

**REPORTS for**  
**CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING**  
**of the**  
**RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

**2021**

**Reports for  
Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

composed of\*

Canada Yearly Meeting  
(Five Years Meeting)

Genesee Yearly Meeting  
(General Conference)

Canada Yearly Meeting  
(Conservative)

**2021**

\* Since 1955 many new Meetings and individual members have joined Canadian Yearly Meeting. The designation on the previous page was approved in 1955 for inclusion in all published reports and minutes to indicate the pre-existing legal entities now incorporated in Canadian Yearly Meeting.

These documents are published on-line and are available for download from our website.

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Thank you,

Kerry MacAdam  
Office Administrator

2021

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## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

Covering the period from February 2021 Reporting and Clearness Session to the end of April 2021.

#### Reporting and Clearness

The Archives Committee presented its Reporting and Clearness report to Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) in Session on February 6, 2021. Our report and attachments are available on the CYM website. The Committee heard extensive support for the work of the Archives Committee and The Archives, and for the re-opening of The Archives after its temporary closure in October 2019. We heard that there remain voices within CYM with concerns about the costs of operating The Archives effectively and with integrity in light of CYM's financial limitations and CYM priorities. However the Archives Committee continues its work to implement CYM's vision that the Archives re-open and return to its work of effectively caring for and making accessible CYM's documents, historic and present, and other deposits, as required by CYM's Organization and Procedure (Sec. 6.17 & 6.22).

#### Pickering College Agreement

The Archives, composed of the Arthur Garrett Dorland Reference Library and the Vault, both of which are climate controlled, are located at Pickering College in Newmarket Ontario. CYM's Trustees are, on behalf of CYM, the legal owners of The Archives. Archives Committee acts as the responsible body for Trustees to plan for and ensure appropriate care of The Archives.

In this light the Archives Committee is concerned to nurture its relationship with Pickering College. This has included revising, in consultation with the Trustees, the written agreement between CYM and Pickering College relating to The Archives. Since February the final revisions were completed by Barbara Horvath, Clerk of Trustees and Elaine Bishop as Clerk of Archives Committee. The draft agreement was shared with Pickering College Head of School, Peter Sturup, on March 19. We are currently awaiting the College's response. A crucial aspect of the agreement enables the Archivist (when appointed) to access The Archives within Covid (or other emergency) restrictions providing Pickering College safety concerns are addressed in parallel with CYM's 'Safe Nurture of Vulnerable Persons in our Care' policy.

#### Planning for Hiring the Archivist

As articulated during our Reporting and Clearness, the Archives Committee plans to hire a full time Archivist for a one year term with potential for extension should that best serve the needs of The Archives and finances be in place. We are working with the Personnel Committee, the Personnel Management Group, the Personnel/Finance Working group, Finance Committee, all with assistance of the CYM Secretary, to ensure that the right conditions for employment are in place, including job description, a salary range that respects the integrities of employment justice and CYM finances, and funding for the one year term. The next step in this process will take place at Representative Meeting on May 15. If health regulations allow the Archives Committee hopes to hold its annual meeting at The Archives coordinated with the start date for the Archivist to assess the situation of The Archives and to welcome the new Archivist on their first day of work.

### Other work:

- Work continues on the Archives Committee Policy Manual. We hope to complete this by the summer.
- We are planning two workshops for the upcoming virtual CYM-in-Session in August and invite everyone to attend!
- We are continuing our work to address issues of technology and archiving.
- We are reviewing the Archives section of the CYM website to see what is needed to bring it up to date.
- We have taken a first step in revising the Archives leaflet and anticipate sharing this with all Monthly Meetings as we approach re-opening of The Archives.
- Work continues on our financial management including exploring with CYM ways for individuals to direct their donations to the Archives.

### Appreciations!

I want to express my appreciation to all of the people doing the hard work addressing issues related to re-opening The Archives. The Archives Committee continues to meet twice a month. I know that other Committees and bodies addressing these issues also are meeting frequently. I want to express my own and Archives Committee's deep appreciation of the Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust as well as to individual donors for their financial support of the work of Archives Committee. We also note again our deep appreciation of Pickering College, host of The Archives. The College's contribution to CYM by hosting The Archives enables us to do this work. We could not do this work without all of these important contributions! Thank you everyone!

Elaine Bishop  
Clerk, Archives Committee

## **CAMP NEEKAUNIS COMMITTEE**

### **Review of 2020**

The year 2020 ended up being a challenging one for Camp NeeKauNis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was with heavy hearts that the Steering Committee decided to cancel our regular Camp programs for the 2020 season as we know that Camp is many people's "happy place"; and that spending time in nature, especially in a beautiful, familiar setting among dear F/friends, has a significant impact on many people's mental and spiritual health during the summer.

Given our infrastructure and volunteer staffing model, we recognized that it would be nearly impossible to provide a safe environment for campers or staff and so made this decision at our called meeting on April 26th (via video conference call). On May 19th, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced that overnight camps would not be permitted to operate over the summer due to COVID-19. Instead, following the Public Health guidelines of the Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit, work crews met in numbers of up to 10 from May to October, under the dedicated oversight of our Physical Development (PD) subcommittee with Eric Preston providing consistent on-site coverage.

While high water levels over the last two years have halted our waterfront renewal plans, we were able to get some much-needed maintenance and work done on Camp's property and facilities during this fallow year.

Areas of focus included the kitchen - which now has a new water heater, new LED light fixtures (gone is the hum in the annex!), and a new coat of white paint making it much brighter. We were also able to clean up dead and dying trees that threatened to fall on our buildings, including the Meeting Center roof. The largest project our volunteer work crews undertook was the renovation of Haslam Cottage, one of our heritage buildings. It now has a beautiful new steel roof which will protect it for many decades to come. It has also been made more accessible through redesigning the back hallway to be wider. The back rooms and washroom have been re-wired, the walls are framed, and the doors are hung. New insulation and paneling will complete the renovation in spring 2021.

At the rise of CYM in August 2020 we had bit of a reshuffling of Clerks as our Recording Clerk, Diana Shepard-Stephens stepped off the Committee having finished her second term; Our Clerk, Kris Wilson-Yang moved into the role of Recording Clerk for the final year of her second term; and Rachel McQuail stepped into the role of Clerk. We continue to be immensely grateful to our current Steering Committee members who shoulder an unsustainable workload due to the fact that the Committee is not fully populated. We also thank those who stepped off the Steering Committee as of the rise of CYM 2020 for their dedication to serving Camp.

While it has been something of a relief not to have to find Session Directors, staff, and campers for our programs this year as this has become more challenging over the years, we also know that hustling for staff and campers is not a sustainable situation. Thus, based on the recommendation coming from our ad hoc strategic planning committee we recognized the need to engage our Camp Community in envisioning the future of Camp in order to discern our way forward. As the first step in this process we invited Camp Associates and Past Session Directors to a "Future of Camp" community consultation via zoom on December 12th. Twenty-five F/friends attended and much love and concern was expressed for Camp and our Camp community as we looked at possible futures. It was clear that transformative change was the preferred option for Camp's future, and we look forward to engaging our community in looking more closely at what this means, and what will be required to make this possible.

We knew that it would be hard on Camp's finances to not have any program or rental fees this year. So we were delighted to have Laird Nelson donate a dozen of his beautiful handcrafted walking and hiking sticks for an online fundraiser in the spring. And we were heartened by the incredible response to our request for donations during this year when we could offer so little to our community.

Several new Monthly Meetings sent donations this year and we thank Hamilton MM, Coldstream MM, Young Street MM, Ottawa MM, and Thousand Islands MM for their support. We would like to express particular gratitude to Hamilton Monthly Meeting for their significantly increased donation in honour of John Milton, and to Wooller Monthly Meeting for their large donation in memory of John Coats. The generous donations made to Camp by individuals and Monthly Meetings along with grants from the Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust, meant that we were able to cover our expenses for the year such that we began 2021 in the same financial position as 2020.

While we don't know what the guideposts leading us away from the pandemic will say yet, we do know there will be time to renew joy and community at Camp NeeKauNis in our future.

### **CANADIAN FRIENDS FOREIGN MISSION BOARD**

During the time that these Friends have been involved in Canadian Friends Foreign Mission Board (CFFMB) several worthwhile projects have come to our attention. Unfortunately, getting the funding from CYM has proven to be a problem. Although we are satisfied that the projects we recommended were worthwhile and that they would not cause problems with CRA the money was not released in a timely fashion. It has been recommended that the funds presently held in the CFFMB account be transferred to the CYM general fund or one of the trust funds administered by the Trustees. The CFFMB opposes this. Funds administered by the CFFMB have always been used for work outside the country. If the work of CFFMB cannot continue under CYM, we recommend that these funds be transferred to CFSC for their work outside the country.

Svetlana Macdonald, on behalf of Canadian Friends Foreign Mission Board

### **CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING PRESIDING CLERK'S REPORT**

After serving for one year as Incoming Clerk for CYM, I became Presiding Clerk in August 2020. I have been blessed to have Beverly Shepard as my mentor and model for this role. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with her.

During my first year I took on the co-ordination of joint work between Clerks' Committee and Personnel Committee. This included:

- clarifying the roles of these 2 committees as relates to oversight of CYM staff
- clarifying policies to CYM committees that use CYM staff and contractor services
- troubleshooting implementation of the new personnel policy
- follow-up work regarding closing the CYM archives for a period of time
- attending a 2-day staff meeting in Ottawa in February 2020
- intensive communication with the CYM secretary regarding his role and work -- a high percentage is related to personnel policy and implementation
- meeting with Personnel Committee ahead of Representative Meeting in February 2020 to develop the proposal for the formation of CAST (Change and Sustainable Transformation Working Group) to follow up on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Financial Sustainability
- increasing the working hours of the CYM Secretary from 80% to full time.

As lack of oversight for CYM staff was identified, I agreed to take on the role of "personnel supervisor." I find it impossible to do this job adequately and have strongly recommended that it needs to be done by a qualified staff person.

After our February 2020 Representative Meeting approved the formation of CAST (Change and Sustainable Transformation Working Group), I organized the first meetings and acted as clerk for CAST until July when Celia Cheatley agreed to be clerk. I am still a member, and CAST has been

meeting every two weeks. I have mainly been working on personnel and CYM structure concerns, but of course also participating in all the other topics and questions along with the other five members.

I have been very busy as CYM clerk, first as Incoming Clerk, and even more so as Presiding Clerk, as I have added handling correspondence, creating agendas, and clerking monthly Clerks' Committee meetings to my responsibilities. Beverly and I have been sharing the clerking of Representative Meeting and CYM business meetings. I knew before I agreed to be CYM clerk that it would be a big job in this time of transition for Yearly Meeting, as we try to rationalize our systems, finances, and human resources requirements. My hope and plan is that when I am finished, the next CYM clerk will have less responsibility. However, I must say I have been really enjoying this work. The Friends who volunteer to help, and the CYM staff, have been a pleasure to engage with, and that is a big reward. I am also thankful to CYM for the opportunity to learn lots of new things at my age (which is not young any more)!

For the last year I have been attending the monthly Office Staff Meetings with the Secretary, the Office Administrator and the Accountant. It keeps me in the loop with their work and concerns. I feel much gratitude for the dedication to Friends of our wonderful staff and their efforts to keep us operating smoothly.

I have been doing lots of organizing and agenda preparation -- Representative Meetings, CYM business sessions, MAC (Meeting of All CYM Clerks) meetings, Clerks' Committee meetings, meetings with Monthly Meeting clerks -- and sometimes helping to facilitate the work of CYM committees.

Due to the Covid pandemic, practically all my work for CYM has been done sitting at my computer. In many ways it is easier -- no time spent flying around the country to attend meetings, and the communication by email and zoom is quick. Figuring out how to do online sessions (for Representative Meeting, Yearly Meeting business, Reporting and Clearness sessions, threshing sessions, etc.) has been time-consuming (and more so for the CYM secretary than for me). I think we have been reasonably successful with these events and we have been able to include a higher number of Friends than if we were meeting face to face. But I do miss the time to socialize with Friends in CYM and get to know you better. I am thinking about how to make up for that in the future.

With much love to my CYM Friends,  
Marilyn

## **CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION WORKING GROUP**

### **APRIL 2021**

Change and Sustainable Transformation (CAST) Working Group has now been working for a year considering how Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) might change to be sustainable financially, environmentally, as a community, and for those that serve us. We have met almost every two weeks for two hours in online sessions to look deeply at what CYM is, ways that it could be better, and areas that need our focus.

We have shared our work with Friends across the Yearly Meeting via email letters, reports to online Representative Meeting and Yearly Meeting Business Meetings, and an online Special Interest Group at CYM 2020. In April 2021 we held an online session entitled “A Friendly Exploration of CYM” where Friends engaged in thoughtful discussions around new technologies integration, communication, youth engagement, CYM-in-session, and how CYM could be a simpler organization. We hope to have more sessions like this.

Since Fall 2020, two members of CAST have worked with Personnel Committee to look at staffing. We asked Nominating Committee to consider possible changes to that process, and accepted their view that our current practice works best. We had an interesting session with our CYM Secretary on the theory of change. We have plans to meet with Canadian Friends Service Committee staff, Program Committee, and others, to draw on their expertise as we continue to consider possible changes to CYM.

In the February CYM Business meeting CAST brought a recommendation that Reporting and Clearness sessions be held online even when Yearly Meeting can meet in-person again. The Meeting discerned that these would be online Business Meetings so that the written report becomes a document of the Yearly Meeting, and any matters arising from the session would be minuted. The thoughtful preparation for the online reporting sessions over the past year and Friends engagement in the sessions helped towards the unity felt in making this change.

We have an incredible group of Friends serving CYM and many thoughtful Friends engaged in this process of change. We have seen the Yearly Meeting adapt to the changes forced upon us by the pandemic. We will probably not know until hindsight if any changes we make are sustainable. Let’s be open to try new ways of being and doing, trusting the Light to guide us.

Celia Cheatley  
Clerk, CAST

## **CONTRIBUTIONS COMMITTEE**

### 2020-2021 Report

Contributions Committee (CC) currently has three appointed members: Penni Burrell (clerk), Gini Smith and Svetlana MacDonald; Martha McClure (liaison with Trustees), John Dixon (liaison with Finance Committee) and Kerry MacAdam (CYM Office Administrator) take part in many of our regular monthly meetings. We welcomed Svetlana this year as a new member and John who replaced Fran McQuail. Many thanks to Fran for her dedicated and skilled service on our committee.

We have always met through teleconference, so cancelation of in-person meetings has not had a significant impact on our committee work during this year of Covid. Since gatherings of Canadian Yearly Meeting have been largely virtual rather than in-person this year, the work of Contributions Committee to make CYM activities visible to its members has become increasingly important.

We are pleased that our request to have a consistent logo created and adopted with all communications is being implemented. We believe that this will help members recognize the

work CYM does since it will be visibly present when a CYM creation arrives in your inbox or are on Minutes or a variety of other publications.

As we informed members in our last year's report, we sent a mailout directing Friends to specific parts of the website. This was part of our commitment to help Friends use online technology. We are now developing more accessible information on the website in partnership with Publications and Communication and the editor of the website.

What we have been doing:

Reporting and Clearness: In November 2020 Contributions Committee had a Reporting and Clearness presentation. We are grateful for the supportive and reflective response to our queries at that time and are working on responses to many of the suggestions as part of our long-term planning.

Collaboration: As the task of CC is to fund raise for the work undertaken by other committees, implementation of the suggestions require collaboration with these committees. This takes time and reflective engagement and we will continue to initiate suggestions we received during this process. We appreciate opportunities to liaise with other Committees through the development of the Meeting of All Clerks as well as at Representative Meetings.

Supporting Youth: We are often asked about what Yearly Meeting is doing to support Young Friends. During the year CC met with Cameron Fraser, CYM Secretary, to learn about key aspects of how work with youth is conducted. Over the past years the Canada-wide Secretary has helped to nurture and support Young Friends as their interests and needs evolve and we heard how important it is for such a presence to be consistently available. CYM provides financial funding for gatherings as requested by Young Friends.

Increased knowledge base: CC is developing reporting methods using the CYM data base to obtain clearer information about where donations come from, and how CYM can engage more members to support CYM through service and financially.

More visible presence: The Quaker.ca website has undergone a significant transformation, inviting more engagement with members, attenders and potential members. The interest of CC in developing a page that welcomes people new to our faith and organization continues, and we look forward to collaborating on this as way opens.

Increased communication with current and potential donors. CC has established a regular presence in the e-newsletter – using quotes from Friends about what inspires them as well as links to the donation opportunities to communicate the inspiring work our Yearly Meeting is doing. Articles describing the roles and activities of Canadian Yearly Meeting and the importance of donations are available in PDF forms and available for use when queries arise by interested potential donors.

What does CYM do? We continue to hear this question from potential donors, often long-term members of Yearly Meeting. Contributions Committee is developing a document that will reflect the various aspects of the often-invisible work that our beloved Yearly Meeting conducts. Once it

is developed, we will collaborate with various committees to enable its use most effectively. It is likely to be able to be broken down into smaller documents, suitable for different needs.

The Clerk, Penni Burrell has now completed six years on Contributions Committee as Clerk and will step down at the rise of meeting in August. A full complement of appointed members is four, but after she steps step down there will be only two unless some new members are appointed. If you feel that working to put our national organization on a sustainable path is important, please check with the CYM Nominating Committee to see if they need further nominations. We can reassure you that it can be spiritually as well as organizationally fulfilling work.

Respectfully submitted,

Penni Burrell (Clerk), John Dixon, Martha McClure, Svetlana MacDonald, Virginia Smith

## **DISCIPLINE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

REPORT TO CYM REPRESENTATIVE MEETING, TORONTO, 30 APRIL 2021

The four members of Discipline Review Committee (DRC) are Ruth Pincoe (Toronto MM, clerk), Dawne Smith (Ottawa MM), Norman Smith (Yonge Street MM), and Carol Leigh Wehking (Hamilton MM). Our progress since March 2020 has been irregular. We cancelled our 2020 winter meeting and were mostly preoccupied with individual responsibilities at home, with our families, with our work, and elsewhere.

Since we all live in Ontario, we used to meet twice a year on a weekend, often sharing a meal on the evening before and sometimes working through part of the second day. We did individual work as well, but were accustomed to sitting around a table considering texts together. Our last two reports (written in February and May 2020) covered work largely completed in November 2019, and both these reports included texts to be considered for First or Second Readings. We presented the last two texts for consideration at the 4 July 2020 Representative Meeting (2.8 Minute of Record, 2nd Reading; and 6.7 Finance Committee, 1st Reading).

