effort:

- We offer Friendly Companions for new members in the first year of their membership.
- We coordinate and support the formation and continuance of Spiritual Friendship groups.
- We work with the Adult Class Committee to identify topics and speakers that will inform and deepen the spiritual lives of community members. This year these included classes on spiritual journeys and on spiritual chanting.
- We work with the Outreach Committee to serve as resources at Seekers’ Meetings.
- We worked with Library Committee to organize a “seeker’s corner” in the library.
- We have developed an information card to encourage more grounded vocal ministry during worship for newcomers and seasoned Friends alike, including queries to test when to speak. Currently these cards are available in the foyer, and next year we will be investigating other ways to bring these queries to the attention of our community.

We also take very seriously our role in supporting the ministries of individual meeting members. Support and accountability from the Meeting is a key factor in our members’ discernment and development of their ministries. We are always looking for opportunities to lift up the ministries of those in our community. To this end:

- We continued a support committee for one Meeting member with weighty responsibility in a Quaker organization.
- This year we undertook sponsorship of Katy Hawkins’s Shiné Yoga classes, in recognition of their spiritual nature and to support her ministry.
- We sponsored a weekend gathering of the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent in August just after many of them had returned from a wonderful trip to Ghana.
- We coordinated a clearness committee and travel minute for Sarah Sharp to ensure that her recent trip to India and Nepal could receive funding support.

It is our hope that service on this (or any Meeting) committee will enrich the spiritual lives of committee members by deepening our relationships with each other and with the

Divine. We believe that progress on our own spiritual journeys is essential to our support of the spiritual life of the community. In support of this goal:

- Our monthly committee meetings begin with worship around the query: “How are we called to serve the Meeting?”
- We also hold a committee retreat annually to build community and deepen our thinking around a timely topic; when we met in June, we discussed white privilege and its impact on our spiritual lives.

As we look forward into the new year, some areas of focus are:

- investigating opportunities for worship through music,
- exploring the potential of worship as activism with EQAT, and
- discerning our committee’s role in the anti-racism work outlined in our Meeting’s recent minute.

We are grateful for the support and input of the Meeting community and we invite your continued involvement in our work.

Committee members include:

Rebecca Heider (clerk)	Jeff Perkins
Lilly Basgall (since 3 rd Month)	Craig SanPietro (since 3 rd Month)
Ellen Deacon	Edward Sargent (until 3 rd Month)
Steve Elkinton	Janaki Spickard-Keeler
Loretta Lucy Miller	Beth Zelasky (until 3 rd Month)

Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting Emergencies, Safety and Unforeseen Disruptions During Meeting for Worship

**Worship and Ministry Committee
Draft, January 2018**

Worship and Ministry Committee is responsible for maintaining the safety and well-being of members and attenders during meeting for worship. This might include a health emergency, the unexpected need to evacuate the room, or any other disruption that needs to be handled during meeting for worship.

Our committee has already identified a group of members/attenders with medical or psychological training that can be called on in an emergency and checked that they are willing and able to step forward if needed. *We will update this list and reconnect with everyone on it in January of each year.*

It is already part of the protocol for the committee member responsible for closing meeting to make themselves aware of which of the people on this list are in the room and where they are sitting in case they are needed. *We will review this protocol and the list with new committee members each spring.*

Medical emergencies: Should someone need medical attention, members of W&M will be attentive to any disruption—going to the person to confirm their need if necessary. If assistance is needed, the W&M member(s) will ask for medical assistance. W&M members would then take direction from the medical professional. This might be calling 911 or other specific action. Other members of W&M may be called upon to shepherd those attending the MfW. This may mean clearing the room—if requested by the medical resource person—or asking that Friends sink back into silence and hold the individual and the medical resource person in the Light. *We have discussed the possibility of doing a role-playing exercise where we practice our response to various situations.*

Non-medical disruptions: Should there be a disruptive message that cannot be carried or “absorbed” within the silence in meeting, one or more members of W&M would seek to make eye contact with one of those identified to assist with psychiatric/psychological concerns. The goal would be to get a sense of whether intervention may be warranted or advised. The resource person and the W&M member may choose to step outside the meeting room briefly to confer whether further action—and what it might be—is required.

If some type of intervention is advisable then the resource person and a member of W&M may invite the person to step out of meeting to engage in dialogue. Should this occur, one or more others of W&M would stay in meeting and shepherd the meeting through the end of the worship time.

In the event that someone is identified as troubled through advance notice from Care and Counsel or from another source, members of W&M may choose to sit near them in meeting to provide support.

We believe it is both important and useful to have a sense of there being a “team” of people who can assist in such circumstances, who are all willing to step up and take action—this would relieve some of the uncertainty and could help minimize confusion should an emergency occur. *We recommend that a core group of people beyond our committee (in addition to the medical/psychological experts) be identified and trained on basic safety procedures (how to call 911, where the First Aid kit is, etc.) so that there are always a few of these people prepared to step up on any given Sunday. For the purpose of safety in the worship room, this group might include members of Care and Counsel, the safety coordinators, and meeting officers, among others. This group should have an annual training session to review protocols and discuss possible situations. Obviously, such a group would be useful beyond incidents in meeting for worship.*