Pacific Yearly Meeting
Communications Committee
Report to Annual Session 2020

SUMMARY

PacYM Communications Committee has many tasks that call our attention. This year we have been led to nurture and grow the beloved community by developing a communications database, making updates to our website, and developing a plan to contract with an IT administrator. We also recommend the position of the Daily Miracle Editor be created, and have communicated this to Nominating and the Presiding Clerk.

REPORT

Dear beloved Friends:

Communications Committee (ComCom) began our committee ministry with an in-person retreat last October, where we worshiped on the spiritual basis for our work and discerned where we felt most called to put our energies. We became clear that the ministry of ComCom was to nurture and grow the "beloved community" primarily by facilitating communication within PacYM, during and outside our gatherings at Annual Session and Representative Committee. We also affirmed our belief that the spiritual work of the Yearly Meeting has been negatively impacted by the lack of infrastructure to support communication.

Over the year while we attended to the many tasks described briefly below, three rose to occupy most of our attention: implementing a new communications directory-database, contracting with an IT administrator, and updating our website. We also recommended to both Nominating and the Presiding Clerk that a new position be created, editor of the Daily Miracle, and that this person be ex-officio on ComCom. We are aware that the work of this committee far exceeds our capacity, and that we have not been able to give our full attention to several priorities such as developing a more active social media presence and setting up G Suite, a program that will allow us to create role-based emails. The position of Daily Miracle editor is distinct from other ComCom activities and is time limited; we think it could be easily separated from the regular work of ComCom.

Throughout the year, we heard Spirit speaking to us through tensions in our work. We worshipfully attended to the tension between getting things done and being led by Spirit, between our responsibility of data stewardship and our call to radical vulnerability, between striving for simplicity and being truthful about existing complexities.

Communications directory-database: At the Representative Committee Meeting (RepCom), Friends approved a budget augmentation for ComCom to begin implementing a communications directory-database and to hire an outside Quaker consultant, Espenshade Consulting, to help us with this process. We have opened an account with the non-profit version of Salesforce and have identified several different ways to import data into the system. We have identified 5 "early adopter meetings", including Orange Grove, Humboldt, Palo Alto, Apple Seed, and Claremont. We have discussed how ongoing maintenance will be handled, and are developing a procedures document. We will host an interest group at Annual Session to introduce Friends to our work, and to solicit input. We believe PacYM will need to establish the position of the "communications database manager," and have discussed how this might overlap with the position of Statistical Clerk. For now, we are recommending that Nominating identify a member of ComCom to serve in this position so that we can better understand the scope and needs of the role. We also updated our privacy and data breach policies to cover the communications database; this change was approved at RepCom. Over the next year, we plan to continue to work with Monthly Meetings to help them engage with the directory-database. We look forward to hearing from

Friends at the Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meeting levels about how the database can support their ministry.

Website: We migrated our website to a new, cheaper hosting service, and now have four Website Editors (George Mills, Sharon Gates, the YPC (Rebekah Percy), and Arthur Kegerreis) constituting the Website Content Team. We have made a number of changes to the website to more easily locate items, including reorganizing the navigation menus and installing a Google search box directly on the site. We are regularly updating information and making small opportunistic improvements. For example, the site now has a map of Meeting and Worship Group locations as well as updated links to PacYM-related social media groups. We had hoped to institute bigger changes guided by interviews of people actually using the site, but plans for interviews had to be shelved under the coronavirus lockdown. We also recently completed PacYM's qualification for a G Suite for Nonprofits account and will soon begin rolling out role-based email addresses at pacificyearlymeeting.org for selected committees and positions within PacYM.

We continue to make progress scanning historical PacYM plenary minutes. Minutes (and attached reports) are now posted on the site for most years 1947-1981 and 2001-present. We hope to have 1982 through 2000 completed by year's end. We encourage Friends to make use of this historical resource. There are many gems in there, including discussions of FGC and FUM affiliation across many decades, which not too many seemed aware of during our recent discernment leading up to affiliation with FGC.

IT administrator: Separately, we have prepared a detailed position description to contract with an IT administrator and have begun soliciting applications.

Our budget includes funding for implementing our communication directory-database, website maintenance/upgrades, an information technology consultant, an in-person committee retreat and Secretariat supplies.

Members of our committee include: Lawrence Alderson, Arthur Kegerreis, Allison Kirkegaard, George Mills, and Kate Watkins (Clerk). Sharon Gates (Assistant to the Clerk), Jan Tappan (Historian/Archivist), the IT Administrator (currently vacant), and Rebekah Percy (Interim YPC) are ex officio on the committee. DJ Bloom (Statistical Clerk) and a member of the YPCC have also participated in some meetings.