The fact that both texts were approved helped us to move forward through the summer.

We had all gained online experience, and we met regularly online from August through to October, making significant progress. Our new schedule of two-hour meetings every three to four weeks is efficient but “homework” chores keep us busier in between. We miss our extended in-person discussions, and sometimes find it difficult to settle into proper discernment.

Representative Meeting adopted a similar schedule, meeting seven times between June and December 2020. With Monthly Meetings added into the mix, the triple cycle of preparation–attendance–reports/minutes required considerable patience and stamina. DRC had a second hiatus from November 2020 to early March 2021, but we are now back on schedule.

Items on our current task list include: a revision of 6.17 Archives Committee; a new section on fulfilling roles and responsibilities; queries on relationships with Indigenous peoples; and a new

section on conflict transformation. We are aware that progress on some of these tasks has been slow. We move forward as we are able.

Meanwhile, the *Organization & Procedure* Rewrite Subcommittee has continued work. This committee consists of Carol Leigh Wehking (Hamilton MM), Donna Sassaman (Cowichan Valley MM), and Peter Stevenson (Interior British Columbia MM). The Committee considers their revision of the Preface complete, but proposes that the new *Organization and Procedure* might begin with a general land acknowledgement for all Canada, inserted before the Preface.

Much of the updating of “Chapter 1: Historical Outline” has also been completed. Discipline Review Committee has proposed that this chapter might better be published as a separate companion pamphlet. The Rewrite Committee is now addressing the remaining chapters individually for revision and as a whole with a view to expanded cross-referencing and rational reorganization.

Discipline Review Committee will bring three texts forward for consideration at the CYM Meeting for Worship for Business on 12 June 2021. The full texts are given below. We hope to prepare additional items for the Representative Meeting in October, and we are also preparing for our Reporting and Clearness Session on 11 September 2021.

**Proposed Changes to *Organization and Procedure***  
**Brought to CYM, 12 June 2021**

<b>CYM / RM Minutes</b>	<b>O&amp;P section</b>	<b>Section title</b>	<b>Readings</b>
RM 2020.2.14 (e)	<b>2.17</b>	Trustees	<b>First Reading: CYM 12 June 2021</b>
RM 2020.2.14 (e)	<b>6.6</b>	Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees	<b>First Reading: CYM 12 June 2021</b>
CYM 2019.8.25 RM 2020.7.6	<b>6.7</b>	Finance Committee	First Reading: RM 5 July 2020  <b>Second Reading: CYM 12 June 2021</b>

- “*O&P*” refers to *Organization and Procedure*.
- The “Source” is the minute from Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) or Representative Meeting (RM). Minute references include the year, month, and minute number.
- Mark-up (for First Readings):

~~Strikethrough~~ indicates text removed from early version in *O&P*

Underline indicates new text added to *O&P*

Texts brought for Second Reading will not show mark-up.

## 2.17 Trustees – First Reading, CYM 12 June 2021 [text with markup]

SOURCE: RM Minute 2020.2.14(e): *CYM Trustees ask Discipline Review Committee to update Sections 2.17 and 6.6 of Canadian Yearly Meeting Organization and Procedure as the responsibilities of the Trustees are not up to date. We approve this work. Discipline Review Committee requests that CYM Trustees provide specific details regarding the updates.*

Those Meetings that hold property or hire employees ~~Meetings shall~~ should appoint members to serve as Trustees ~~of any property owned by the Meeting,~~ in accordance with the Trustees Act in their province; specific duties of Trustees are set forth in this legislation. ~~Religious Institutions Act or other statute of the provinces. Trustees and their successors will be appointed in such manner as may be specified in the conveyance, or other instrument creating the trust, and the Meeting may, by resolution and in the manner set forth in the conveyance, increase or decrease the number of trustees.~~ The Meeting should also approve the Trustees' terms of reference, and may increase or decrease the number of Trustees. The Trustees should make an annual report detailing their holdings and actions.

~~The duties of the trustees are set forth in the statutes but in general shall be: to~~ Trustees hold title to all real estate and other property belonging to the Meeting. Deeds should be legally recorded and all records and documents preserved. Trustees ensure that the property is kept in good repair, is adequately insured, and is not improperly used. Actions proposed by the Trustees concerning the sale or lease of property must be approved by the Meeting. Trustees are also responsible for administration of trust funds and certain bequests. ~~and to manage it on behalf of the Meeting; to keep property in repair; to guard property from injury or improper use; to keep all deeds legally recorded; to preserve all records and documents dealing with such properties and to make a detailed annual report to Meetings of all their holdings and actions as trustees.~~

~~Trustees shall invest all funds and other personal property whether received by bequest, donations or otherwise and administer the same according to the direction of the donors. The Meeting must approve of any action proposed by the trustees concerning the sale or lease of property owned by the Meeting.~~

Trustees for Meetings that have employees should oversee the relevant personnel policies and ensure that appointments to remunerated positions are made in compliance with good employment principles and legislation. Trustees are responsible as a body for their trust and must not act individually, except within defined parameters. (For example, the Trustees' Treasurer may work individually to fulfil specific responsibilities.)

Responsibilities and functions specific to Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees ~~of Yearly Meeting have additional functions which are described in Section 6.6. It is suggested that Monthly Meetings are invited to consult with the~~ Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees in relation to the transfer of any property.

See also 6.6 Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees.

## **2.17 Trustees – First Reading, CYM 12 June 2021 [text without markup]**

Those Meetings that hold property or hire employees should appoint members to serve as Trustees, in accordance with the Trustees Act in their province; specific duties of Trustees are set forth in this legislation. The Meeting should also approve the Trustees' terms of reference, and may increase or decrease the number of Trustees. The Trustees should make an annual report detailing their holdings and actions.

Trustees hold title to all real estate and other property belonging to the Meeting. Deeds should be legally recorded and all records and documents preserved. Trustees ensure that the property is kept in good repair, is adequately insured, and is not improperly used. Actions proposed by the Trustees concerning the sale or lease of property must be approved by the Meeting. Trustees are also responsible for administration of trust funds and certain bequests.

Trustees for Meetings that have employees should oversee the relevant personnel policies, and ensure that appointments to remunerated positions are made in compliance with good employment principles and legislation. Trustees are responsible as a body for their trust, and must not act individually, except within defined parameters. (For example, the Trustees' Treasurer may work individually to fulfill specific responsibilities of the Trustees.)

Responsibilities and functions specific to the Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees are described in Section 6.6. Monthly Meetings are invited to consult with the Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees in relation to transfers of property.

See also 6.6 Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees

## **Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees – 1st Reading, CYM 12 June 2021 [text with markup]**

SOURCE: RM Minute 2020.2.14(e): *CYM Trustees ask Discipline Review Committee to update Sections 2.17 and 6.6 of Canadian Yearly Meeting Organization and Procedure as the responsibilities of the Trustees are not up to date. We approve this work. Discipline Review Committee requests that CYM Trustees provide specific details regarding the updates.*

Note the addition of “Canadian Yearly Meeting” to the title of this section.

Since the Yearly Meeting Office is located in Ontario, the Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees are guided by the Trustee Act of Ontario. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees name their own new members. Appointments to the Canadian Yearly Meeting Board of Trustees are reported by Nominating Committee so that the names are recorded in the Yearly Meeting minutes. Since the Yearly Meeting is not incorporated, Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees carry fiduciary responsibility for the Yearly Meeting. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees have two main areas of responsibility.

The Trustees hold title over and exercise responsible stewardship of all property of the Yearly Meeting, including real estate and financial assets. The Yearly Meeting must approve any action proposed by the Trustees concerning the sale or lease of property owned by the Yearly Meeting.

The Trustees assess and make recommendations to mitigate risks to Canadian Yearly Meeting and its members and volunteers.

Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees report their decisions to Representative Meeting in an annual report detailing their holdings and actions. The audited financial statements also provide details of all holdings. Trustees review the draft audited financial statements of the Yearly Meeting and the audit findings letter, approve the audited financial statements, sign the audit representation letter, and appoint the auditor for the next year. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees also work in conjunction with Finance Committee and Contributions Committee to establish procedures and approaches that will place and maintain Canadian Yearly Meeting on a solid and sustainable financial footing.

Yearly Meeting authorizes the Clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees, together with the Yearly Meeting Clerks and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer, to make decisions that need timely implementation between sessions of Yearly Meeting or Representative Meeting and are clearly in line with Quaker values and with previous work of the Yearly Meeting.

~~The status and duties of Trustees are detailed in Section 2.17: Trustees. Trustees of Yearly Meeting~~  
Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees may have the additional function of inspecting and perfecting, where necessary and if permitted by the Provincial statute, the titles to lands and other estates belonging to constituent Meetings of the Yearly Meeting, including the properties of Meetings that have been discontinued.

See also 2.17 Trustees; 4.22 Discontinuance of Meetings; 6.7 Finance Committee;

6.13 Contributions Committee

## **Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees – 1st Reading, CYM 12 June 2021 [text without markup]**

Since the Yearly Meeting Office is located in Ontario, the Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees are guided by the Trustee Act of Ontario. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees name their own new members. Appointments to the Canadian Yearly Meeting Board of Trustees are reported by Nominating Committee so that the names are recorded in the Yearly Meeting minutes. Since the Yearly Meeting is not incorporated, Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees carry fiduciary responsibility for the Yearly Meeting. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees have two main areas of responsibility.

The Trustees hold title over and exercise responsible stewardship of all property of the Yearly meeting, including real estate and financial assets. The Yearly Meeting must approve any action proposed by the Trustees concerning the sale or lease of property owned by the Yearly Meeting.

The Trustees assess and make recommendations to mitigate risks to Canadian Yearly Meeting and its members and volunteers.

Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees report their decisions to Representative Meeting in an annual report detailing their holdings and actions. The audited financial statements also provide details of all holdings. Trustees review the draft audited financial statements of the Yearly Meeting and the audit findings letter, approve the audited financial statements, sign the audit representation letter, and appoint the auditor for the next year. Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees also work in conjunction with Finance Committee and Contributions Committee to establish procedures and approaches that will place and maintain Canadian Yearly Meeting on a solid and sustainable financial footing.

Yearly Meeting authorizes the Clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees, together with the Yearly Meeting Clerks and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer, to make decisions that need timely implementation between sessions of Yearly Meeting or Representative Meeting and are clearly in line with Quaker values and with previous work of the Yearly Meeting.

Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees may have the additional function of inspecting and perfecting, where necessary and if permitted by the Provincial statute, the titles to lands and other estates belonging to constituent Meetings of the Yearly Meeting, including properties of Meetings that have been discontinued.

See also: 2.17 Trustees; 4.22 Discontinuance of Meetings; 6.7 Finance Committee;

6.13 Contributions Committee

## **Finance Committee – Second Reading, CYM 12 June 2021**

SOURCE: CYM Minute 2019.8.25: *Discipline Review Committee (DRC) was asked to revise the outdated description of Finance Committee.* RM Minute 2020.7.6: *DRC brought a revised draft forward for First Reading at Representative Meeting on 4 July 2020. The text was approved for First Reading. A number of suggestions were made from the floor and later sent to DRC*

Finance Committee plays a vital role in promoting the stewardship of the financial health and integrity of Canadian Yearly Meeting. To this end Finance Committee works in conjunction with Contributions Committee and Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees to establish procedures and practices that will place and maintain CYM on solid financial footing.

Finance Committee also works in consultation with relevant officers, staff, and committees of the Yearly Meeting. Finance Committee makes recommendations regarding revenue sources and policies affecting CYM expenses. Some of this revenue comes as contributions transferred from the constituent monthly meetings. Additional revenues come from individual contributions and from some trust funds and CYM investments.

Finance Committee is responsible for the preparation of an annual budget that covers the financial needs of Yearly Meeting to continue work on behalf of Friends in Canadian Yearly Meeting. Finance Committee presents the budget to Representative Meeting for review, amendment if needed, and approval.

Finance Committee and the CYM Treasurer support the work of the CYM Staff in preparation for the year-end financial statement for audit. Finance Committee reviews the draft audit and recommends the draft audited financial statements to Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees. The Trustees review the audit findings letter, approve the audited financial statements, and sign the audit representation letter.

See also 6.6 Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees; 6.13 Contributions Committee

## **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

April 20, 2021

Report covering the period from May 2020 to April 30, 2021.

The current Clerk came to the committee in May 2020. There was a lot to learn about working at the national level. It is gratifying to know that, as of today's date, the committee has an impressive array of Resources to hand, some of which reside on the CYM Quaker.ca website, such as the Manual and other essential documents for this committee. In concert with the CYM Secretary we have also created a whole suite of documents on a shared Google Drive. These documents belong to the category of essential tools for the committee, such as documents that clarify the advertising and registration processes for an online course offered through CYM; contracting files and procedures; financial considerations in light of the changes currently underway at CYM level.

The committee has met almost monthly since May 2020 designing these processes, including the adoption of CYM's revised contract for services template recently set in place by the CYM Personnel Committee.

We have been laying the ground to offer the following types of courses within a given calendar year:

1. Courses that strongly reflect the Canadian experience through course facilitators selected through our discernment processes. This would include courses such as Quaker Basics (e.g., Introduction to Quaker and Friends' Ways, Study of Canadian Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*), a course on Quaker Leadings, or Clerking a Business Meeting in the Canadian Context.
2. Online offerings that are crafted in partnerships with international organizations such as Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre; Pendle Hill; Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (QREC). An example of this would be 'Practices of Hope', partnered with Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, which we are offering twice online in 2021, with dates in June and September.
3. The eventual creation of a style of Canadian Religious Education Collective or Collaborative that offers guidance and resources for facilitators using methods such as Parker Palmer's Circles of Trust; Woodbrooke's Ways of Working Facilitation, or QREC's Conversation Circles. This latter initiative is designed to support local Meetings and Worship Groups so that these groups feel that they have the right tools and support to design their own tailor-made conversations in relation to emergent issues at the local level.

Given the emphasis on being sustainable, it seems wise not to expand beyond offering more than 5- 7 courses or webinars in a year. (At the moment, we are just focusing on online offerings).

The committee offers a tremendous service in terms of supporting the registration process (which is carefully coordinated and supported by the CYM Office administrative staff); they also provide, each time a new course is offered, careful mentoring of the instructors offering courses based on Canadian content. This level of care may not be necessary when we work with international partners, although we are open to reviewing this to ensure good quality and service in a Quaker manner.

We regularly connect through our Youth representative with the needs of Young Friends. It is our understanding that CYFYM has requested a workshop on Clerking. The people involved with Quaker Religious Education Collaborative have a strong component of Youth education offerings and we may learn more about this angle when we do a joint call with them in May 2021.

Departing from the usual Quaker practice not to name individuals, the Clerk wishes to record their heartfelt gratitude to Marilyn Manzer, for her work on the Manual, as a great guide to what the Committee represents; Wesley Glebe for his guidance of the committee in past years; Cameron Fraser for his assistance in creating good collective processes over the course of 2021-22; the CYM Office Staff, Kerry MacAdam, for working with us as we establish new practices; as well as each member of this incredible committee for their heart, time and tremendous effort.

List of Course Offerings (Actual and Projected), 2020-21:

1. 'Introduction to Quaker and Friends' Ways,' Jackie Bonner, Summer 2020
2. 'Uh Oh was that a leading?', Jackie Bonner, April 2021
3. 'Hope as a Practice', Tracey Martin and Woodbrooke, June 2021

4. 'Hope as a Practice', Tracey Martin and Woodbrooke, September 2021
5. Clerking workshop, Canadian facilitator, under discussion, October 2021.
6. Introduction aux quakers et a leur cuite nonprogramme, projected Fall 2021 or Spring 2022.
7. Conversation circle work, possibly a bespoke creation with Woodbrooke, Fall 2021, to coincide with work on conversation circles with Quaker Religious Education Collaborative.

Respectfully submitted,  
Catherine Harding, Clerk, CYM E and O

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Annual Report to Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) April 2020-April 2021

The year started with the uncertainty of the Covid 19 pandemic having just begun. Like everyone else we had no idea how it would affect the operations of CYM or the constituent Monthly Meetings. Our Auditors cautioned us that they had no idea whether there would be significant impact on our financial investments.

Each year begins with CYM's Financial Statements for the preceding year being audited. The professional audit of our 2020 CYM accounts identified no irregularities. These documents are available on the business side of our website, quaker.ca, for anyone to examine. It turned out that our CYM total funds balances still grew \$133,000, despite the pandemic.

One immediate impact was a decision to hold the 2020 CYM in Session online in August. This meant reduced costs, including no rent for the site and no staff travel costs but did not reduce staffing costs as our permanent staff continued to work from home during the pandemic. And it increased some costs due to the need for more contract staff time to do the online sessions set up and support. In the overall operating costs, it meant our planned deficit for the General Fund was much reduced, from almost \$108,000 to just under \$36,000.

Finance Committee continued with its annual work of compiling the budget for the next year in the fall. Because the decision was made in the fall to have the 2021 CYM in Session online, the budget was prepared with the knowledge we had gained about how that affected our costs, and we were able to propose a budget with a smaller deficit than the previous year. There had not been any organizational modifications yet made to CYM through the CAST (Change and Sustainable Transformation) process so there was no impact from those on the proposed budget for 2021.

The ongoing concern over CYM's financial sustainability continued to be the focus of the committee through the fall. Friends, both on the committee and outside the committee, put forward thoughtful and insightful questions about not only how we managed our money but how we could better get a sense of the whole picture of CYM's assets and income. Finance Committee has historically only managed the General Fund. It is only one of many funds, the others being managed by CYM Committees and the Trustees.

This concern of financial clarity and sustainability was put forward for discernment by the CYM membership at Finance Committee's 5 Year Reporting and Clearness session held online Jan 23, 2020. Generally, there was agreement that our first two proposed priorities: "1. Work to simplify, strengthen, and unify CYM's financial systems, and work collaboratively to make committee finances more understandable. 2. Work with the Trustees to reduce the number of funds, to simplify the financial systems" were very timely and should be the focus of the committee's work for the next little while.

As with most of CYM's Committees during 2020, all of Finance Committee's meetings were held online and resulted in more but shorter meetings than our usual two weekend meetings each year. E-mail communication played a larger role in committee work as well.

Fran McQuail, Clerk

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Nominating Committee, like all CYM committees, has met virtually over the past year. We met in the fall of 2020 and in January 2021 to prepare the Nominations package which was sent to Monthly meetings in January. We also have had numerous email exchanges. We will meet again in May to prepare the slate of nominations for approval in the summer months. Meeting virtually lacks some of the warmth and connection we feel when we gather in person but it is good to see each other's smiles.

