

**Pacific Yearly Meeting
Ministry and Oversight Committee
Report to Annual Session 2015**

The role of Ministry and Oversight Committee is to help foster the spiritual life and good order of the Yearly Meeting, by offering assistance and counsel and endeavoring to make the Annual Session a fulfilling experience for all participants. Upon request, Ministry and Oversight committee may assist any Pacific Yearly Meeting (PYM) committee, Meeting or individual of the Yearly Meeting. The committee also considers and reports on any other matters brought to it by the Yearly Meeting, Representative Committee, Quarterly or outlying Meetings.

Annual Session 2015

We are reminded of our collective need to come back to the center of love from which all good work grows. The theme of the Annual Session, knitting together our spirituality and our activism, continues the work of bringing us to more kindness, more patience.

The Committee is preparing to report on the state of the society at Annual Session after reviewing the State of the Meeting reports received from most PYM Monthly Meetings and some Worship Groups. The state of the society report will be posted on the PYM website following Annual Session.

Other activities for which Ministry & Oversight Committee is responsible at Annual Session include Meetings for Worship, Worship Sharing, Meeting for Memorials, the Buddy program, intergenerational activities, and Family Night. Ministry & Oversight Committee is present and active in almost all formal activities offered at Annual Session.

Annual Session Attendance Assistance

This year in particular, we have identified a number of difficulties with the attendance assistance process. We will be working on these procedures over the next year to be able to provide a smoother process for applicants and clearer guidelines for decision-makers for Annual Session 2016.

Quarterly Meetings

Ministry and Oversight Committee is laboring with the concern that trying to maintain three levels of organization (Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly) is stretching our community. We would like to explore, together with the Quarterly Meetings, where there may be duplications of efforts and what could we do to alleviate this? We are also exploring what the Committee's role is in supporting the Quarterly Meetings.

Ministry and Oversight Subcommittees

Electronic Communications: The subcommittee is working on defining its scope, policies and procedures for PYM's web presence, performing an audit of the PYM website, and thinking about security issues. This subcommittee also serves as support for our PYM web developer.

Experimentation and Implementation: The focus of the subcommittee is now the structure of the Yearly Meeting organization.

Racial Justice: This subcommittee has been working with Paula Palmer on her workshop for Annual Session and also on the subcommittee's interest group on helping to heal the racial divide.

Representative Support: This subcommittee serves as a resource for Meeting representatives and building community within this group.

Visiting Friend: The current work of this subcommittee is preparing to support Roena Oesting as Visiting Friend in 2015 and 2016.

If a subcommittee has completed its work, isn't making progress on its work, or is not serving its purpose, it should be laid down. The Ministry & Leadings and Support for Distant Meetings subcommittees were laid down this year. Ministry & Oversight Committee has taken on this work.

Visiting Friend

Ministry & Oversight Committee approves Roena Oesting (La Jolla) to travel among the Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups of Pacific Yearly Meeting as Visiting Friend under this program from July 2015 to June 2016. She will be supported by the Visiting Friend Subcommittee during her service. Announcements will be made at and following Annual Session encouraging Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups to schedule visits.

Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy

Many Monthly Meetings are being required by insurance companies to draft related policies. Ministry & Oversight Committee has reviewed and revised the policy and procedures of the Yearly Meeting, which in addition to strengthening and caring for our Yearly Meeting community, will be available to help Monthly Meetings as they address this task. The draft policy was built from researching many Yearly Meetings and Monthly Meetings, as well as consultation with PYM's children's, Junior Yearly Meeting adult, and youth programs committees, and several other individuals with related expertise. It is posted on the PYM website together with this report and will be presented at Annual Session. If there is clear support for the policy in its current form, it will be brought for the approval of the body, otherwise time will be given for further consideration and the policy will be brought to the 2016 meeting of Representative Committee for approval and formal adoption by the Yearly Meeting.

Ministry and Oversight committee meetings

The committee meets in person three times a year and daily during Annual Session. We have adopted a practice of spending time with local Friends through adult education sessions, Meeting for Worship, and other social interactions. We met this past fall in Santa Rosa and offered a session on leadings for Redwood Forest Meeting. Our winter meeting was hosted by Orange Grove, where we talked about the Yearly Meeting, the committee, and the Annual Session. In late spring we met at San Jose and participated in a general discussion regarding the health of San Jose Meeting. Ministry and Oversight Committee has benefited greatly from listening to these Friends and invites other Meetings to consider hosting a meeting of Ministry and Oversight Committee.

Annual Session 2016

Ministry & Oversight Committee held in its discernment this year a concern regarding how we might be able to make the Annual Session a more accessible experience for a larger portion of our community. We considered the geographic and demographic diversity of our Yearly Meeting, the difficulty Friends may face in attending Annual Session due to work, other commitments, and cost, among other factors.

A proposal of three alternate configurations for Annual Session was presented at the 2015 meeting of Representative Committee. The proposal was prepared on consideration of the work of the former Futures Committee and the Experimentation & Implementation Subcommittee. Following the meeting of Representative Committee, the proposal was amended and the input of the community was sought through the Monthly Meetings. Several Meetings and individuals responded.

As a result, Annual Session will have a different configuration for 2016 and 2017 as an experiment, following which the experience will be evaluated to identify the benefits and drawbacks. A decision will then be made as to whether we continue with the new configuration, experiment with a different configuration, or simply return to a mid-July Monday to Saturday schedule.

Annual Session 2016 will be held June 17 - 22 at Walker Creek Ranch
Annual Session 2017: June 16 - 21 (proposed)

This means a Friday to Wednesday configuration. The schedule will undergo some changes to potentially offer the keynote address, Meeting for Memorials, introduction of business, and listening sessions on the weekend, while other traditional Annual Session activities, such as worship sharing, interest groups, bible study, and transformative Quakers, will be offered throughout. This configuration also means the Yearly Meeting community we will be together for First Day Meeting for Worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Bronwen Hillman
on behalf of PYM Ministry & Oversight Committee