

Ministry and Oversight Committee Report to Representative Committee 2019

Ministry and Oversight Committee met at Honolulu Friends Meeting on the islands of Oahu and Hawaii February 15-19, 2019, drafting this report.

The Committee agreed that one of its major goals is to Support presiding clerk's ability to create, embrace and promote her vision for the annual session as expressed in the Call to Annual Sessions and in conversations with her. We wish to make our belief in continuing revelation something we have the courage to live personally and to act on as a faith community. Looking at some of the difficulties our community has had in turning faith into outward action, we are seeking ways to reframe the conflicts and challenges that arise in PYM from an experience of fear, scarcity, and conflict to one of love, abundance, and joyful action. Prophetic witness need not only point to what is wrong in the world but is most powerful when it proclaims a compelling vision of the blessed community we are working to create and encourages us to celebrate the steps we are taking toward that spiritual reality.

Ministry and Oversight Committee is committed to helping Pacific Yearly Meeting be a safe, welcoming and inclusive spiritual home for all people. We work to remove the barriers that keep people out of our community or limit their participation in several ways:

M&O has been actively addressing conflicts that have arisen in the last year, by working with individuals, committees, and meetings, including Junior Yearly Meeting Committee and Earthcare Witness. We are in the process of discerning the best way to conduct Family Night at annual session.

M&O is working with the Clerk on ways to enhance the dynamic of plenaries—making space for people to testify to transformations they have already experienced and celebrate the joys of that transformation as part of our discernment practices.

M&O sees racial Justice and inclusion as central to all our work and the work of every committee and meeting, not just something to be delegated to the Racial Justice Subcommittee. Every committee and meeting must faithfully ask themselves what is the impact of each decision on the process of becoming an equitable and inclusive yearly meeting. Aspiring to the creation and maintenance of safe, welcoming environments requires a commitment to changing practices that have systematically worked against diversity and equity.

M&O continues to look at FGC affiliation as one possible step toward enhancing our own spiritual depth, our ability to be a voice in the world, and recognition that we are part of a larger world of Friends. We continue to gather information and ask monthly meetings to continue threshing this issue in preparation for discernment at annual session.

M&O is working hard on enhancing communication and connection between Yearly Meetings, monthly meetings and worship groups. Members of M&O will be reaching out to meetings to schedule visits with monthly meetings and worship groups, especially those that are smaller, more isolated and that don't have anyone attending Annual Sessions or Representative Committee.

M&O continues to try to build an effective Religious Education Subcommittee to help meetings provide resources for the growth of members and attenders of all ages. The committee is also maintaining contact with Children's Program, Junior Yearly Meeting, and reaching out to support Young Adult Friends and their projects. There is no longer a formal YAF program so Yearly Meeting has an obligation to fully embrace the talents and leadership of Young Adult Friends in every aspect of our work.

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M&O continues to evaluate the weekend schedule experiment, attendance assistance for Annual Sessions, interest groups and their selection process, and Worship Sharing logistics. We are developing queries for Worship Sharing in consultation with the Clerk. We recommend that the keynote speaker be live streamed and that we distribute the Worship Sharing queries to Monthly Meetings so that Friends who do not attend Annual Session can still participate.

M&O is exploring alternative ways to pay for Annual Sessions and asked Finance Committee to also consider the possibility of adopting a “gift economy” or pay-as-led arrangement. Finances continue to be a barrier to participation, and a number of Yearly Meetings have been experimenting with this alternative, including New York, New England, Baltimore, North Carolina Conservative, North Pacific and Intermountain Yearly Meetings.

The Committee consists of Shayne Lightner (Santa Monica), Valerie Nuttman (Santa Cruz), Thistle West (Strawberry Creek), Gail Eastwood (Humboldt), Kylin Navarro (Berkeley), Elena Anderson (Redwood Forest), Jim Summers (La Jolla, Co-clerk) and Shan Cretin (Santa Monica), Co-clerk).