It is mid-March as I write this report. Nominating Committee awaits the nominations from your Monthly Meeting. To-date we have received no new nominations. Several re-nominations have been confirmed.

Nominating Committee is dedicated to serving the Yearly Meeting by providing the names of Friends to serve on the Standing Committees, Other Groups and Outside Bodies. We can not do this without the support of all of the Monthly Meetings. We sincerely appreciate the effort by MMs to discern from within their communities those Friends with the gifts to further the work of the Yearly Meeting. In particular, this year we are seeking an Incoming Clerk. Some committees are working with up to half the desired number of members: Camp NeeKauNis, Contributions, Personnel and Program Committees. We sincerely appreciate all those Friends that are currently serving and all those that are considering a nomination this year.

Other than working on nominations, we have been working on simplifying the process of updating and keeping current the *Friends Serving Yearly Meeting* list on the CYM webpage. With the help of Cameron Fraser, Kerry MacAdam and Tim Kitz we have revised the format and presentation of the *Friends Serving Yearly Meeting* list. We hope Friends find it easy to navigate and find the information they are looking for.

Nominating Committee is grateful for the work Change and Sustainable Transformation (CAST) is doing. We are participating with CAST in discussions about the process of the approval of nominations going forward.

Nominating Committee is also working with Program Committee on ideas for online programming for this summer's virtual gathering.

Charlotte Burch (Winnipeg MM)

Nominating Committee Clerk and members: Heidi Dick (Calgary MM), Pauline McKenzie (Wooler MM), Sara av Maat (Annapolis Valley MM)

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Annual Report April 2020 - March 2021

The following reports on CYM Personnel Committee business between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. This report was written by the CYM Secretary in consultation with Personnel Committee and the Personnel Management Group.

### Context

Significant changes took place within the CYM personnel system in 2019, a year that began with the Personnel Committee clerk and CYM Secretary serving as the two members of the Personnel Committee to support the important organizational decision made in 2018. In 2019, the Personnel Management Group (PMG) was established as part of a new CYM personnel system, which acted as a centralized structure for coordination of personnel administration and management. The CYM Clerk, Trustee Designate, and two new Personnel Committee members stepped forward to offer their expertise and commitment to these organizational change efforts. At the core of this group's intention was to establish and maintain consistent personnel practices that aligned with the law, were fair to staff, and enabled effective support of CYM's programs and services.

### Personnel System Development

Personnel Committee and the Personnel Management Group (PMG) continued working with the CYM Secretary, CYM Clerks, CYM employing and contracting committees, and CYM staff to develop a unified personnel system. This included work to clarify the roles and responsibilities within the personnel system, which led to Marilyn Manzer (CYM Clerk) being designated as personnel supervisor and Virginia Dawson (Trustee representative to the PMG) being designated as Trustee Designate for signing legal employment and contracting documents. Personnel Committee and the PMG developed mandate statements for both groups, which were reviewed and approved by CYM Trustees. The PMG and Personnel Committee worked with CAST and CYM Trustees to review and consider changes to the CYM staffing structure. The CYM Secretary was intentionally not involved in the aforementioned process to ensure right order with staffing considerations and decisions.

### Personnel Committee and Personnel Management Group

Monica Walters-Field finished her term as Personnel Committee Clerk at the rise of CYM 2020. Holly Turner agreed to step into the role of Personnel Committee Clerk, and co-clerked the committee with Monica from February through August 2020. Monica continued to serve on the committee as an associate member, in particular as she took on responsibility for Reporting and Clearness with the assistance of the Secretary (see below). Peter Chapman continued to serve on Personnel Committee. Virginia Dawson maintained her commitment to serving on the Personnel Management Group, and attended all Personnel Committee meetings, which took place at least every two weeks. Clerks' Committee formally assigned the CYM Secretary to provide regular administrative support to Personnel Committee and the Personnel Management Group. Personnel Committee work remained relatively heavy during this period of time, but was made easier by the commitment and hard work of now past clerk Monica Walters-Field.

Personnel Committee and the PMG participated in joint meetings with the CYM Clerks between January and May 2020, which led to the establishment of the personnel supervisor position. This role is currently performed by Marilyn Manzer, CYM Clerk, who meets with Personnel Committee and the PMG on an as-needed basis, and acts as a communication conduit between the PMG and Clerks' Committee. The personnel supervisor regularly attends monthly CYM Office Staff Meetings, receives staff timesheets, and meets with staff on an as-needed basis.

Monica Walters-Field and the CYM Secretary engaged in a six-month process to prepare for the reporting and clearness process, which included substantial consultation with Personnel Committee and the PMG. Personnel Committee reported and presented to the online Representative Meeting on November 21, 2020. See Personnel Committee Reporting and Clearness Process, Appendix A, CYM Representative Meeting Minutes November 21, 2020 <https://quaker.ca/business/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/11/RM-Minutes-21-November-2020-Corrected-V.pdf>

Holly Turner, Personnel Committee Clerk, was named as ex officio member to Finance Committee by CYM Trustees for a trial period. Holly attended all CYM Finance Committee meetings between November 2020 and March 2021, and has supported effective cross-committee communications. Holly and Virginia have regularly attended online Representative Meetings and CYM business sessions, further supporting communication flow and supporting the personnel system.

Personnel Committee and the PMG have turned much of their energy to working directly with CYM employing and contracting committees to explore practices and develop systems for a unified personnel system. This work has especially included Archives Committee, Camp NeeKauNis, Education and Outreach Committee, Program Committee, and Publications and Communications Committee. Most recently, Holly Turner presented to most of the CYM Committees clerks at the Meeting of All Clerks on March 20, 2021, including sharing updates to the Personnel Committee webpage on the business side of Quaker.ca.

#### Personnel Administration and Management

Thanks to the substantial work in 2019-2020 to resolve a number of outstanding personnel concerns, much of the administration and management work in 2020-2021 was focused on arising personnel matters. Personnel Committee continued consultation with human resources consultants and an employment lawyer on an as-needed basis. Between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 Personnel Committee:

Continued to support the:

- Development of employee job descriptions (as required);
- Development, negotiation, and signing of contracts and employment agreements;
- Enactment of contract negotiation processes and contract closure processes;
- Evaluations for all staff, and received feedback on the processes and resources;

Explored and enacted such staffing adjustments as were necessitated by Covid-19, particularly in relation to:

- Cancellation of Yearly Meeting in Session;
- CYM Office health and safety protocols;
- CYM Office staff work away from the office;
- Staffing for "CYM 2020 online";
- Camp NeeKauNis contracts;
- Contract and employment agreement amendments to the above;

- Developed clarity on the roles and responsibilities of contractors across CYM;
- Developed clarity on the range of external contracts with service agencies across CYM;
- Participated in interviews of external service providers with committees exploring contractual relationships;
- Supported exploration of speaker roles and contractual arrangements within CYM;
- Supported CYM Archives' redevelopment of the CYM Archivist staffing position;
- Reviewed staffing for communications and technology support;
- Contract invoicing practices;
- Explored insurance coverage for CYM employees and contractors; and
- Supported the work of the newly enacted Personnel-Finance Working Group.

#### Personnel Policy, Procedure, and Resource Development

Personnel Committee and the PMG developed the following in consultation with various members of CYM, including CYM Trustees, CYM Clerks, the Office Finance Team, employing and contracting committees and staff:

- Policies, procedures and resources for privacy and confidentiality;
- Leave Request policy and procedure/from;
- Policy and procedure for use of staff time;
- Personnel documents header;
- Personnel filing systems in compliance with legal requirements;
- Draft policies and procedures for archiving personnel-related documentation;
- Personnel communications and information tracking systems;
- Draft protocols for contracting enactment, maintenance and termination;
- Google form for personnel risk assessment to accompany Trustee risk assessment;
- Revised CYM timesheets for efficient and effective time tracking and communications;
- Development of new CYM Employment Agreement;
- Draft policies and procedures for CYM staff equipment costs, particularly related to working from home (including technology and internet needs);
- Policies & procedures for contracting Friends also serving CYM as committee members ;
- Policies for benefits for part-time staff and meal allowances;
- Policies for staff vacation accrual and in-lieu time resolutions;
- Template for call for proposal template for contractors;
- Approved national CYM contract applicable under civil law (in Quebec);
- Worked on policy revisions, toward enacting the following in the spring or summer of 2021:
- Revised Personnel Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Workplace Violence Policy; and
- Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Holly Turner

## **PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **Report to CYM 2020**

*Prepared Summer 2021*

In Spring/Summer 2020 we were very busy responding to the changing communications needs of CYM brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. We were underway with a design update for Quaker.ca, and we launched the new monthly electronic newsletter in June 2020. (And our clerk had recently given birth to her first child!)

CYM2020 did not include Meeting for Worship for Business sessions. Consequently, we did not submit a report for 2020. We do not feel led to produce a long report for reporting's sake, and feel that we have continued to strongly represent PubCom's work at Representative Meetings, Meetings of All Clerks, Finance Committee, etc. We will therefore focus our reporting efforts on more recent events through our 2021 report.

## **PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **Report to CYM 2021**

*Prepared Summer 2021*

#### **Our major work since CYM2020 has included:**

- Completing a design update of Quaker.ca (launched in December 2020)
- Continuing to publish the Canadian Friend three times per year
- Publishing the e-newsletter monthly and working to grow its readership (currently at over 350 subscribers)
- Accepting responsibility for the creation of a CYM logo (currently in progress)
- Supporting Canadian Quaker Learning Series (under the care of Winnipeg Monthly Meeting) to produce two pamphlets
- Participating in the large number of additional online meetings (Representative Meetings, Meeting for Worship for Business sessions, etc)
- Undergoing Reporting & Clearness in June 2021
- Meeting every 4-8 weeks (and sometimes more often!) via video-call (Google Hangouts/Meet) to hold and continue our work together

We addressed many of the joys and challenges of our work in our recent report for Reporting and Clearness (which you can find here: <https://quaker.ca/business/cym-minutes/>). Friends expressed appreciation for the clarity of our report, and so we are reproducing the summary table it contained at the end of this report. We continue to hold a concern for meeting Friends where they are in terms of communications media – recognizing both that the shift to more electronic communications risks leaving some elders or those without good internet/technology access out of the loop, and that CYM currently allocates very little time or resources to communications media which would most effectively reach and connect youth under 30.

While we appreciated Friends' worshipful consideration and sharing during the Reporting and Clearness process, we did not feel that way opened towards clear solutions or next steps to the challenges and gaps that we raised up. We will continue to discern as a committee the best ways forward, and have asked our Clerk to continue to raise these issues with the Meeting of All Clerks.

We thank all the CYM clerks, staff, contractors, committees, and other volunteers who have graciously supported our work through a very busy couple of years. We thank Catherine Novak for her years of service; her second term is complete at the rise of CYM 2021 and she will be missed!

### Reminders & Key Contact People:

- Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups are reminded to send any updates to their Meeting times and locations to [editor@quaker.ca](mailto:editor@quaker.ca) so that Quaker.ca listings (<https://quaker.ca/contact/find-a-meeting/>) can successfully help Seekers and Friends new to your area find you
- CYM Committees are reminded that they are responsible for requesting updates to Quaker.ca content that is relevant to their work (Quaker.ca is large and PubCom cannot stay on top of all the changes across CYM which should be reflected on the website, although we do our best!)
- There are significant resources on Quaker.ca. These include:
  - *Faith & Practice*: <https://quaker.ca/cympublications/faith-and-practice/>
  - *Organization & Procedure*: <https://quaker.ca/cympublications/organization-and-procedure/>
  - Digital versions of *The Canadian Friend*: <https://quaker.ca/cympublications/tcf/>
  - Numerous CYM lectures and talks: <https://quaker.ca/resources/audio-and-video/> (click on the “+” symbols to expand the audio and video offerings)
  - Other educational resources: <https://quaker.ca/resources/education/> (although we know Education & Outreach Committee is cooking up new ideas for how to share more educational resources online!)
- [editor@quaker.ca](mailto:editor@quaker.ca) (currently Tim Kitz) - website changes and *The Canadian Friend* articles
- [pubcom-clerk@quaker.ca](mailto:pubcom-clerk@quaker.ca) (currently Maggie Knight) - contact re: committee business

### How you can help PubCom:

- [Subscribe \(https://quaker.ca/news-events/newsletter/\)](https://quaker.ca/news-events/newsletter/) to the electronic newsletter and invite others in your local Meeting to do so as well. (The more Friends we can reach directly, the more effective the e-newsletter can be at helping to keep the CYM community in the loop and on the same page.)
- Submit news, events, etc to [newsletter@quaker.ca](mailto:newsletter@quaker.ca) by the 15th of each month.
- [Sign up to receive](#) *The Canadian Friend* and [submit](#) articles, reflections, art, and photos for upcoming issues.
- Make sure your mailing address is up to date with the CYM Office (email Kerry at [cym-office@quaker.ca](mailto:cym-office@quaker.ca))
- Join us! We need new committee members! Inquiries about the work of the committee are welcome to [pubcom-clerk@quaker.ca](mailto:pubcom-clerk@quaker.ca)

In Friendship,

Maggie Knight (Vancouver Island MM), Clerk, on behalf of the Committee:

Robert Kirchner (Edmonton MM), Rachel Urban Shipley (Ottawa MM), Catherine Novak (Vancouver Island MM), John Samson Fellows (CQLS Clerk, Winnipeg MM)

**Table 1: Summary of Current Work, Opportunities, & Gaps**

*(from Publications & Communication Committee’s June 2021 Reporting & Cleanness Report)*

<p><b>Work that currently relies on paid services (requires financial resources to be maintained)</b></p>	<p><b>Work that currently relies primarily on volunteer labour (requires skilled volunteers with the desire to continue this service)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Website editing (posting + updating content, basic structure changes)</li> <li>● <i>The Canadian Friend</i> coordination, editing, design, printing, and distribution</li> <li>● Website hosting, security and design updates, backups and recovery</li> <li>● Google for Nonprofits hosting, administration, and technological support (@quaker.ca emails and Google Drive/Docs/Sheets/videocall etc)</li> <li>● Accounting, personnel, and TCF mailing list management</li> <li>● Layout of CQLS pamphlets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Editorial decisions and policy</li> <li>● Program and oversight for 3 contractors</li> <li>● Reporting and collaboration with other parts of CYM</li> <li>● Budgeting and financial decision-making (within budget approved by Representative Meeting)</li> <li>● Monthly electronic newsletter</li> <li>● Considering and evaluating what communications technologies CYM should use or avoid using, keeping in mind privacy and security, accessibility/ease of use for our demographics, and corporate ethics</li> <li>● Through Canadian Quaker Learning Series, editing and oversight of production of CQLS pamphlets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work we could take on if we had more resources</b></p>	<p><b>Work we could support if we had more resources + more effective collaboration with other CYM committees (would need discernment with relevant committees)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CYM Communications Plan</li> <li>● Proactive schedule for updating and streamlining website content</li> <li>● Strategic communications calendar bringing together news and opportunities from across the Yearly Meeting (coordinating between committees, etc)</li> <li>● Better integration of content across media (e.g. featuring <i>TCF</i> articles on the website, instead of only PDFs of full issues)</li> <li>● Improve digital availability and distribution of CQLS pamphlets</li> <li>● FriendsIntentional organizational use of social media (current CYM Facebook presence is ad hoc; CYM is not currently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Materials (print + digital) for seekers and newcomers which could be used by Monthly Meetings</li> <li>● Livestreaming CYM events, such as Yearly Meeting, so that Friends can participate without having to travel</li> <li>● Hybrid in-person and virtual event design (with Program Committee and Educations &amp; Outreach Committee)</li> <li>● Intentional online distribution of educational resources (e.g. for First Day programming, local M&amp;Cs, etc) (with Education &amp; Outreach and other committees)</li> <li>● Deeper coordinated engagement in events such as World Quaker Day (opportunity</li> </ul>

<p>using any other social media, e.g. Twitter, Instagram, TikTok)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proactive management and distribution of our existing video content (YouTube, Vimeo accounts)</li> <li>● Creation of more short video content (previously requested by Contributions Committee, in keeping with current digital outreach + fundraising best practices)</li> <li>● More support for and collaboration with CYFYM / Young (Adult)</li> <li>● Convening Friends responsible for communications at the Monthly Meeting level to share advice and lessons learned</li> <li>● ...no doubt many other ideas! A shortage of ideas is never our challenge!</li> </ul>	<p>for many Meetings to undertake or participate in programming with some CYM coordination and/or support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support for the Archives Committee in considering how to hold digital records (e.g. retaining metadata from digital-only files) and provide appropriate digital access</li> <li>● More training for Friends on how to use CYM technological resources (e.g. Business section of Quaker.ca, Google Drive/Docs/Sheets, etc) - particularly in service of Friends serving CYM and working with each other virtually</li> <li>● Adoption of best practices in fundraising communications (with Contributions Committee)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communications work/infrastructure that is outside our responsibility (as we understand it)</b></p>	<p><b>Gaps: to our understanding, nobody holding responsibility / CYM has currently allocated insufficient resources</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Modernized CYM contact database to streamline the administration of donations, TCF mailings, and electronic dissemination of information</li> <li>● Up to date and effective CYM Directory that upholds privacy needs while enabling community building and service</li> <li>● Distribution of CYM’s Faith &amp; Practice</li> <li>● Distribution of excess copies of CQLS pamphlets</li> <li>● Coordinating remote participation in CYM Business sessions (scheduling, documents in advance, Zoom info, etc)</li> <li>● Tech and communications coordination across committees (calendar, video call bookings, reliable system, distribution of information)</li> <li>● Camp NeeKauNis runs their own website and communications</li> <li>● CFSC runs their own website and communications</li> <li>● Tech support for Monthly Meetings and Half-Yearly Meetings (although we have certainly shared advice as we able)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing and maintaining CYM-wide communications systems</li> <li>● Training and onboarding Friends serving CYM re: communications and technology</li> <li>● Training and onboarding CYM staff re: communications and technology</li> <li>● Coordinated approach to internal communications (e.g. holistic look at what information needs to reach who in the Yearly Meeting, streamlining what is circulated to MMs by the CYM Office, etc)</li> <li>● Coordinated approach to communications between Quaker bodies within CYM (MMs, WGs, HYM, NeeKauNis, CFSC, etc)</li> <li>● Coordinated approach to communications with bodies external to CYM (FGC, FWCC, CCC, Kairos, etc)</li> <li>● Stewardship of the overall “face of CYM” to the outside world (including seekers and newcomers)</li> <li>● Widespread support for Friends adjusting to and learning new technologies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Widespread and coordinated support for communications at Monthly Meeting and Half-Yearly Meeting levels</li> <li>● Discernment regarding communications and/or resources in languages other than English</li> </ul>
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**STATISTICAL SECRETARY**

2020 was a very unusual year for those Friends tasked with collecting the statistics for their Monthly Meeting and Worship Groups.

