

PYM Ministry and Oversight Committee Report to Representative Committee

February 2018

Ministry and ? Committee (M&?) 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 using a question mark instead of the word “Oversight” in our name because of our ongoing discomfort with being identified as ‘overseers,’ a term that became associated with slavery, and because we do not believe it accurately describes what we do. After Annual Session 2017, where unity was not found to change our name, we continue to wrestle with what we might be called. We are grounding that search in a deeper understanding of who we are and what we do.

M&? is working closely with our Racial Justice Subcommittee to identify and tenderly address systemic racism and implicit bias within our Yearly Meeting. We are fully supportive of the Racial Justice Subcommittee and grateful for their ongoing efforts. As M&? we are also taking on some aspects of this important work where we believe our engagement is required. Facing the institutional racism embedded in our community is critical to our capacity to be a loving, relevant, and thriving group into the future. We will do well to follow Isaac Pennington’s advice: “Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.”

We continue to work with the Monthly Meetings under our direct care to understand their needs and support them to the best of our abilities. As we have expressed in the past, we are rarely able to do as much as we would like in terms of pastoral care for these Monthly Meetings due to distance and the other responsibilities we carry.

We are in the process of creating a Respectful Relationships Subcommittee to carry forward the work on Abuse Prevention and creating the complementary “Respectful Relationships” document. We will be contacting child and youth related committees regarding this work and subcommittee.

Providing adequate support for religious education has long been a struggle for the Yearly Meeting. At our most recent meeting, M&? recognized that the education of our children and spiritual deepening of our adults is essential if we are to thrive as a religious community. We found growing energy among our members and renewed our commitment to create a vital Religious Education Subcommittee. We will hold an interest group on this topic at Annual Session. We encourage anyone with passion or interest in religious education, for children and/or adults, to contact us.

We encourage all Meetings to consider the [additional information](https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/2018/documents/pym-committee-reports/ministry-and-oversight-committee-docs/additional-information-about-fgc-affiliation-and-a-request-for-monthly-meetings-to-season/) (found here: <https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/2018/documents/pym-committee-reports/ministry-and-oversight-committee-docs/additional-information-about-fgc-affiliation-and-a-request-for-monthly-meetings-to-season/>) that we circulated at the start of February 2018 regarding potential affiliation with Friends General Conference (FGC) and to come to Annual Session 2018 ready to discern the question of affiliation. We note that FGC is currently focusing its energies in areas we see are critical to the health of Pacific Yearly Meeting including racism, spiritual deepening, religious education, and how to become more welcoming Meetings.

We have prepared an [Evaluation Summary of Annual Session 2017](http://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Summary-of-Evaluations-of-Annual-Session-2017.pdf) (found here: <http://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Summary-of-Evaluations-of-Annual-Session-2017.pdf>) . We hope this is a useful contribution to the community in sharing what we learned.

Many meetings, in their State of the Meeting reports, talked about aging—aging meetings, and the challenges a meeting faces in supporting its aging members. In response to a request for support, M&? developed a short set of resources and queries regarding mental health and aging within Meetings. It will be posted on the Pacific Yearly Meeting website for all to access.

Last year an M&? working group contributed to Annual Session by organizing spiritual accompaniment for various Officers and Clerks with demanding roles and also ensured a grounding presence during worship. This work was well-received and M&? has now created an ongoing Eldering Subcommittee to continue providing for the Yearly Meeting in this way.

The transition of our Electronic Communication Subcommittee to the new Communications Committee began at Annual Session 2017 and continued rapidly. We have maintained communication and support during the transition period and are very pleased that they will be fully fledged as of RepCom. We are immensely grateful for their extensive, enthusiastic, and very useful work for the Yearly Meeting.

We continue to support the Presiding Clerk in his role through regular meetings and taking up concerns at our meetings. We have worked with Diego in creating a group to support him discerning the plenary agenda for Annual Session 2018.

We are using less of our budget than previous years due to extensive carpooling, which we acknowledge is not always possible but which we are glad to have been able to have done so far this year. Inspired by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee, we have also been using Pacific Yearly Meeting's Zoom account and cell phone teleconferencing capabilities instead of the Turbobridge account. This has further reduced our expenditure.

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