

PYM Ministry and Oversight Committee Report to Representative Committee

February 2017

Ministry and Oversight Committee (M&O) cares for the spiritual health of Pacific Yearly Meeting, supports the Presiding Clerk and plays a significant role in holding the Annual Session, among other things. We are currently laboring with various pieces of work with, and for, the Yearly Meeting. We are working to actively engage with an increasingly broad range of officers and committees in order to maintain a good sense of the spiritual health of our community. We are also paying special attention and care to right relationships in our community, within Meetings, amongst committees, and amongst our committee. We appreciate Friends approaching us with input, feedback, questions, and concerns. We sense the Yearly Meeting shifting to considering how we become more spiritually grounded and are doing this work within our committee through increased time in contemplative activities.

Based on some feedback, and in order to hasten our ability to meet our legal requirements, M&O is taking a new approach to the Abuse Prevention Policy. The Policy has been under development for several years to both support our community in preventing and dealing with sexual misconduct in the Yearly Meeting, particularly at gatherings, as well as meet requirements placed on us by our insurance company. This new approach involves focusing, in the first instance, on the elements of the policy that relate to mandatory reporting and our legal requirements, including how we select and vet applicants to work with minors. The rest of the policy that was drafted over the last couple of years will be kept and reconsidered as part of a document that focuses on right relationships within the Yearly Meeting. Splitting the document into two allows the separation of legal requirements from broader questions about how we encourage and respond as a community when people behave in ways that make others uncomfortable. The Abuse Prevention Policy is in draft form and will be taken to a number of committees and officers, including Junior Yearly Meeting Adult Committee and Children's Program Committee, before being brought to Annual Session. M&O has yet to consider a process for how the second document, which will focus on right relationships, might be developed and welcomes suggestions. Having the legal requirements taken care of in the initial Abuse Prevention Policy will allow the community time to develop the right relationships document.

The process outlined in our report to Annual Session 2016 regarding affiliation with Friends General Conference is still underway and we will report further at Annual Session 2017. We welcome any questions Friends have regarding affiliation.

M&O has drafted a restructure and right-sizing proposal for the Yearly Meeting administration. The changes proposed reflect, to a large degree, the current operating structure, taking into account, for example, committees that exist in name but do not meet and are yet to be laid down. M&O shared this proposal with Nominating Committee in the first instance and, with their feedback and support, will consult widely with other PYM Officers and Committees.

The M&O Co-Clerks have met with the Quarterly Meeting clerks and the clerks of Quarterly Meeting M&O committees as part of an ongoing series of coordination calls established by the Presiding Clerk. They found this to be a meaningful engagement to address issues that arise across the whole Yearly Meeting and look forward to further calls and working together across our common challenges.

M&O is working with the clerks of the PYM Peace & Social Order Committee, as well as others, to discern the practice of "Minutes of Concern" and how they can best reflect our custom of minutes that capture the spirit stirring amongst Friends.

M&O has reflected on the use of the word "oversight" in our committee's name. Given the pain that the words "oversight" and "overseer" cause some current, and potential, Quakers, we have resolved to work towards changing our name. We are actively discerning a name to recommend that the Yearly Meeting approve for our committee that does not include the word "oversight" and that will most accurately describe our committee and the work that we do.

The Visiting Friend Sub-Committee of M&O is currently laid fallow. We welcome the revival of this work should Spirit move Friends in this direction and are maintaining records in such a way that will make this easy when the energy arises once again in our community. The other sub-committees of M&O include the Electronic Communications Sub-Committee (ECSC) and Racial Justice Sub-Committee which are very active in service to the Yearly Meeting. ECSC is examining and improving annual session registration processes and developing a long-term vision for a new website for the yearly meeting. The Representative Support Sub-Committee is currently without members (other than an M&O liaison) and is being carefully considered by M&O.

One of the roles of M&O is to support the Presiding Clerk. We have worked with Diego regularly and supported his discernment in a variety of ways, particularly related to Annual Session. We are also considering how others can be supported in their challenging work to serve our Yearly Meeting community including through spiritual accompaniment.

The workload of M&O is diverse and significant in quantity. There are many issues of concern that M&O is aware of and is seeking to address. We are prioritising our work and trust Friends will hold us in the Light as we address outstanding work and concerns. We continue to actively support, and discern how we care for, the Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups of PYM that are not affiliated with a Quarterly Meeting.

We encourage all Monthly Meetings to write State of the Society Reports as outlined in Faith and Practice and submit them to the Quarterly Meetings. PYM M&O looks forward to building the PYM State of the Society Report based on the contributions from Monthly Meetings.

We continue our practice of holding our in-person committee meetings at different Meetings through Pacific Yearly Meeting. This has brought us much joy, connection and service to the Yearly Meeting.

We request that Meetings submit names for inclusion in the Meeting for Memorials, to be held at Annual Session 2017, by July 1st.

Faithfully submitted by
Kylin Navarro and Sally Kingsland, Co-Clerks