In March meetings ceased to gather in their regular meeting places and over the year they experimented with different ways of coming together. When completing the Statistical Form about attendance, Friends were invited to describe anecdotally their experiences during 2020. These will be described later in this report.

Last year we recorded 1001 members, but some meetings included corrections this year, to that number, reducing it to 994. At the end of 2020, the total membership number is 975.

Additions of members during the year included 10 new members by request and 7 transferring their membership to the meeting where they now worship.

The losses included 16 deaths, 2 resignations and 10 whose names were removed by their meeting. Of the total of 975 members, 642 are classified as involved, which is 66% and is a similar proportion to last year.

Counting regular or active attenders the number for 2020 is 533, whereas in 2019, it showed 635. This number may have been inflated due to different methods of counting attenders. It is hoped clearer instructions this year, gave a more accurate picture of our active attenders.

If we combine the number of attenders, 533, with the involved members’ number of 642, and then add in 74 Friends whose membership is in a different monthly meeting from where they regularly worship, we get the figure of 1249.

This gives us a snapshot of the potential of Friends across the country as a faith community to support CYM as an organization.

Friends were also asked to provide the average attendance at their meetings for worship, both in the monthly meeting and the affiliated worship groups. This was hard to do in 2020 due to the pandemic. The figures in the attached document reflect those numbers for January to mid- March 2020.

The experience of holding meeting for worship during the pandemic has been a challenge. Most meetings transferred to using Zoom. Some found their attendance increased, as those living at a distance could join regularly and it facilitated those unable to travel when the Canada/US border was closed.

Where meetings were not using Zoom, Friends had the opportunity to join those who were. Some worship groups and meetings worshipped more frequently, than their previous in person schedule. Two switched to weekly meetings, having met twice a month before, and found 30 minutes of worship and 30 minutes of worship sharing to be more conducive to a gathered silence.

Some of the challenges cited were families who missed the children's programs provided. Others found that those members working online from home were reluctant to go online on Sundays. However there were many descriptions of the positives of gathering online. The joy of seeing Friends who hadn't been able to be physically present before.

Many meetings experimented with different means of gathering during the summer, when the restrictions permitted outside gatherings. There were meditative forest walks, gathering in the meeting house or Friends' gardens. Others used masks and extra ventilation in their meeting house.

Few meetings experimented with blended meetings. One tried connecting a Friend in the meeting house with those in the garden, and those at home. One meeting invested in the extra equipment need to facilitate a blended meeting.

One meeting in addition to their regular meeting on Sunday, held meetings for Friendship on Friday evenings to keep in touch and strengthen the community. One meeting held a special Christmas program on Zoom. One worship group held discussion groups on social justice issues.

It is impressive to see how monthly meetings and worship groups have responded to the challenges of meeting together during the pandemic and found ways to worship together and to support their spiritual communities.

Much appreciation and gratitude is due for all those Friends across the country who tend to the task of counting averages of attendance and tracking the flow of members and attenders in their meeting, so that each year we have a picture of the statistical health of Canadian Yearly Meeting.

Virginia Dawson  
Statistical Secretary

**CYM STATISTICAL REPORT: CALENDAR YEAR 2018 - ATTENDANCE BY GROUP**

	Monthly Meeting	Name	Type of Group	Avg. attendance		Frequency of meetings
				M for W	FDS	
<b>Arg</b>	<i>Argenta</i>	Argenta	Main Body	9		weekly
		Nelson	Worship Group	5		twice a month
<b>AV</b>	<i>Annapolis Valley</i>	Annapolis Valley	Main Body	9		weekly
<b>Cal</b>	<i>Calgary</i>	Calgary	Main Body	14	1	weekly
		Lethbridge	Worship Group	3		monthly
<b>Col</b>	<i>Coldstream</i>	Coldstream	Main Body	12		weekly
<b>Cow</b>	<i>Cowichan Valley</i>	Cowichan Valley	Main Body	14		weekly
		Salt Spring Island	Worship Group	4		weekly
<b>Edm</b>	<i>Edmonton</i>	Edmonton	Main Body	10		weekly
<b>Hal</b>	<i>Halifax</i>	Halifax	Main Body	6	1	weekly
		Antigonish	Worship Group	6	1	weekly
		South Shore	Worship Group	3		twice a month
		Truro	Worship Group			weekly
<b>Ham</b>	<i>Hamilton</i>	Hamilton	Main Body	20	6	weekly
		Cambridge	Worship Group	6		weekly
<b>IBC</b>	<i>Interior British Columbia</i>	Interior BC	Main Body	13		weekly
		Lillooet	Worship Group	2		weekly
		Prince George	Allowed Meeting	0		inactive
<b>KA</b>	<i>Kitchener Area</i>	Kitchener Area	Main Body	16	3	weekly
		Guelph	Worship Group	0		inactive
		Lucknow	Worship Group	10		twice a month
<b>Mon</b>	<i>Montreal</i>	Montreal	Main Body	15	1	weekly
		Laurentian	Worship Group	3		weekly
		Mid-week	Main Body	5		weekly
		Eastern Shore	Allowed Meeting	0		intermittent
<b>NB</b>	<i>New Brunswick</i>	Fredericton	Worship Group	7		twice a month
		Fundy Friends	Worship Group	5		weekly
		Prince Edward Island	Allowed Meeting	6		weekly
		Sackville	Worship Group	6		varied
		Saint John	Worship Group	8		varied
		Woodstock-Houlton	Worship Group	9		varied
		Ottawa	Worship Group	9		varied
<b>Ott</b>	<i>Ottawa</i>	Ottawa	Main Body	32	1	weekly
		St. Lawrence Valley	Allowed Meeting	12		weekly
<b>Pel</b>	<i>Pelham (Niagara Quakers)</i>	Pelham	Main Body	13		twice a month
<b>Pet</b>	<i>Peterborough</i>	Peterborough	Main Body	10		weekly
<b>Pra</b>	<i>Prairie</i>	Regina	Main Body	0		in abeyance
<b>Sas</b>	<i>Saskatoon</i>	Saskatoon	Main Body	7		weekly
<b>SJ</b>	<i>St. John's WG</i>	St. John's	Worship Group	6		twice a month
<b>SP</b>	<i>Saanich Peninsula</i>	Saanich Peninsula	Main Body	10		weekly
<b>TI</b>	<i>Thousand Islands</i>	Thousand Islands	Main Body	11		weekly
<b>Tor</b>	<i>Toronto</i>	Toronto	Main Body	45	3	weekly
		Mid week	Main Body	7		weekly
		West End	Worship Group	8		monthly
		Vancouver	Worship Group	8		monthly
<b>Van</b>	<i>Vancouver</i>	Vancouver	Main Body	20	3	twice weekly
		Coquitlam	Worship Group	0		laid down
		North Burnaby	Worship Group	12	2	monthly
		Fraser Valley	Worship Group	0		laid down
<b>VI</b>	<i>Vancouver Island</i>	Victoria Friends	Main Body	30		weekly
		Victoria (Wednesday)	Worship Group	15		weekly
		Mid-Island	Allowed Meeting	6		twice a month
<b>Win</b>	<i>Winnipeg</i>	Winnipeg	Main Body	30	3	weekly
<b>Woo</b>	<i>Wooler</i>	Wooler	Main Body	7		twice a month
		Prince Edward Count	Worship Group	4		twice a month
		Yarmouth	Worship Group	4		twice a month
<b>Yar</b>	<i>Yarmouth</i>	Yarmouth	Main Body	8	3	weekly
		Manitoulin Island	Worship Group	0		in abeyance
		Otterville	Worship Group	5		monthly
<b>YS</b>	<i>Yonge Street</i>	Yonge Street	Main Body	18	1	weekly
		Little Britain	Worship Group	2	4	weekly

## CYM STATISTICAL REPORT CALENDAR YEAR : 2020

*Full names of meetings are given in Attendance by Group Report*

	Arg	AV	Cal	Col	Cow	Edm	Hal*	Ham	KA**	IBC	Mon	NB	Ott	Pel
<b>Membership Summary</b>														
<b>Total December 31,2019</b>	30	15	30	36	17	16	49	44	43	25	22	39	136	8
Corrections (2019 report)												-5	3	
<b>Additions:</b>														
Birth/adoption														
Request			2							1	1			1
Transfer in			1		1			1						1
<b>Losses:</b>														
Death				1	1			2		1		1	1	
Resignation														1
Removal				4										
Transfer out				1					1					
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS 2020</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Membership Profile</b>														
Birth to 18 (Young Friends)					2			1	2	4		0	2	
19-35 (Young Adult Friends)	6		3	1			1	4		2	1	2	17	
36-59 (Adult Friends)	3	7	11	4	3	6	16	14	20	4	5	7	37	3
60 and over (Senior Friends)	21	8	19	25	12	10	32	24	20	15	17	24	82	6
Uninvolved (of above)	19	7	18	11	5	2	19	19	7	5	7	9	60	2
<b>Members from other MMs</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Attendees Profile</b>														
Birth to 18			2					11	4	2	2		1	2
19-35		3	3					0		2	16	6	2	1
36-59		2	5	3	3	5	5	11	16	3	8	7	18	7
60 and over	7	2	4	7	9	3	4	5	16	7	9	14	17	8
<b>TOTAL ATTENDERS 2020</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total Involved in MMs</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Marriages</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>												

\*\* Estimated age profiles      \*2019 numbers

## MAIN SUMMARY

Columns include main body of meeting and groups under its care

	Pet	Pra*	Sas	SJ	SP	TI	Tor	Van	VI	Win	Woo	Yar**	YS	TOTAL
<b>Membership Summary</b>														
<b>Total December 31,2019</b>	10	2	12	0	17	25	111	73	81	14	11	80	48	994
Corrections (2019 report)							1			1	-1		-1	-2
<b>Additions:</b>														
Birth/adoption							1		1				1	3
Request							1	3		1				10
Transfer in									1	2				7
<b>Losses:</b>														
Death							4		1	1	2	1		16
Resignation						1							1	3
Removal								1					5	10
Transfer out								3			1		2	8
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS 2020</b>	10	2	12	0	17	24	110	72	82	17	7	79	40	975
<b>Membership Profile</b>														
Birth to 18 (Young Friends)						1	6		7			3	4	32
19-35 (Young Adult Friends)	1		3		1	8	19	4	15	2		19	3	112
36-59 (Adult Friends)		1	4		5	5	25	26	25	7	2	22	6	268
60 and over (Senior Friends)	9	1	5		11	10	60	42	35	7	5	35	27	562
Uninvolved (of above)	0	0	1	0	2	13	26	38	2	1	0	47	13	333
<b>Members from other MMs</b>	3	1	2	3	1	5	9	2	2	0	2	0	2	74
<b>Attendees Profile</b>														
Birth to 18					1		5		5	6		1	3	45
19-35		0	1	2		1	18	3	10	11			6	85
36-59	1			4		5	27	3	18	13	2	3	2	171
60 and over	15		1	2		6	36	5	16	9	9	6	15	232
<b>TOTAL ATTENDERS 2020</b>	16	0	2	8	1	12	86	11	49	39	11	10	26	533
<b>Total Involved in MMs</b>	29	3	15	11	17	28	179	47	131	55	20	42	55	1249
<b>Marriages</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

## **TRUSTEES of CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING**

### **2020 REPORT TO YEARLY MEETING**

Since our last report to Yearly Meeting CYM Trustees had several specially called meetings, plus our regular annual meeting on April 24, all conducted on Zoom.

CYM is in the midst of major change, particularly in the areas of finance and personnel management. While Trustees are not initiating these changes, we are involved by reason of our fiduciary responsibility for CYM. Our Reporting and Clearness session in January 2021 was a very useful opportunity to bring Friends' attention to these issues and to hear Friends' responses and advice. Trustees continue to depend on and appreciate the reports from our representatives and designates to Committee of Clerks, Personnel Management Group, Finance Committee, Contributions Committee and updates from CAST.

#### Consolidation of Funds

In November 2020, Representative Meeting minuted support in principle for the consolidation of CYM funds. Following a presentation at our April meeting, Trustees approved moving forward on the consolidation of funds for presentation in the 2021 audited statements. There are many details to be planned before this change can be implemented.

#### Unified Personnel System

At Representative Meeting in November 2020, Personnel Committee provided a very detailed report, outlining the development of the system that is now being finalized. The Personnel Policy ensures our practices meet the legal requirements of employment law and are also consistent with our Quaker values. This policy helps CYM to be a responsible Quaker employer with practices that are in compliance with employment law. The revision of the existing Personnel Policy is almost finished. That revision will be brought to Trustees for approval – the approved policy is expected to be received by Representative Meeting later this year.

The new Personnel System includes the role of Trustees in receiving and approving recommendations from the Personnel Management Group (PMC) and Committee of Clerks for any changes in employment. The trustee designate in the PMG is now responsible for signing contracts and employment agreements on behalf CYM.

#### Risk Assessment Reports:

We received and reviewed reports from all CYM committees and found committees to be managing potential risks thoughtfully and responsibly. The Risk Management process provides Trustees with current information about operations throughout CYM, but in no way represents an approval process for committee plans and activities.

#### 2020 Audited Financial Statements:

The Trustees reviewed the draft audit and approved it. We also re-appointed the auditing firm, Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep to conduct the audit of 2021 financial statements.

#### Physical properties owned by Canadian Yearly Meeting:

These properties are Camp NeeKauNis, the Quaker Archives, and three cemeteries in Ontario. Trustees have been in regular communication with the respective committees managing the operations of these properties. Planning for their financial needs is one aspect of the consolidation of funds that requires attention in the coming year.

CYM Trustees:

Kwame Barko, Pete Cross, Barbara Horvath (Clerk), Martha McClure, Rick Rolston, Anne-Marie Ziliacus (Treasurer).

Report prepared by Barbara Horvath, Clerk

Attachments:

List of investments

Reports from Yonge Street Friends Burial Ground, Pickering Friends Cemetery

Canadian Yearly Meeting Investments at December 31,  
2020

Asset Class Description	Book Value	Market Value
Cas		15,979
Fixed Income		
Bond funds & exchange traded funds	56,320	61,029
Preferreds		
Algonquin PWR & utilities	17,289	18,999
Bank of Nova Scotia	37,884	38,595
Bank of Nova Scotia	37,485	33,690
Bank of Nova Scotia	38,623	38,505
Brookfield Asset MGMT	12,345	9,450
Brookfield Infrastructure Partners LP	50,000	49,620
Brookfield Renewable Partners LP	49,442	48,440
Canadian Western Bank	95,299	92,454
CDN Imperial Bk of Commerce	59,400	60,660
CDN Western Bank	6,088	6,125
Fairfax Financial HODGS LTD	3,551	3,560
Fairfax Financial Holdings LTD	53,879	43,250
Fairfax FINL HLDGS LTD	2,183	2,226
Industrial Alliance Ins & Fin	24,975	21,130
Industrial Alliance INS & FIN SVC	19,691	20,650
Royal Bank of Canada	37,086	33,750
Toronto Dominion Bank	75,497	72,990
Toronto Dominion Bank	6,000	6,034
Floating Rate Preferreds		
Northland Power Inc	49,262	40,500
Preferred Share Funds & Exchange Traded Funds		
CDN Imperial Bk of Commerce	24,794	25,712
Equity		
AECON Group Inc	45,313	46,256
Brookfield Infrastructure Partnerships	23,795	27,273
GFL Environmental Inc	17,944	29,131
Intertape Polymer Group Inc	8,924	9,052
Allied Properties Real Estate Investment Trust Units	15,116	13,289
Bank of Montreal	12,551	16,936
Bank of Nova Scotia	19,160	22,704
Brookfield Asset Management Inc Class A Ltd	24,919	31,572
CDN Apartment PPTYS Real Estate Invst Trust UTS	24,927	30,063
CDN Western Bank	22,349	21,682
Manulife Financial Corp	30,549	42,129
Royal Bank of Canada	113,550	177,803
Toronto Dominion Bank	108,493	172,608
Open Text Corp	22,648	23,136
Alphabet Inc Class A Common Stock	30,271	73,742
BCE Inc Com New	73,737	74,608

Telus Corp  
Algonquin Power & Utilities Corp

16,298 15,313  
31,219 61,331

Brookfield Renewable Partners LP	5,420	32,515
Fortis Inc	18,540	23,400
Ishares S&P/TSX Capped Information	6,388	7,709
US Cash	149	149
US Equity		
VISA Inc Cl A Common Stock	10,704	13,124
Apple Inc	10,204	18,577
Microsoft Corp	35,243	40,036
Alibaba Group Holding Ltd Sponsored ADR	11,364	9,309
Exchange difference to show US in CAD \$	32,880	22,327
	1,545,727	1,799,122

## **Pickering Friends Cemetery for the year 2020**

March 18, 2021

Greetings! I hope you are staying safe.

The year 2020 was a difficult one. We lost Jim Adamson, who for a long time, had looked after the welfare of Pickering Friends Cemetery. He is missed and his passing left a huge knowledge gap about the cemetery.

Despite the pandemic, I visited the Pickering cemetery and found that the grounds were well kept. However, there are some headstones that need straightening, and two that are broken. John Sabeau will look into the process of hiring someone to do this work this year. The person who was supposed to do the work last year did not get back to John.

I am not aware of any scatterings or burials in 2020.

The grass was cut, and the cemetery was maintained in 2020. The cost of grass cutting in 2020 was \$1650, similar to costs in the past.

Ebby Madera, Co-convenor

## **Yonge Street Friends Burial Ground**

2020 Annual Report

Committee Members: Evelyn Schmitz-Hertzberg (Clerk & Administrator), Ruth Pincoe (Recording Clerk), Richard Kamus, Ruth Jeffery-MacLean, June Pollard

The Yonge Street Friends Burial Ground is located at 17000 Yonge Street in Newmarket, Ontario. It is south of and adjacent to the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting House. The Burial Ground is maintained for the interment of members of the Religious Society of Friends, regular attenders and their immediate families. The property is registered under the ownership of Canadian Yearly Meeting Board of Trustees and licensed under the Bereavement Authority of Ontario.

CYM Board of Trustees appoints members to the Burial Ground Committee and these Friends are responsible for the maintenance and management of the burial ground according to Quaker practices and the Ontario Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act (2002). The Canadian Yearly Meeting Trustees pay the operating costs. Although the work proceeds as necessary throughout the year, the committee meets in spring and fall to do a walk about to assess the need for maintenance, repairs and improvements, and to discuss all other issues that have arisen since the last meeting. Our last meeting was in November 2020 on Zoom. Richard Kamus reports

activity at the site and notes there is an increase in the number of people visiting during the pandemic.

