

## MINISTRY AND COUNSEL

### I. Purpose

- Ministry and Counsel Committee oversees and nurtures the spiritual and pastoral life of the Meeting community and supports Friends as they discern God's will in their lives. We seek to serve the Spirit by addressing the spiritual growth of our members and attenders as well as pastoral needs they may have.

### II. Responsibilities

- Oversight of Sunday morning and mid-week Meetings for Worship as well as the Worship Groups under our care. This includes recruiting people to be greeters, and persons with care of worship.
- Chose a query and advice from Faith and Practice and provide them to the person with care of worship, to be read in meeting the first week of each month.
- Carrying out appointed responsibilities for oversight of marriage, membership and other matters requiring Friends to reach clearness for themselves and the community.
- Oversight and implementation of a regular adult religious education program.
- Preparation of the annual State of Society Report and other official reports and correspondence with the wider Quaker community including Northwest Quarterly Meeting and New England Yearly Meeting.
- Keeping the relevant material on the website up to date. This includes material on the home page, material about Meeting for Worship, and general information about Quakers. When changes are needed, provide updated content to the webmaster to post.
- Sustaining contact with distant members and junior members regarding their membership interests and responsibilities.

### III. *Ad Hoc Committees of the Ministry and Worship portion:*

- Clearness Committees: Since we do not have a minister or written sacrament or creed; requests for membership in the Society of Friends or marriage under the care or guidance of the Meeting are addressed through a careful and sensitive clearness process. After receiving a request from the Monthly Meeting for Business, Ministry and Worship forms a Clearness Committee to meet with the Friends asking for assistance. This Committee will be composed of a combination of seasoned and new Friends whose knowledge and experiences will best meet the needs of the individual or couple seeking clearness.
- Membership ad-hoc committees: Some responsibilities of these committees include
  - 1) convening membership clearness committees.
  - 2) Keeping the membership handbook up to date,
  - 3) Identifying potential new members, and
  - 4) Remaining in contact with distant members and junior members regarding their membership interests and responsibilities.
- Marriage ad-hoc committees: These groups gather materials from other monthly meetings, early Meetings and Friends organizations and provide leadership for Marriage Clearness Committees. Members seeking to marry under the care of the Meeting submit that request to Ministry and Counsel who then appoints a group of Friends of various

ages and experiences to meet with the couple. That group worships together as they explore marriage and the couple's intentions.

- Other Clearness ad-hoc committees:
  - 1) Friends who are contemplating a serious life decision, may request a Clearness Committee of Friends who will assist them find clarity around that decision.
  - 2) Traveling ministries: Friends who are contemplating a traveling ministry may request a Clearness Committee to help them as they discern their leading and formulate their plans.

#### IV. Pastoral Care Portion of our responsibilities:

- Provides for supportive care for all members and attenders, including transportation, meals and visits to the sick and hospitalized.
- Provides contact with absent and non-resident members.
- Arranges workshops on topics of member interest. Examples: preparation for the end of life, sustainability, enlightening music, white privilege, care for the elderly, spiritual growth, committee clerking education.
- *Ad Hoc committees of the Pastoral Care portion*
  - 1) Standing Support Committees provide ongoing encouragement and a sounding board for individuals who are engaged in work, either within the Meeting or in the larger community. Here individuals can continually test the leading that has guided them to choose that particular work. They can benefit from the voices of other Friends regarding the nature of their work and their own performance of it.
  - 2) Temporary Support Committees are convened for a shorter time to help a person who faces a particularly difficult life situation. They help the individual generate and facilitate strategies for dealing with the present difficulty.

#### III. Number of Members

- For the volume of work needed, this committee of Ministry and Counsel, which includes both care of the spiritual life of the Meeting as well as pastoral care, needs at least 8 working members.

#### IV. Desirable Qualifications

- Members should be committed to fostering the spiritual life of the Meeting and be able and willing to support members in a variety of ways.

#### V. Time Commitment

- The committee meets monthly and the outside requirements vary by the yearly schedule and the requests made of it by the members of the Meeting.

#### VI. Last Revised: November 6, 2019