Evelyn Schmitz-Hertzberg is the current Administrator. She maintains the burial ground records and reports to the Bereavement Authority on a yearly basis. Sale of lots and plots and the necessary recording of transactions are her responsibility. Evelyn also insures that there is a witness for all interments or the scattering of human cremains. She consults and gives approval for the shape, size and colour of a grave marker as well as insuring that wording is appropriate to a Quaker Burial Ground.

#### Interments and Scatterings 2020:

1 burial of cremated remains

1 burial lot was sold

4 stones were erected (one of the stones was laid flat to the ground and without a foundation which is contrary to the specifications outlined in the By-Laws. The Administrator has been in touch with Luesby Memorials to have that situation rectified.)

#### Donations:

\$4000 from the A.S. Rogers Fund (for the stone restoration project)

\$2500 from Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust (for the stone restoration project)

\$350 donation from Burton Keffer

Toronto Monthly Meeting has instituted an annual donation of \$500 to CYM Trustees for the stewardship of the grounds. This is in recognition that many departed Toronto MM members who are interred or ashes scattered and others who own rights for future burial or scattering of ashes. The donation is in recognition of the service provided by the Burial Ground Committee and Yonge Street Monthly Meeting who enables use of the meeting house.

#### Activities:

##### Groundskeeping

Richard Kamus (volunteer) and Kent Sorenson (contract) assumed the work of groundskeeping for a period of 2 years (end 2021). The change was a cost-saving measure with the expense reduction to be used for the stone restoration project.

Superior Groundskeeping has managed the activity for many years but their work was restricted to grass cutting. Richard will be documenting and reporting on the actual activity necessary to keep the property in acceptable condition.

##### Communication

Evelyn has written an article about the restoration project and including the history of the burial ground.

We now have a webpage on [quaker.ca](https://quaker.ca) to inform Friends interested in purchasing a plot or to acquire general information about the site. <https://quaker.ca/ysfbg/>

## Financial

Evelyn submitted a budget to the Trustees which to assist them in their financial considerations.

Richard Kamus, Ruth Pincoe and June Pollard were appointed to work on the fundraising to support the long range plan for the stone restoration project.

Financial activity for 2020 in the Newmarket RBC account has been reported to the CYM accountant. There has been communication to better understand the financial needs for maintaining the burial ground.

### Continuing Concerns:

**The Restoration Project:** This has been in the works since 2016. It involved making application to the Town of Newmarket to have the property recognized as being of historical significance. At the time the provincial government had several programs to fund the improvement of historic cemeteries. This was a lengthy project manoeuvring through the departments within the municipality. Unfortunately the programs were short lived but the concern for the historic markers continues. With the donations noted above we were able to contract for a short period of time this past summer and the work accomplished was highly encouraging. We hope to continue again this summer even though we have already had to cancel Memorial Restorations Inc. for the planned start in April. We remain hopeful that continued fundraising efforts will allow that to happen.

**Trees** There are several significant trees on site. They are well over 100 years in age and need regular monitoring. We have the consulting services (no charge) of an arborist. We are always aware of the possibility of need for additional care which will impact the budget. There is a dead ash tree that needs removal.

**Deterioration of the metal fence –** A section of property on the east side of the burial ground was temporarily expropriated to facilitate the construction of a transit corridor on Yonge Street. Construction on Yonge Street has moved south after which the Region of York offered assistance from their contractor to improve the appearance of the streetscape. The fence bordering Yonge Street was sanded and repainted by a group of volunteers from YSMM and the community. The paint has not withstood the impact of traffic on Yonge Street. We continue to hold the concern for the decorative fencing on the east side and now include all fencing around the property in our considerations.

The gate on the east side was repaired March 2020

Evelyn Schmitz-Hertzberg, Clerk and Administrator Yonge Street Friends Burial Ground Committee

## MEMORIAL MINUTES

### CHARLAND, LOUIS C.

30 June 1958 – 8 May 2021

Louis C. Charland was born in New Orleans on June 30, 1958. He was the son of Marguerite Pannet-Raymond and Claude Charland, from Montreal and Levis (Quebec). Professional commitment to health care runs in the family, with a grandmother who was a nurse, and a grandfather neurosurgeon. Louis' father Claude was a career-diplomat, while Marguerite, who also worked as a policy analyst on international development, was the pillar who kept the family together through the many adventures and relocations. Claude's early death, when he was ambassador to France in 1993, affected Louis and the family deeply.

As diplomat children, Louis, sister Anne-Elizabeth, and brother Bernard, grew up as true cosmopolitans, living in New Orleans, Lagos, Sao Paolo, Ottawa, Brussels, Paris, Rome, and Mexico City. Bernard remembers Louis as the "archetypal big brother" who would hold his hand when discovering "new schools, cities, and summer camps". They developed "a private language that was a mash-up of all the countries, schools, and cultures of their youth." Throughout his life, Louis continued to intersperse his English with French, his French with English. French remained for Louis the preferred language for conversations of the heart, and for the many epicurean enjoyments. His anglophone friends would often be blessed with a short French expression of love.

The diplomatic life impacted in other ways. Louis loved the buzz of big cities, getting lost in colourful neighbourhoods, trying out greasy-spoon ethnic restaurants, and then making friends salivate with a description or picture of a culinary gem. But he also confessed that for much of his life he found it hard to find a real 'chez-soi', a sense of being at home. It explains in part a restlessness that characterized a big part of Louis' life.

This restlessness was further a reflection of his eclectic mind and his boundless curiosity. In primary school in Brussels he was designated as courier for deliveries during class hours. He later realized it was the director's way to keep him out of trouble since classes were boring and he couldn't sit still. "Today I would have been diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed a pill", he'd say.

Louis abounded with talent. A former co-member of a rock band lauded how Louis "made his electric guitar sing." Problems with his hand forced him to abandon the guitar, but jazz, classical music, and French chanson remained a key part of his life. Louis wrote poetry and he was also an artist in the kitchen.

Philosophy became his professional vocation. Louis studied at Carleton and Western University, where he obtained his PhD in 1989. After working as consultant for the Ontario government, and work in bioethics and philosophy at the hospital for Sick Children and the University of Toronto, he moved to Montreal where he joined the research group of Benjamin Freedman at McGill University. He would credit Benjy, who passed away shortly after supporting his job application, for his trust, which gave him the boost that launched his further academic career.

The move to London in 1998, and his appointment in the departments of Philosophy and Health Sciences at Western, were also personally transformative. Just prior to his move, Louis faced a serious health crisis, which he surmounted with the help of his family and in the years since also with support and guidance from AA. AA became a staple in his life and gave him some of his most meaningful friendships and companionship on life's journey.

The outpouring of grief and expressions of appreciation from students and colleagues reflect how deeply valued Louis' work and mentorship was and will continue to be. Louis was one of the original thinkers in the philosophy of emotions and of psychiatry, and in bioethics. His articles on the role of emotions in decision-making capacity, and on anorexia nervosa as a passion, and recent work on the concept of 'emotion' in Descartes, to name just a few, is internationally pathbreaking. It reflects intellectual rigour and courage, and a talent for the evocative integration of lived experience in philosophical reflection. In line with his deeply human connection to others, many of his papers are constructed around narratives of experiences with illness and suffering.

Louis work and personal life are firmly intertwined. His own challenges, and his boundless support for those around him, have inspired his work on emotions and passions. Through his work, he also forged deep friendships and connections, including during the special year 2003/2004 at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

This is also the year he met his wife Anna, the person who became his ally and whom he deeply loved in the last two decades of his life. After Anna and their son James joined Louis in London, following their marriage in 2005, Louis found a further sense of purpose and serenity. He confided once how he had never imagined, having always lived as a bachelor, the comfort of daily life with the person he loved. He would talk with wonder and affection about Anna's amazing cooking and her daily rituals. Louis was a loving father for James as well, whose growth as a confident young man he admired. He increasingly appreciated his life in London, including the ritual of his daily coffee at the diner, his swims, the walks with Anna, and the excursions they frequently undertook.

His work also made him discover the Quakers. Louis first began attending Meeting for Worship at the Friends Meetinghouse in Sparta, Ontario in 2012. His interest in Quakers began when he was studying the history of psychiatry. He was impressed by the early Quakers' instrumental role in changing the public's perception and treatment of people afflicted with mental illness. The peace and tranquility of silent worship suited Louis's spirit-seeking nature and he became a regular attender. In 2013 he requested membership in the Society of Friends, and he was welcomed with open arms.

More than once during silent worship Louis was moved to share his deep gratitude for the Quaker community, and for the beauty and simplicity of the meetinghouse itself. On Sunday mornings he often arrived before anyone else to dwell in its quiet sanctity, and his presence helped to settle the meeting as people gradually arrived. He never failed to stay after meeting for worship to visit with everyone. Louis shared the results of his cooking adventures with friends at the monthly potluck lunch and conversations with him during these times were enjoyed by all. The Quaker community of Sparta is filled with deep love and gratitude for having known Louis.

His kind, gentle and friendly presence will be felt by his friends at the Meetinghouse long into the future.

All this contributed to Louis' particular happiness in recent years. He had found a home. He would come to Toronto no longer to escape as in his early London years a life that seemed at times too quiet for his restless and inquisitive mind, but to enjoy the presence of friends and family, and to share with Anna the things the big city offers. He was more than ever a supportive husband, brother, friend, colleague, and mentor; and a wise and understanding uncle to his nephews and nieces, as well as to our sons. He made plans for special things to do with Anna on semi-retirement. His huge international professional recognition, which pleased Louis, who tended to be too humble and at times somewhat unsure about the level of his accomplishments, inspired plans for various new projects with colleagues. He bubbled with life and energy.

It seems therefore particularly cruel that he was torn from our lives now and so abruptly. But Louis would invite us, not to understand with reason, but to trust there is a meaning to it all, that he left us on excellent terms, and that he is with us on our spiritual journey of acceptance. He'd perhaps suggest to find solace in the wisdom of Blaise Pascal : "La dernière démarche de la raison est de reconnaître qu'il y a une infinité de choses qui la surpassent. Elle n'est que faible si elle ne va jusqu'à reconnaître cela. Que si les choses naturelles la surpassent, que dira-t-on des surnaturelles. » « The last undertaking of reason is to recognize that there are an infinite number of things that transcend it. It is only weak if it does not recognize that. And if natural things escape it, what do we have to say of the supernatural things."

It has been a real blessing to have Louis, a beautiful soul, in our lives. Sacré Loulou, you leave a gaping hole but we know you're on our side when we take the path that lies ahead of us.

## **FARRELL, ANN** **1924 – 27 November 2020**

Ann Patricia Farrell was an only child born in London, England, in 1924 to apparently unconventional parents. She spent much of her childhood in a boarding school, and unfortunately, did not experience the closeness of a family. She was determined to have that for herself when she grew up.

During the Second World War she began her apprenticeship in the Fleet Street office of an Indian daily, and served as a radar operator with the WAAF. After the end of the war in Europe, another job took her to occupied Germany. She married Ted Farrell in 1948 and in the following year they emigrated to Canada. Her first job in Canada was in the library of a Vancouver daily, and later she wrote for the British Information office.

Ann's eldest son David was born in Canada. In 1954 the family returned to England where her other four children – Mary Ann, Siobhan, Dominic, and Judy – were born. They returned to Canada again in 1964, and when her marriage ended in 1969, Ann began her life as a single mother. Raising a large family was hard, but she pulled it off: there was little money, but there was always fun, music, parties, and summer holidays.

Ann had a long and successful career as a journalist, working first at the *Toronto Star*, and then in White Rock, British Columbia, as editor for *Country Life*. Her move to Sussex, New Brunswick, in 1983 to take on the job of editor of *The King's County Record* was quite a leap. Founded in 1887, the *Record* is the oldest continuously published weekly newspaper in Canada, and Sussex had its own unique rural character. Ann's genuine interest in the town endeared her to the community, and she appreciated and encouraged people in their work. Soon after her arrival, she persuaded a friend, local resident Lee Whitney, to write a weekly column about adventures in rural New Brunswick and his small family farm. The column was an instant success and continued for more than thirty years.

Faith was an important part of Ann's life. She delighted in talking about the mixed bag of Unitarian, Dutch Jewish, Catholic, and Quaker influences in her spiritual journey. Her earliest contacts with the Religious Society of Friends were two older women who gave her a home for part of her childhood. She encountered Friends again in her adult life and became a faithful part of the Quaker community in the Maritimes. In 1987 Ann was received into membership in New Brunswick Monthly Meeting, at a meeting held on a huge rock beside the ocean overlooking the Northumberland Strait. Friends in New Brunswick remember Ann as "an extraordinary person ... enormously spunky and ready for anything ... courageous and independent." She gave strength to her local Worship Group, to regional Quaker gatherings, and to special events with Quakers and the Indigenous Community.

She was also extremely curious, which helped to make her such a good reporter. In addition to her work as a journalist, Ann wrote two books. *Grace MacInnis: A Story of Love and Integrity*, published in 1994 is a well-written biography of this remarkable CCF (and later NDP) politician. Her memoir, *The Way It's Been*, is full of photographs, funny anecdotes, and keen observations about her own life and the people she met.

Ann continued to write for the rest of her life, sharing wonderful stories with her family and friends. For more than twenty years she was a core member of In My Own Words, a writing group in the Older Women's Network that published two anthologies.

If Ann's move from Toronto to New Brunswick was a "leap," her return to Toronto probably tested her legendary resilience. Though capable of critical thinking and discussion, and not given to much complaining, she found the "politics" of the large Toronto Monthly Meeting (TMM) tiresome. She clearly missed the spiritual intimacy of the New Brunswick Quaker community. Nonetheless, whenever possible, she attended Meeting for Worship at Friends House. She served on Ministry and Counsel and Personnel Committee, and held the staff position of Assistant Treasurer. She also served as a Canadian Yearly Meeting representative on Friends World Committee for Consultation, and in 1997 was one of two Canadians to attend the FWCC Triennial held at Selly Oak, Birmingham, in England.

Friends in the Maritimes – both Quaker and non-Quaker – missed Ann after her return to Toronto. She had made many lasting friendships and continued to keep in touch through letters, phone calls, and visits whenever possible. Ann treasured friendship and was always joyfully welcomed into the homes of all who knew her.

Ann's daughter Mary Ann wrote, "the kindness and compassion of faith was mirrored in her and became a major part of her life. She gave generously of her time and energy to a number of causes, two of which were particularly important to her: epilepsy (a disease that in 1995 took the life of her youngest daughter at age 32) and the Older Women's Network. She was original, unique, and witty, and she had an unending passion for life."

Over time, poor hearing and other age-related issues increasingly prevented Ann from venturing far from home. For a number of years, the Downtown Worship Group met once a month with Ann at her apartment in the Older Women's Co-op. Ann's simple hospitality created a comfortable atmosphere where the members could worship together, contemplate queries, share life stories, and support each other as they grew older. Ann graciously accepted a tendency toward chatter or debate within the Group while expressing that what she really appreciated was deep silence. She opened herself to opportunities to make an inward journey alone or with others.

Ann Farrell passed away peacefully on 27 November 2020 in Picton, Ontario, at the home of her eldest daughter, Mary Ann, who cared for her during the last weeks of her life.

### **FISCHER, PHYLLIS VALERIE**

**1 June 1929 – 21 August 2020**

Phyllis Fischer died on 21 August 2020. Despite her request for simplicity in matters after her death, we write this minute in remembrance of our Friend because we want to record the difference she made in our lives and in the world. By sharing qualities from her life that we see as important, we learn ways to chart our own ways forward.

Phyllis had a strong calm centre. She was loving, generous, wise, grounded, and practical. Over and over, Friends have remembered that she was an exceptional listener. Phyllis was ferociously independent. She had a great sense of humour – a quality not to be underestimated!

As Quakers, we appreciate people who are plain spoken and speak their truth. If Phyllis gave her word, or an opinion, you knew it was genuine and well thought through. She was a wonderful person to discern issues with, get support from, share a laugh, and talk to about almost anything from art to dogs to inequality to music. She lived simply and cared deeply about people, creation, justice, and most especially her boys and their families.

Her strength of character and practical side helped her as one of the few female students entering medicine at McGill. As a pathologist, she used her skills to support the Anishinaabe people of Grassy Narrows in northern Ontario, by providing proof of the horrendous effects of mercury poison on the people living along the Wabigoon River. Phyllis built relationships with, and advocated for concerns identified by, Indigenous partners, in communities, in the urban settings, and in prisons where she volunteered with the Native Sons program.

Phyllis carried out this leading with the nascent Quaker Committee for Native Concerns, originally operating under Canadian Yearly Meeting, and shortly thereafter, becoming a program under Canadian Friends Service Committee, currently called the Quaker Indigenous Rights Committee. This was a committee Phyllis served on and worked with for the rest of her life. She also supported Peace Brigades International. Although she worked on committees locally as a part of the life of Toronto Monthly Meeting, her overall concerns were national and international in scope. She was supportive, caring, and compassionate, committed to social justice not only as an end goal but as a process of getting there.

Always generous, she shared her home as a space for meetings, travelling F/friends or for housing the young interns of Canadian Friends Service Committee. An intern reminisced that she learnt the value of inter-generational friendships and how small acts of thoughtfulness and kindness can make a big difference.

Phyllis preferred to live her spirituality rather than talk of it. She let her life speak. You could see it in the way she held herself and how she met people, how she listened and how she considered things. She really could talk to anyone and meet them where they were, which speaks to the depth of her spiritual practice. She answered that of God in each person by listening profoundly. Her spirituality ran quiet and deep. She did not profess to know the answers or outwardly speak to matters of faith. She had a healthy skepticism about “certainties,” but she lived her life faithfully, truthfully, and nonviolently.

Phyllis Fischer was a pattern and an example for all of us. May her spirit shine through in our collective memory and actions, as embodiments of truth and love.

**McGRUTHER, MARGARET**  
**1925 – 13 March 2021**

Margaret McGruther died on Saturday March 13, 2021 at the age of 96, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Margaret was born in 1925, in London England, to Quaker parents, John “Bertie” Lief and Gertrude “Amy” Howes. She is survived by two sisters, Fiona Lief and Esther Large, niece Janet, nephew Peter, daughter Rosemary McGruther (David Ross) and grandchildren Claire Rose and Garrett Ross. Her husband, Frank McGruther predeceased her in 2014.

She grew up in Sutton Coldfield, England and attended Quaker Meetings in Middlesex and Warwickshire. After earning her teaching certificate, she emigrated to Montreal, transferring her membership to Montreal Friends Meeting. She participated in the life of that Meeting while studying at Sir George Williams College, working for Bell Telephone, and learning French, typing, shorthand, mathematics, sewing and tailoring. Margaret met Frank at a Scottish Country Dancing group and they were married in 1958 under the care of Montreal Friends.

They moved to Calgary in 1961 and she transferred her membership to Calgary Monthly Meeting. She earned her Bachelor's degree in education at the University of Calgary and taught elementary school briefly until a diagnosis of celiac disease caused her to retire. Margaret and Frank's continued interest in Scottish country dancing led them to found the Calgary branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. They took art classes, and joined the Calgary Sketch Club, filling their home with their paintings. She continued taking classes in computers and Spanish. Margaret was a life-long learner and avid skier, hiker, and canoeist, joining Bow Waters Canoe Club expeditions, skiing in the winters and canoeing and camping in the summers. She loved the outdoors and continued hiking and learning botany and birds until very late in her life.

She had a strong sense of community service: she wrote letters for Amnesty International, volunteered with Project Ploughshares, and taught English as a Second Language. She volunteered at the Kerby Centre until she was 94, editing the newsletter and helping seniors prepare their taxes. She was a founding and active member of the Grace Tai Chi Group.

Margaret was a careful and meticulous woman, relied on to catch errors in Quaker minutes and the Kerby News. She was modest, so that many of her friends did not know of her wide-ranging interests and education. She was thoughtful of others, ensuring that visiting children had toys to play with, the clerk had a footstool during Meeting for Worship for Business, and that there was a collection of tea to satisfy everyone. She was well known for her delicious gluten-free macaroni and cheese which she brought to all the potlucks.

Margaret was very active with Calgary Monthly Meeting, serving as Clerk several times. She was a keeper of our history, recording her knowledge in what is now the history section of our website. She and Frank travelled to Western Half Yearly Meeting, often staying in their little trailer. She served as clerk of WHYM in the 1970s. She participated in Canadian Yearly Meeting and was interested in the Canadian Friends Historical Association.

Above all, Margaret quietly held Calgary Monthly Meeting. Her steadfast participation, and her knowledge of Quaker process and history, held our meeting together when numbers fell, keeping space for new attenders to experience Quaker worship and life. Being a Quaker was a cornerstone of her life.

**RAJAGOPAL, PINAYUR (RAJA)**  
**1 March 1930 – 11 June 2020**

Raja was born in Vellore, India and participated in nonviolent resistance early in his life. When he was 12 he marched with the Quit India movement, was clubbed on the head by a policeman, and bore the scar throughout his life. He met Gandhi in 1947, the year of India's independence.

Raja graduated college in 1950, and then taught mathematics in Alagappa College in Karaikudi. In 1958, he started a two-year fellowship in physics in Madras, and in 1960, he received a Commonwealth scholarship to pursue a PhD in computer science at Cambridge University in England.

In 1962, while on vacation in London, Raja met Dagmar, a German student who became the love of his life. Raja completed his PhD in 1963 and in 1964 he secured a position at the Max Planck Institute in Munich where Dagmar lived. In 1965, Raja and Dagmar were married.

In 1966, Raja accepted a tenured professorship at York University, which at that time was a brand-new university, and he moved to Toronto with Dagmar and their firstborn son, Krishna. Raja was the head of the Department of Computer Science and Math in Atkinson College. Atkinson was a unique experiment in Canada, a faculty devoted entirely to teaching part-time students, typically working mature students who needed nighttime classes. Raja built the department and would teach there for 30 years.

Once in Toronto, Raja and Dagmar together sought a new spiritual tradition, and eventually came to worship at Friends House in Toronto, becoming members of Toronto Monthly Meeting (TMM) in 1973. Raja was drawn to the social justice aspect of Quakerism and sought that of God in everyone. He and Dagmar became actively involved in committee work and their sons, Krishna and Mohan, attended First Day school.

Raja was Clerk of the Quaker Committee for Refugees (QCR) for many years. Under Raja's clerkship, TMM became well informed about the work of the Committee. It is thanks to Raja's dedication to "right ordering" and process that the committee is on such firm ground today. Raja laid out the Terms of Reference for QCR as well as other TMM committees, so that the Committee's purpose and scope would be clear and accessible. Raja's proposed *Guidelines for Good Committee Work* was intended to foster the discipline of Friends' way of conducting business, thus helping to maintain the integrity (both structural and spiritual) of our Meeting.

Raja was a faithful friend. Friends remember his warm handshake; whenever he met a friend, he would enclose their hand with his, look them in the eyes, ask how they were, and really care about the answer. He stayed in touch with friends, near and far. "Raja's subdued tenderness was known to blossom when he called – to phone he would raise his voice, a voicesong with a smile." He cared for the spiritual wellbeing of Friends, sending Quaker material to isolated Friends, and warmly welcoming newcomers to our Meeting. Despite his illness in the months before he died, he lovingly gave his energy to visiting a friend seeking membership to TMM.

Raja also gave his time and energy helping others to improve their lives through education. He devoted his whole teaching career to bringing education to those who had missed it, who could not go to university straight out of school. Raja took great pride in the educational accomplishments of his wife, sons, and grandchildren. He was a teacher his whole life, including after retirement. He taught math to those who were interested at Christie Gardens, the retirement residence where he lived for his last 6 years. He took a keen interest in the educational journeys of all those whom he cared for: from the waiters at his favorite restaurant to the Resident Manager of Friends House.

Raja wrote a wonderfully helpful Introduction to Quakerism for newcomers to our Meeting, which is also available on the TMM website. He also wrote about the dangers of agricultural biotechnology, resulting in a Quaker Institute for the Future booklet published in 2011. He followed this up with another publication in 2019 Environment and Health, the Other Planetary

Crisis, in which he concludes that “this is what we can hope for and what we should work for – a tipping point on the positive side of awareness about environment and health... We can work to spread awareness of the dangers of our present course and hope for social tipping points to occur.”

Raja was deeply rooted in Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace and right relationship with the natural world, which shaped his spiritual legacy. Spiritual maturing is a life-long process. In the final decades of his life, Raja returned to Hinduism, and drew on Hindu tradition to deepen his understanding of Quakerism. He described himself as a Hindu Quaker, and found himself enriched by both Hindu and Quaker faith experiences.

Dagmar’s health started declining around 2013, and Raja was a devoted caregiver. Her death in May 2017 was a blow which Raja bore with fortitude but from which he never recovered. Friends will miss Raja greatly and will remember his paternal care and his attention to the spiritual wellbeing of the Meeting.

## REPRESENTATIVES TO WIDER QUAKER BODIES

### FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION

2021 Report

While the pandemic has taken away many opportunities, it has also provided some. In 2019, only one Canadian registered for the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Section Meeting. In 2021, six Canadians registered. We do not to celebrate 600% increases very often. My report will share some of those experiences.

*The FWCC Mission and Vision is Answering God's call to universal love. FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world. And to envision a thriving and integrated network of Friends from the Arctic to the Andes, woven together in transformative faith, learning to love, listen, and witness.*

I asked the Friends who attended this year to share their experiences.

**Ellen Helmuth**, New Brunswick Monthly Meeting, wrote:

I found my attendance at the FWCC Section of the America's to be enriching, especially to be in the presence of so many different groups of Quakers. Programmed, unprogrammed, conservative, evangelical, and they all brought gifts to share. I was inspired by the daily devotions led by Mey Hasbrook. The morning sessions were always led by music. One morning, Lavonne from Kansas played two very meditative pieces of music on the piano and as I listened very closely, an image of my Mother's face came to me. A very distinct image even though she had aged considerably from when I last saw her when she was still here on this earth. And it brought back my precious childhood memory of her playing piano as I would go to sleep each night. The image lasted for the entire time of Lavonne's playing. It was as if my Mother was paying me a visit. I was in tears. I could not talk about it for quite some time as it was so emotional. I was raised in a Mennonite family and we sang hymns acapella in our church services with four-part harmony. Bonding and harmonious

**Barbara Aikman**, Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting, shares:

I attended a study group called "Supporting Clearness and Faithfulness" facilitated by Marcelle Martin and Jorg Aruz; Both from the Philadelphia area. The session was filled with organized factual insights and practical procedures for setting up either of these two types of groups. We also broke into pairs with opportunity for experiential learning. For example, practicing deep listening and asking evocative questions.

The Faithfulness group was a new idea for me. I know some Friends in CYM meet regularly with the same small group of Friends, some over many years, to share their spiritual journeys, seeking support and to be challenged in living their faith. Both groups have an atmosphere of Holy accompaniment and an intention to support clarity, trust, faith and faithfulness.

The Faithfulness group was described as 3-7 people, meeting monthly for 2 hours. In rotation each person has one hour of the group's focus. Some desired outcomes are responding to God's call, acknowledgments of giftedness and grace, identify impediments to following God's will and allowing them to be removed.

Why am I led to share this with you? I have been feeling stuck, empty, lacking purpose since my retirement. This idea of a faithfulness group where we are accountable as well as supported is something I think would be beneficial. It takes things deeper from our Sunday worship and study groups and is personal.

I found many sessions of the FWCC section meeting very inspiring. Messages of Hope, call to plant new seeds, being held in love. My faith to allow things to unfold and know I am not alone are blessings from the gathering.

**Gwen Anderson, Winnipeg Monthly Meeting:**

The online section meeting was posed to our Meeting in this Covid-season as an opportunity that may not come again: this unfolding of the FWCC tapestry in our own homes.

I registered with trepidation. Canada has a liberal, unprogrammed Quaker culture and the Winnipeg Meeting, I suspect, is a liberal among liberals. I am homosexual. I don't seek spiritual connection with folks who are guided by religious teachings to draw a divide between us—the gay and the straight. But: the unfolding tapestry in our own homes, and so on. I thought it true that this year's online Section Meeting may be the only one I'm able to attend.

I attended delicately. No wading in, for me. I did not make time for the Bible Study, though among less conservative company I likely would have. I skipped the first Home Group meeting but at Glenn Morison's urging, I attended the second. I also attended the Opening session, and my workshop session—Connecting with Indigenous Peoples Through the Land with Pamela Parker.

The sessions I attended made me appreciate Quaker process. The patience that sits in in any Quaker gathering, especially welcome in the non-simultaneously translated sessions. I enjoyed those most—witnessing while speakers adjusted themselves to the pace of the translator; listening to their words and then listening again to them spoken in a language which to me is all cadence and occasional familiars.

I met familiars, also, in all the breakout rooms in any of the sessions. People like me—these liberal, these conservative—peering into our computers, self-self-conscious of the connection we were making.

There was controversy in my chosen workshop—Connecting with Indigenous Peoples Through the Land. Here in this workshop were those of us who possess the land together with those who no longer do. An eloquent and passionate Black woman to remind us not everyone comes from people who one way or another sought land. Uncomfortable-making in the good way a Quaker gathering can be. If I attend future Section Meetings I'm sure to come again with my delicate

feelings. I am too old to willingly stand the disrespect of some one or another's god. That's not company I seek. But I was enriched by this session. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity.

And I share two highlights from my own experience:

I very much enjoyed attending a presentation on the Right Sharing of World Resources work with women's groups in Kenya, India and Sierra Leone. In particular, to hear about the way it has evolved by close attention to what has and what has not worked so well.

The presentation by Jerry Knutson on Personal Spiritual Discernment, based on his writing of Pendle Hill Pamphlet #433 was a delight. To try and describe it briefly, we were encouraged to bring a personal issue of choice and then to imagine voices embodied in a group around you. These might be your body, your mind, your inner critic and such. After you have heard from all of them, a wise, loving and lovable clerk speaks. I was surprised as the tone of my "inner critic" was much more forceful and aggressive than the gnawing and oblique tone that I normally experience with my inner critic. And the wise clerk did indeed end by posing a question I had not thought of.

For more information on the Friends World Committee for Consultation, please feel free to contract me, or visit [www.fwcc.org](http://www.fwcc.org) or the Section of the Americas [www.fwccamericas.org](http://www.fwccamericas.org).

Glenn Morison  
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## **KAIROS** **July 2021**

KAIROS was formed in 2001 by bringing together 10 inter-church coalitions with thirty years of ecumenical work experience in social justice and human rights. Today we are indigenous, settlers and newcomers to Canada working with people of faith and conscience for justice. KAIROS is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021 with various activities this fall. Please check out the website at [www.kairoscanada.ca](http://www.kairoscanada.ca)

I represent CYM on the Steering Committee of KAIROS and have been the chair for the past three years. This will be my last year on the Steering Committee.

2020 began for KAIROS as it did for many other organizations, with closing our offices and asking staff to work from home. KAIROS staff and programs moved on-line - meeting and working virtually.

As well, KAIROS moved its offices at the end of June 2020. This was not a planned move. The landlord asked KAIROS to leave to renovate the office building even in the midst of a pandemic! We moved to the Anglican Church Head Offices, with staff still working from home.

During this time KAIROS's programs hardly missed a beat focusing on ecological justice, including social and economic justice, gender justice, indigenous rights, and migrant justice.

In 1919/20 The Women, Peace and Security program organized a delegation of church leaders to visit their partners in Palestine and Israel. The delegation spent time with women's groups, visited community development and infrastructure projects and met with civil society organizations. CFSC Clerk, Lana Robinson, was part of this delegation.

Kairos Blanket Exercise (KBE) went online in 2020 and provided participants with a virtual experience. The KBE is KAIROS's largest program in terms of the number of workshops and participants across Canada. As well teaching and sharing circles were offered led by Indigenous Knowledge Keepers. This new initiative addresses both historical and contemporary topics in an honest and personal way based on an Indigenous-world view and using Indigenous teachings and protocols.

The Migrant Justice program received Federal Government funding to provide support for the activities of local community groups who are working to help improve the lives of migrant workers. They are advocating for permanent residency rights and human rights for migrant workers in Canada.

Information about all of these programs – and others - can be found on the KAIROS website at [www.kairoscanada.ca](http://www.kairoscanada.ca)

KAIROS has endorsed the Principles for a Just Recovery and has joined an informal alliance of more than 300 national and local civic society groups to demand that recovery plans move us toward a more equitable and resilient future. This includes rejecting militarism, and other forms of violence and promoting a positive peace in which all people, especially women can fully participate in political, economic and social life. KAIROS urges the federal government to invest in a future that promotes the integrity of the planet and the dignity of all peoples.

In October 2020 Jennifer Henry, KAIROS's executive director for over eight years decided to step down as its Executive Director. She wrote to the Steering Committee, the staff and the volunteers at KAIROS, "It has been an honour and privilege to serve this incredible inspiring movement, As KAIROS prepares its new five year strategic plan, it seems like the right time for a leadership transition, one that will invite new vision, and energy into KAIROS' future." The KAIROS Steering Committee thanked Jennifer for her many contributions over the years and noted that the organization has grown and expanded under her leadership. In January 2021 there was a virtual celebration of Jennifer's work with contributions from the KAIROS family across Canada and internationally.

An Interim Executive was put in place in December and the Steering Committee, with the help of the Human Relations department of the United Church of Canada, set up a process to hire a new Executive Director. In May 2021, KAIROS hired Aisha Francis as its new Executive Director.

At the same time, KAIROS is in the process of developing its 2021-2026 strategic plan which will focus on four organizational areas and three programmatic themes. The organizational areas are 1) anti-racism, equity and diversity within KAIROS; 2) Network and Movement development; 3) discerning the role of the KBE (Kairos Blanket Exercise) within KAIROS; and

4) discerning the role of institutional churches in KAIROS over the next 20 years. The programmatic themes are 1) decolonization, indigenization, racial and migrant justice; 2) land, water and climate protection; and 3) global gender justice, human rights and Peace building. This is my last year on the KAIROS SC representing the CYM. KAIROS is a dynamic and energetic organization focusing on ways and means to support rights gender and ecological justice through its partners internationally and in Canada. I do hope the Nominations Committee can find someone to step into this role.

Thank you for allowing me to represent CYM on the Steering Committee of KAIROS for the past six years.

Anne Mitchell

## **KAIROS ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE CIRCLE**

July 21, 2021

The KAIROS Ecological Justice Circle (EJC) brings together one rep. from each of the Canadian member churches, to work on advancement of social and environmental justice, based on the understanding that the earth is an integral part of God's creation, and that we must live within Earth's material limits. Our work is inspired by eco-theology, and influenced and informed by Indigenous wisdom.

This is year three of my second 3-year term (Fall 2018 - Spring 2021) on the KAIROS EJC, which concludes my participation as CYM Rep. in this role. Our EJC has kept in touch via conference calls in April & November of 2020 and February of 2021. The in-person all-Circle Gathering which is usually held in May of each year in Toronto was cancelled in 2019, 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19.

EJC has been mostly virtual, with no in-person programming due to COVID.

Launch of Reconciliation in the Watershed Resource: Children's Reflection was released on World Water Day, March 2020: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Reconciliation-in-the-Watershed-Resources-Childrens-Reflection.pdf>

Climate Action Month: Held virtually in September, 2020: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/ecological-justice/climateactionmonth-30-day-challenge-2020>

Faith-based climate initiative For the Love of Creation: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/for-the-love-of-creation-a-faith-based-initiative-for-climate-justice> There are now 30+ endorsing churches and groups, with KAIROS playing a lead role.

KAIROS signed on to a letter in March 2020 calling on any bailout of the oil and gas industry to go directly to workers and to clean up orphan wells: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/no-new->

[money-for-oil-and-gas-companies-give-it-to-workers](#). It appears the government listened with this [announcement](#).

*[Holding Close to the Heart](#)*: A year-long process that was launched in March 2020 to remember and pray for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and the children who died in residential schools. The plan was for a prayer bundle to be passed from hand to hand across the country, but were paused due to COVID.

KAIROS submitted a public comment in September 2020 on the proposed Tilbury LNG Expansion project in BC: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/climate-action-month-day8>

Faithful Climate Conversations were launched in November 2020 - a series of guides to help faith communities talk about climate change: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/canadian-faith-groups-launch-climate-conversation-initiative>

[Sacred People, Sacred Earth Day on March 11, 2021](#), BC-Yukon KAIROS representatives including myself joined in organizing and participating in a GreenFaith International day of action. We gathered to pray, meditate, sing, and ring bells in front of Jonathan Wilkinson's office (Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change) and to [read out and present the list of demands](#). KAIROS encouraged people through For the Love of Creation to organize locally and supported an online space to introduce the faith-in-action campaign.

It has been an honour to serve with the KAIROS Ecological Justice Circle over the past six years. I sincerely hope that another Canadian Friend will be inspired to participate in the KAIROS Ecological Justice Circle so that Quakers will continue to be represented in this important work.

In Peace,  
Ruth Walmsley Vancouver MM.

## **WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

As a new representative to the World Council of Churches (WCC), I am still getting the lay of the land, but in this have been aided by representatives from other Quaker bodies (most notably Janet Scott from Friends World Committee for Consultation, who has been involved with WCC for decades), and by contacts I am making with Canadians from other church bodies.

I attended my first meeting of the Central Committee (June 23-29) by Zoom. Naturally, as with any ecumenical body (or any body, actually), a great deal of energy is spent framing things in ways that allow those with a broad spectrum of positions and concerns to together carve out a way forth, a process that is at once fascinating and frustrating. But the commitment to stay in the conversation and work things through despite genuine and deep disagreements I find deeply admirable. The next Central Committee meeting will be in person in Geneva in February, but I am sure that CYM finances will not permit my participation in that meeting.

At this past Central Committee meeting I was assigned to the sub-committee dealing with the program for the upcoming 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, 31 August to 8 September of 2022 (moved back a year due to the pandemic). My intention is to attend.

The program also included meetings of regional groups, and those of us in North America heard reports (chaired by Archbishop Mark MacDonald, the Anglican Church of Canada's first National Indigenous Anglican Bishop) of a number of listening consultations (called "Pilgrimages for Justice and Peace") that have happened at key locations on the continent mainly around indigenous, Black Lives Matter, climate, and life sciences issues, and in which the Canadian Council of Churches (whose Zoom meetings I have also been attending in this capacity) has been a central player.

Jeffrey Dudiak

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY MONTHLY MEETING

We are a small Meeting that meets weekly on First Day for Worship and holds Meeting for Worship for Business as needed.

Using the Queries provided by Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel (CMMC), we held a Meeting for Worship in sharing format, on both Zoom and in person, as has become our custom these last months. Friends shared many things they are grateful for:

- The excitement and energy of our March weekend retreat that was just before the Covid lockdown in Nova Scotia.
- Support given by Friends to Friends, phone calls during isolation, deep involvement in CYM's work, a community in which to find love and nurturance.
- Opportunity for social in-person time in the summer: games and picnic in the park, evening camp fires.
- Our new ability to use the Zoom platform for worship, business and connection with families, friends, wider Quaker groups regionally and around the world, and technical help in doing so.
- Having new people find, and old members attend, our virtual worship from greater and lesser distances.
- The leading of Friends to find our Meeting a place in the community to worship, even in the time of social distancing, with the hope of outreach as circumstances allow.
- The still new Atlantic Half Yearly Meeting (AHYM) as it provides connections among us all.
- The ability to be of service to CYM, and through that developing new relationships, and welcoming the commitment and willingness to change across our big Yearly Meeting.
- Living in Nova Scotia where we have found ourselves, through no virtue of our own, relatively free of Covid.

In reflecting on the effects of the Covid virus at a personal level, some Friends found the experience distancing with too much sitting in front of screens; others liked the slower times, and some experienced both. As a Meeting we were challenged to be creative in meeting the needs for worship and community. Not all of us are comfortable with virtual meetings; some of us are nervous with in-person meetings even under our province's guidelines. We miss our pot lucks and tea time conversations. On the other hand we have sometimes been surprised with the presence of Spirit in virtual meetings and sharings. It has been a joy when distant Friends who we otherwise would not see or have met have come onto Zoom.

Shared thoughts on the conflict queries: conflict can be problematic for Quakers. We are confused and suppress emotions. We were asked how we can create safe places when things are hard. Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting (AVMM) has had its fair share of conflict in the past and we have not always been able to have resolution. Our Ministry and Counsel is available. With the establishment of Atlantic Half-Yearly Meeting (AHYM) with a ministry and counsel, there will be a wider group and resources to draw upon.

AVMM does not have an active peace or social justice concern leading us to concerted action. Members in our Meeting are active in the wider community and enrich the Meeting. Friends are engaged with action on climate change, health and well-being, food security, community gardens, guaranteed income, group transitional work, non-violence work, indigenous fisheries, and others. We hope to take part in shared concerns with others in AHYM.

Spirit works among us. We offer a reading at the beginning of Worship and there is often vocal ministry. After Worship we share and chat, but still are feeling the need for study group and retreat opportunities in the near future. We celebrated World Quaker day with a video and sharing session.

Our Meeting participates in the Wolfville Area Inter Church Council's activities. We value our relationships with the wider community of both Quaker groups and local community groups. Still seeking openings and new Light, we strive to be grounded in faith that Spirit will be present with us and we will be led to live our Quaker testimonies in truth and with love.

## **ARGENTA MONTHLY MEETING**

What is the state of our society? We are okay; however we are also in a state of longing. Longing to return to our regular schedule of sitting together.

Perhaps this separation has sharpened our appreciation for how the Meeting serves our spiritual life. Members are moved by the faithfulness of Friends showing up. Just being present. We are nourished by a sense of community and acceptance. We appreciate the silence and simplicity of Meeting for Worship. We treasure the gems of wisdom spoken out of the silence or in our "afterwords" time. Our connections are deepened by conversation after Meeting where hopes, dreams, ideas and concerns are shared.

We Friends are especially appreciating the perfection of nature during these Covid times, as we seek those activities that nourish our spirits.

Many are fed through volunteering. Care of our Meeting House and grounds provides that opportunity for some. Others volunteer in a Quaker School. Another Friend serves our local library. Friends work with children and serve on community boards. Others serve on CYM committees. Many also participate as advocates for social justice. The theme of protecting the environment runs deep in our Meeting as well.

We have found joy this past year in the quiet of slowing down, learning to worship by oneself, and immersing ourselves in nature. The year 2020 brought Meeting for singing and worship with distant Quakers and churches, and brought some members of our two worship groups together. This use of video conferencing has proven satisfying and even offered a surprising sense of intimacy among participants from various communities.

As safe and confirming as our Meeting for Worship is and has been, what we would change is – we would like to increase our numbers. Given that we are all retirees, survival of Argenta Monthly Meeting will only be assured by welcoming in younger members. We acknowledge our need to get creative and concrete as to how we might foster a more inclusive meeting.

## **COLDSTREAM MONTHLY MEETING**

The year 2020 was a year of changing, compromising, growing and adapting. Our Meeting rose to the challenges created by the pandemic and worked its way through its effect on us with members' cooperation. There have been positive and negative consequences both on the Meeting as a whole and on individual members. The strength of the ties that bind us together as a community seemed to strengthen as we struggled through keeping members safe and able to be part of our Meeting one way or another.

Whenever it was allowed within the gathering restrictions imposed, we continued to hold Meeting for Worship at our meetinghouse. Since it has a large capacity, we were generally able to have as many people who chose to come attend although, when limited to 10 attendees, there were pre-Meeting conversations about who got to come and who did not, even within households. When we realized the pandemic was going to be lengthy, we worked together to come up with solutions for using a virtual platform to expand the options for attending. Through some experimentation, we came up with a solution. Some members attend at the meetinghouse with masks, disinfecting, distance, and no food. Those at the meetinghouse set up a virtual hub using a cell phone, computer and large TV screen. A microphone was added to increase the ability of those on Zoom to hear anyone speaking at the meetinghouse. The rest of the members attend via Zoom while connected to the meetinghouse.

This changed setup has had some effects on our group. There are people who do not, cannot or choose not to attend via Zoom. There are people who cannot, do not or choose not to attend in person. The result of this has been that there are members we do not see, but some who we see on a more regular basis. There were positive effects of adding the virtual platform. When we only offered the regular meetinghouse attendance we averaged 10 to 12 people each Sunday. This number grew to 15 to 16 on average after we offered Zoom as well. Members who were away (either live far away or have journeyed away) could still attend. We were able to offer a virtual chat and teatime midweek, which was popular. Weather no longer meant only people who live close to Meeting attended. The addition of the virtual platform has helped with offering presentations. We enjoyed a presentation by a member who shared some of his early civil rights experiences and members attended Pelham Half-Yearly Meeting. Many members took advantage of the presentations and/or Meetings for Worship offered by Canadian Yearly Meeting, Canadian Friends Service Committee, Canadian Council of Churches, Friends General Conference, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Canadian Friends Historical Association, Pendle Hill and more. We are a rural Meeting that serves a large area and many members have distances to travel so meeting virtually made it easier for committees to meet. Members of a refugee support group were able to meet with people in Australia and England. The ability to join with members

from around the world virtually was a very positive development, one which we are looking forward to expanding. These extra opportunities that members could attend were shared in our after Meeting sharing time and this helped with our spiritual growth.

There were some negative results of these changes. We found that wearing masks put a physical wall between us and made it harder to hear and understand people. We miss smiles and other facial expressions. Our after-Meeting sharing has been quieter. One on one sharing both before and after Meeting has been reduced or in some cases eliminated. Using a virtual platform attracted new people but that platform made it harder to get to know people, both members to know newcomers and newcomers to meet individuals. There seemed to be a barrier between those using Zoom and those attending the meetinghouse. Our way of celebrating milestones was altered. We marked a 90th birthday with balloons and singing outside an apartment balcony. Our farewell to a member moving away was virtual. One huge negative was the inability to gather around food. Potlucks have always been one of our favourite things and one we do so well!

During this pandemic year we have not been able to reach out as much as usual due to the restrictions. However, the *London Free Press* wrote an article about the Australian refugee project we are involved with. This resulted in an additional refugee being sponsored and extra offers of assistance. We increased the donations we gave, especially to those programs hard hit by the pandemic, for example, food banks and women's shelters.

We remain a strong and diverse group whose members care deeply about one another.

### **COWICHAN VALLEY MONTHLY MEETING and Salt Spring Island Worship Group**

1. How have our individual and corporate actions in the wider world enriched and strengthened the spiritual life of the meeting community?

The Cowichan Valley Monthly Meeting's (CVQ) spiritual life was enriched in 2020 by discussions and activities that undergird our strong sense of connection and community with all beings on the planet, and our strong commitment to equality and fairness.

- The Meeting initiated discussion regarding the 2003 CYM Minute of Record re same sex/gender marriage. CVQs joyfully support the right of Friends to marry, irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity. CVQs hope to bring this topic to the 2021 CYM in digital session.
- One Friend has shared her research into Mennonite and family history that has highlighted intergenerational trauma, and family constellation. This Friend's work underscores CVQs' belief in acting in such a way to "... [live] in the virtue of that life and power that [takes] away the occasion of all wars..." (George Fox, (1660).

- One Friend researches First Nations natural history with her Cowichan mentors and publishes regularly in a local magazine, using local indigenous words for plants and animals. She, along with her Cowichan Elder friend, received a Quaker Reconciliation grant to facilitate a Fish Leather workshop. This Friend's work supports the Meeting's commitment to relationships with indigenous peoples based on love, respect, truthfulness, and cultural appreciation.
  - In the fall a number of Friends met socially distanced at the home of two members to share food and to watch a filmed stage presentation of *Gloria: A Life*, a retrospective on the life of Gloria Steinem, played by Christine Lahti. Gloria then joins the cast for a discussion. We found it a powerful reminder of someone who was instrumental in many of our lives and helped to bring feminism in our era to life.
  - Two CVQs have a long history with Monteverde (Costa Rica) Friends School and have encouraged the Meeting and CVQs individually to provide financial support to the school. Their advocacy recognises the importance of Friends' education that helps the whole child – intellectual, physical, creative, and spiritual – to grow into responsible world citizens, concerned with social justice, environmental challenges, and peaceful resolution to conflict.
  - Early in the year, a CVQ shared photos and many moving stories of her KAIROS trip to Palestine/Israel. Through her presentation, Friends experienced the everyday challenges and deprivations experienced by Palestinians, and the stresses experienced by both Israelis and Palestinians.
  - Friends met on February 27, 2020, to discuss CYM sustainability.
  - The Meeting experienced the death of a beloved and active Friend in the summer of 2020. Since his passing, his life partner has generously shared her voyage of grief and discovery with us.
2. 2020 was a year like no other in recent memory. The pandemic brought many challenges to the way in which we worship and communicate, but Friends have also reported unexpected blessings. How was your meeting's spiritual life affected?
- We have felt blessed in holding Meeting for Worship (M4W) in a Friend's art-filled, plant-filled back garden during the warmer months.
  - We have felt blessed in bringing in Friends/attenders who normally can't attend M4W in person. Online Meetings for Worship have made it possible to geographically expand our community.
  - We have felt sadness that a number of our long-time Friends and attenders haven't attended Zoom meeting and thus feel more isolated. The need for shared pastoral care was highlighted during 2020 and continues in 2021.

- We have had to grow into online meetings, learning how to have worshipful time and social time. Technical issues have at times prevented Friends from participating in Meeting for Worship.
  - We have felt blessed in terms of being ‘invited’ into one another’s homes. This has resulted in a deepening of relationships.
  - We have felt blessed in terms of being in worship in our own homes. At times, being in a sense of safety has invited deeper sharing.
3. Conflict in Meetings could be a tool for transformation and an opportunity for connection and growth, but Friends have traditionally viewed it with misgiving. How has your Meeting addressed conflict among your members? What would help the Meeting to deal more constructively with conflict?
- To our knowledge, our Meeting did not experience conflict in 2020.
  - Learning how to work through conflict peacefully, respectfully, and lovingly is vital to nurturing a strong and supportive Friends’ community. It requires courage, and trust, and a belief that working through conflict actually strengthens relationships when done well.
4. What does the ideal "beloved community" look like? What must we do to make it a reality?
- One Friend’s concern about Pastoral Care over the past few years, especially elderly members who are unable to attend M4W either in person or electronically, led the Meeting to consider how we can improve our caring for one another.
  - One Friend’s vulnerability and courage in sharing her experience of love and loss has deepened our relationships as a spiritual community, and has invited us to be vulnerable and brave in our sharing. Intimacy builds the beloved community.
  - Pacifism isn’t passivity! Building the beloved community through activism: environmental, social issues, peace, and political. We are grateful for our own beloved community, which inspires us to share responsibility, share our experiences, and encourages us to work for a just society.



### **Salt Spring Island Worship Group (SSI)**

Attendance at SSI worship group has, fairly consistently, been eight people; mostly, this year, counted as four 'bubbles'. In the summer we managed very pleasant and gathered meetings in Friends' gardens where we could be inspired by flowers and birds and the weather cooperated perfectly. However, as it got colder we had to find more suitable accommodation. The Seniors' Centre in Ganges provided us with a large room, which gave plenty of space to remain suitably socially distanced. We have had to abandon that since the 'lockdown' became more severe.

The four of us familiar with the main body of Cowichan Valley Quakers have enjoyed attending Sunday morning meeting for worship on Zoom, but either diffidence or other engagements on a Sunday have prevented the members of our group who are not otherwise connected to Quakers from joining that meeting. There are also a few people who like to be on our mailing list, but remain otherwise inactive within the group, though some are involved with social justice programmes. The four who attend Zoom meetings consist of two Members and their partners. The less involved members of the group have expressed frustration about being unable to meet so we are all looking forward to less restricted times.

It is to be hoped that the detachment of the half of the meeting that has not yet met Cowichan Valley Quakers will be encouraged to emerge from their isolation with the prospect of a marriage in the summer.

## **EDMONTON MONTHLY MEETING**

### **Overview**

2020 was a difficult year for our small Meeting as the Covid-19 pandemic altered worship and communication norms and global events heightened our awareness of racial, cultural, and economic inequities and injustice. Outreach to homebound members and extended Friends networks (Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC), Canadian Yearly Meeting) have helped us maintain our spiritual community.

### **Online Communication and Discernment & Resulting Challenges**

When non-essential public activities were terminated in mid-March the Edmonton Monthly Meeting initiated Zoom meetings. After public gathering restrictions were eased, we held hybrid meetings with social distancing and Zoom. We met in person with protocols to minimize

potential virus spread. A member brought computer equipment enabling people to join the worship by Zoom if they wished. This worked tolerably, but people found it was difficult to hear and it sometimes felt like we were divided into two separate Meetings for Worship. As a result, we chose to hold our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business entirely online. In the autumn in person meetings were discontinued and our Meetings or Worship were purely on Zoom.

Holding Meetings for Worship and Business, and discussions online and via email came with some challenges. We found that we discern differently, and perhaps not always as well, when conversing online than when doing so in person. Conversations that might otherwise have occurred in private took place publicly over group email. As a result, differences of opinion about social activism and the Christianity of Quakerism grew into conflict, with some members and attenders choosing either to leave our Meeting permanently, or to worship elsewhere for a time.

Our Ministry and Council held a Threshing Session in September both to heal the hurt in our Meeting and to develop common expectations for how we communicate online.

### **Social Activism/World Events**

The horrific death of George Floyd at the hands of police in the United States sent immediate ripples of rage and concern for the local Black and Indigenous communities through our Meeting. Racial injustice continues to be a deep concern for us, as do other inequities that have resulted in Edmonton Friends participating in excellent online Webinars. During the summer, at least one member attended a CFSC-sponsored 6-week program called 'The Only Way Forward: Shifting Punitive Perspectives' delved deeply into issues of systemic racism in our society and how it affects Indigenous people and Black people daily. In the autumn, ten of our members participated in a 6-week webinar and discussion facilitated by Matt Legge and Trevor Chandler, based on the book, 'Are We Done Fighting?'. The discussions made for deep and worthwhile reflection. Maintaining a relationship with Indigenous peoples in our area continues to be a priority for our Meeting.

### **Friends Involvement with Monthly Meeting Committees and CYM**

Friends continue to be active on Canadian Yearly Meeting committees: four of our Members serve in CYM positions, which is a lot, given the small size of our Meeting. However, our nominating committee was unable to fill our Monthly Meeting committees and positions; people were either too busy or exhausted from the previous year. We are grateful to Laurel Beyer who attended our November Meeting for Worship for Business and talked about how Saskatoon MM addressed the challenges we are facing. This helped us greatly in making some decisions about a way forward.

### **Local Spiritual and Community Activities**

Friends in our Monthly Meeting continue to be involved with faith, justice, and environmental organizations in the larger Edmonton community; for example, we maintain a regular liaison with the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action. We are lucky to have a vibrant Social Committee which holds an enriching social meeting online every Tuesday. Ministry and Counsel continued the practice we'd had past years, of using quotes to reflect on, during worship,

but expanded their sources beyond Advices and Queries, and emailed them out in a day in advance. This allowed more time to reflect and made the reflection accessible to those not attending. Friends extended outreach to Friends who are homebound or less comfortable with using technology for visitation and worship to help preserve connections that would otherwise be lost.

## **HALIFAX MONTHLY MEETING**

2020 was certainly a year like no other. Halifax Monthly Meeting (HMM) started the year meeting in person at the Ecology Action Centre (EAC). This was a bright time where we met together and worshiped in a warm and welcoming environment. We worked as best we were able to help coordinate the organizational aspects of the meeting at this beautiful location, with the help of EAC volunteers. While we were able to meet in person a number of younger and/or newer Friends/Sojourners joined in for Meeting for Worship (M4W).

As a meeting we participated in Interfaith Harmony Halifax (IHH) World Interfaith Harmony Week in February and hosted a M4W at the Women's Council House. We brought in visitors from across the city who were interested in sharing in our worship and learning about the Quaker community in Halifax. One of those explorers became a regular attender. Quaker involvement in IHH continues.

A significant proportion of HMM is made from elders. This is a joy in so many ways. There are also Friends who feel frustration and sadness at the lack of children and the small number of young Friends/explorers in our meeting.

Early in the year the Quaker Worship Meeting at Northwood Manor was laid down.

When we were no longer able to meet in person due to the pandemic our meeting informally met spiritually – at the same time in our own homes but without any method to connect. With the initiative of one of our oldest Friends, some of us began to meet virtually – first via Jitsi and eventually via Zoom. We express appreciation to Maida Follini for her perseverance in bringing us together virtually. This form of worship easily met the spiritual needs of some Friends, while others struggled with meeting virtually. In the springtime a group of Friends began to meet outside at the Public Gardens. First by the pond and later on the benches in the middle of the park. Thanks to Roger Davies, we set up a sign and invited visitors to join – physically distanced but spiritually connected. Sylvia Mangalam also opened up her home for M4W when the restrictions allowed, however unfortunately we were not able to open that to visitors due to public health restrictions. Throughout this time virtual Meetings continued and allowed for Friends and new friends to join in. For some this supported spiritual and community growth.

Atlantic Friends Gathering (AFG) had been scheduled for May, 2020. The organizing committee was made up of Jocelyne Tranquilla (Clerk - HMM), Daphne Davey (Recording Clerk – PEI Allowed Meeting), Helen Lofgren (HMM) and Mary Petrie (Truro Worship Group). The

experience of organizing for the AFG was spiritually edifying and we had a beautiful weekend planned at Camp Geddie with the theme: “Food: Security, Sufficiency, Spirit!”. Unfortunately this had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, however the work was not in vain and the committee moved forward for planning for 2021, with Jessica Tellez as the new Clerk.

In March Meetings for Worship for Business (M4W4B) were put on pause while we discerned how we could continue with the business aspects of HMM. We determined that decisions and discernment are best done during M4W4B and not via email. In September M4W4B started up again with Laureen van Lierop acting as Clerk and Jocelyne Tranquilla as Recording Clerk. Henceforth we have held M4W4B virtually. Mieke Eales took over the responsibility of Recording Clerk in October and Laureen handed over the Clerk reins to Lucky Howard at the end of the year.

One source of sorrow for our meeting was that during the pandemic we were not able to meet in person with those Friends who are living in long term care residences. We held them in The Light but wished we could have done more. Another source of deep sorrow was the death of a beloved member of HMM, Ed Belzer. As a meeting we held, and continue to hold, both Ed and Kathryn in The Light/The Darkness. We miss Ed and are grateful for his life and in particular his contributions to HMM.

In November we had two called meetings to discuss Change and Sustainable Transformation (CAST) of Canadian Yearly Meeting.

Despite it all, it seems like, amidst the pandemic, our Meeting has in some ways been revitalized. We are seeing new faces, and have a renewed Nominating Committee. We have a new Communications Committee, which is being Clerked by Jordon Daniels. We wonder together what the future will bring for HMM.

#### 2020 Membership Updates:

- Jennifer Overington: transfer of membership from Vancouver MM to HMM. Welcome home, Jennifer.
- Joyous returns to HMM: Jessica Tellez, Christina Tellez (who joined us in person in Halifax and then virtually from Bolivia), and Lucky Howard.
- Erik Königer was able to join in active participation in HMM through our virtual Meetings
- Donna Smyth and Gillian Thomas who, for many years, have contributed immeasurably to our Meeting, both through M&C and facilitating email communication, have moved to the Annapolis Valley, so will no longer be with us. We will miss them but give thanks and appreciation for their years of service.



Respectfully submitted with guidance from M&C, and approved by HMM.

### **Antigonish Worship Group**

For the first couple of months of the pandemic our worship group did not meet. In late spring/early summer we began to meet outdoors in Friends' backyards. This brought a lot of joy as we realized how much we had missed meeting and missed each other. Over the summer we continued to meet outdoors and were even able to welcome some visitors and share soup together/apart.

As it became too cold to meet outdoors, our former space at the L'Arche community was opened to us again. The space is small. We wear masks, and we are not able to maintain 6' distance if more than 3 or 4 are present. Under those circumstances we have not felt able to open the meeting to visitors or inquirers. That was a painful decision and we wonder if it is the right one. Nor have we made as conscious an effort as we might, to check on members and attenders we have not seen.

Some of us have been attending worship meetings offered online and have reconnected with Friends at a distance or discovered new communities. Others have found worship meetings on Zoom have felt artificial and that the technology has not spoken to our condition.

In the past we had potluck lunches, meetings for study and meetings for business fairly regularly. None of this has happened for the past year. When the pandemic struck we had been enthusiastically planning a weekend workshop with Matt Legge of CFSC to which we were hoping to invite the wider community. Matt's workshops have gone online and at least one of us has attended that way. We are starting to find a need to discuss "business" items and so are thinking about, but have not yet resumed, scheduled meetings for business. We are 2-3 hours from Halifax and so have had very little participation over the years in monthly Meeting for business there. However, that meeting is now online so more participation on our part may be possible.

As a Worship Group we signed the open letter published in the Hill Times calling for parliamentary debate on signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We were involved in a presentation to the Antigonish town council requesting them to sign the ICAN Cities Appeal, which they agreed to do. As individuals, members of our group have worked for protection of the environment, sought ways to be in solidarity with Indigenous people, supported Palestinian human rights, worked in peace education and for the right of people with disabilities to live dignified lives.

In past years the writing of the State of Society Report has often begun with a worship sharing meeting to consider the queries related to the state of our meeting. This has been a reflective and spiritual process for us. Unfortunately this year, there was freezing rain leading to the cancellation of that meeting, as we are in a rural area where people travel some distance to

attend. The report was drafted by one person and sent around for corrections and additions by e-mail.

### **Truro Worship Group**

Truro Worship Group started the year meeting in-person, then switched to Zoom and now continues to meet every other Saturday, in-person, following COVID restrictions and guidelines. We have taken a leading role in the Cobequid Interfaith Council, where we network with representatives from other faith traditions. We celebrated the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week with an Interfaith Expo and an Interfaith Worship Service held in February. We often participate in virtual meetings with others from the wider Quaker Community.

### **South Shore Worship Group**

The South Shore Worship Group lost one of its founding members with the passing of Raymond Dahn in February 2020. Ray and his late wife Margery hosted Meetings for Worship at their home in Centre, Nova Scotia for more than 40 years, welcoming hundreds of Friends during that time.

A quiet, thoughtful man with a mischievous sense of humor, Ray was well-respected for his wise counsel. On learning of his passing, one Friend wrote, “He lived an authentic life and was an example to others.” Another said she always paid attention, on the rare occasions when he spoke at meeting, because he usually had something worthwhile to say. We miss this kind and generous man, and we are grateful to have had his presence among us for so many years.

Our biweekly meetings welcome a solid core of regular attenders gathering to share worship and conversation. Early into the Covid pandemic we continued to hold meetings in person but, as the situation worsened, we suspended in-person meetings altogether. We did have some virtual meetings and one in-person outdoor gathering in the summer on a Friend’s deck.

Karen and Lou Putney from Tampa MM have attended our meetings for many years in the summer months. We are pleased to report that they have now made Nova Scotia their permanent home and we appreciate hearing their experiences from a wider Quaker world perspective. Another of our members, Susan Holtz, is serving on Atlantic Half-Yearly Meeting’s Ministry and Counsel Committee.

While opportunities for engagement in the wider world have been limited by the pandemic, many of us have used the time to explore other avenues for involvement in social justice activities as well as seek out possibilities for spiritual growth and new learnings online. Some of our members have been attending virtual HMM meetings while others have been taking part in worship and other programs offered by Pendle Hill and Woodbroke. These resources have proven to be an unexpected blessing and we are grateful to have them.

We appreciate the continuing work and commitment of Halifax Monthly Meeting.

## **INTERIOR BRITISH COLUMBIA MONTHLY MEETING**

It seems everyone agrees this was a year like no other. Most of us appreciated being able to attend Meeting on a weekly basis via online platforms. Meeting weekly, rather than bi-weekly or less, we've had a better connection with others in the Meeting and were able to reduce our "carbon guilt" as there was much less travel. We felt our discussions were more focused as we worked through the discomfort of not meeting in person. However, the Sense of the Meeting within the group is sometimes difficult to discern. Having only online Meetings means some members, who do not like this format, are missed and may feel unsupported. Some feel that we have less spoken Ministry when we are online. We rarely see the children and youth in our Meeting and are concerned for them in this time of COVID.

We were able to hold a number of face-to-face small group Meetings during the warm weather and everyone who attended deeply appreciated them. We missed being able to gather in our annual Interior British Columbia Monthly Meeting (IBCMM) spring retreat or attend Western Half-Yearly Meeting and CYM gatherings in person.

A new attender, the daughter of an IBCMM member, joins us from Los Angeles. Another attender sends regular emails from her life in China. Our representative diligently attended Representative Meetings and the Meeting as a whole spent considerable time considering the issues she raised in her reports. We were pleased to be able to hold an online memorial meeting for one of our members.

Lillooet Worship Group has experienced the COVID-inspired contradiction of having more worshipful connection to our Monthly Meeting in the past year. We had been in the habit of meeting for worship with only ourselves weekly. Now we meet via Zoom with a larger group of Interior Friends and are gradually getting to know some of the new members and attenders. We also join Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) in meeting for worship via Zoom almost every week which is very meaningful to those of us that have spent so many years of service with Friends from across Canada.

Kamloops Worship Group held in-person meetings in January and February, and once a month, out of doors, in August and September. Other months, members attended the weekly online meetings. Email and other communication methods have helped us keep in touch and support each other in times of illness or isolation. We are unclear if not meeting regularly in-person has affected the sense of community within our small group.

CFSC continues to be very important, both to the Meeting as a whole and for members' personal contributions. During this past year of isolation, attending the CFSC online weekly worship has become very important to some in the Meeting. Three Friends serve on CFSC committees as members or associates. One Friend co-facilitates Zoom workshops on the book "Are We Done Fighting?", and four of our members participated in these workshops. For some in the Meeting,

online worship and sharing with members of other Quaker organizations has helped keep the COVID fears at bay.

## **MONTREAL MONTHLY MEETING**

A different year it was!

We collected funds for Covid relief and used it to:

- Help our members and attenders
- Paid for groceries for a refugee family when they suffered a mild case of Covid
- Kenyan Quakers were extremely thankful to receive financial assistance

We donated to Solidarity Across Borders and to Communitas to support a refugee and the child of an incarcerated parent in attending university.

We are active members of Réseau Oecumenique Justice, Environnement et Paix.

Jennifer Preston enlightened us about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

This year we updated our website, updated our email hosting, and listed our Meeting on CanadaHelps to facilitate donations.

Holding First Day Meeting, mid-week Meeting, and Bible study online allowed easy attendance by many, however some are waiting until we can meet in person. We held Meeting in a park and an outdoor walking meditation, preceded online by a reading and followed up by reflections.

We appreciate Business Meetings whereby disagreements are calmed.

Montreal Monthly Meeting looks forward to gathering on Zoom, and is lucky to have a member who started a colourful newsletter with announcements, quotes, book reviews, poems and creative writing. We've welcomed several new attenders.

## **NEW BRUNSWICK MONTHLY MEETING**

New Brunswick Monthly Meeting is in a unique position in that it is made up of five Worship Groups and two Allowed Meetings (Eastern Shore and Prince Edward Island). The following is an overview reflecting the combined reports of the four Worship Groups on our shared experience.

Coping with COVID-19 has been a major challenge this year. We are fortunate that we have a core membership of experienced Friends which has helped us grow together during these challenging times. We have also been joined by new seekers who have enriched our fellowship. Many of us were able to meet at the Villa Madonna this fall for a retreat together. We also gathered on Zoom for several evenings in the winter where we shared our stories and reflected on chosen readings.

A cherished memory this past year was joining with Anne Thomas to study the Gospel of Mark. This was an enriching experience for all those who participated. Zoom enabled Friends across Canada and beyond to join New Brunswick Friends in a memorial service for Anne in November.

These difficult times have challenged us to strengthen our faith community and test the value of our testimonies.

### **Fredericton Worship Group**

This year started normally with Meetings held in each other's houses every two weeks, with rich worship followed by good conversation. However, the onset of the pandemic pushed us on to the internet for both worship and business meetings. The only exception was a New Brunswick MM in-person retreat in the fall which a few of us attended.

For a few of us, online Meetings were both spiritually and socially enriching. Meetings were held weekly rather than biweekly, continued through the summer, and attracted a new family who joined us regularly. New relationships were forged, and old relationships were nurtured with isolated Friends and with those from other worship groups.

Although this was a good experience for a few people in our worship group, the majority of our members and attenders seldom participated in online Meetings. These technologies were not adequate for connecting us and it has been difficult to maintain the WG as a community supporting one another in our daily lives and spiritual journeys.

Once we can again meet in person, it will take time to build up our worship group community.

### **Fundy Friends Worship Group**

With the COVID-19 precautions initiated by the New Brunswick government on March 13th, 2020, we revised our Meetings to FONGO, a free auditory communication system that worked

surprisingly well for most of us. We kept our usual format, taking turns to “host” Meeting, with a reading, sometimes music, 25 minutes of silence, and worship sharing. While the irony of “Silent Meeting for Worship” over the ‘phone was not lost on us, it worked surprisingly well. When the weather warmed up, we resumed meeting outdoors at one another’s homes, which lasted into the fall without our usual summer “break;” having worked on maintaining our connection, we were reluctant to break it, even for a week or two. In the fall of 2020 into the winter of 2021 we resumed ‘phone Meetings, but are now happily meeting outdoors again.

Fundy Friends find that the unique circumstances of the past year have brought us closer together; we have shared our concerns, experiences, hopes and heightened awareness of what unites all of us on our fragile planet.

### **Houlton-Woodstock Worship Group**

The year 2020 started out normally. Our Worship Group met every First Day at various homes of members/attenders in Houlton, Maine and Woodstock, New Brunswick in January and February. Then there were rumours of a new virus and in mid-March there was a “lockdown” in Maine and the border between Canada and Maine was closed. COVID-19 had arrived.

Meeting for Worship in-person stopped. Only once during the year did Friends in Houlton meet. It was a memorable First Day, on September 27, when we gathered on the outdoor porch of a newly built home in the country by a couple and their son who had attended our WG for several years. With face masks on, we sat 6 feet apart overlooking fields, cows and a forest with deciduous trees turning red and gold. Messages during Meeting out of the silence were deeply felt and received. After Meeting we ate our brown bag lunches that we had prepared while catching up on everyone’s news – missing Keith and Ellen Helmuth and others from Woodstock because they could not cross the border. As we departed on this sunny, warm day, we expressed the joy of being together as we bumped elbows. Then cold weather set in.

Thankfully, before and after this get-together, the Clerk of NBMM had arranged for us to Zoom or phone-in for Meeting for Worship together, then Worship Sharing and up-dates of our lives and others. These First Day get-togethers now included those from other Worship Groups of NBMM, often totaling fifteen worshippers, which was an added spiritual treat. At various times during 2020, eight people from our WG attended these Zoom Meetings and expressed their uplift from and gratefulness for them. Four of our members were regulars and we were happy to connect also with a NBMM member who had moved to Toronto and with others from afar.

During this time of isolation, Friends kept in touch with each other by phone or email and enjoyed the connection by Zoom. Meetings for Worship were Spirit filled, ministry was shared in both the silent worship and worship sharing after meeting. People expressed their appreciation for being able to be connected by Zoom. It was better than not being able to connect at all.

Our spiritual lives were enriched by discipline in our home settings, book reading, delving into issues of concern, and reaching out to stay connected. In October our NB members were

enriched by attendance at an in-person spiritual retreat at the Villa Madonna and with in-put from our Houlton members via Zoom. The conference centre was equipped to handle small groups during the pandemic and members were so very grateful for the chance to be together and share in the spiritual nurture. With this experience of connection via technology, it will give us much to consider for our future gatherings after this pandemic is behind us.

### **Sackville Worship Group**

Until March 2020, the Sackville Worship Group continued its usual practice of weekly worship at the Mount Allison University Chapel. Two members were there regularly, along with several attenders, including the University Chaplain.

The onset of the pandemic in March changed everything, of course. We lost our beautiful place of worship because all the university buildings were closed to the public. Also, we could not gather elsewhere because of COVID-19 restrictions.

However, by mid- June, we were able to have an outdoor gathering in Jane Robertson's garden to say goodbye to Rev. John Perkin, who was leaving the University to take up a position in Ottawa. We enjoyed being together for worship, conversation, and a potluck lunch.

In September, we were happy to welcome back Linda Foy, our member who had been living in Ontario.

There were opportunities from March onwards to worship on zoom or by phone with other Friends from New Brunswick. Although it seemed strange at first not to meet in person, there have been some benefits from our zoom worship. We did not need to travel and could “get together” whatever the weather! We have been able to feel close to the others from all over the Province despite not being together in person. Sometimes, one of the worship groups took responsibility for readings which inspired us all.

At the end of October, a retreat was held at the Villa Madonna in Saint John and this was a wonderful opportunity to meet in person with New Brunswick Friends. We had interesting presentations and enjoyed meals and shared worship.

In December, one of our attenders offered her yoga studio for us to meet together on Sundays. Unfortunately, this was short lived because of tighter COVID-19 restrictions right after Christmas.

### **Saint John Worship Group**

The Saint John Worship Group has experienced a good year. For much of the year we have been able to meet weekly at the Villa Madonna Retreat Centre, following the guidelines for mask wearing and social distancing. We have been joined by a number of sincere seekers who find value in and contribute to our meetings for worship. We have been averaging 12 to 14 people at our weekly meetings.

We look forward to more face-to-face involvements with Friends, hopefully in the near future.

## OTTAWA MONTHLY MEETING

"We are in a very holy time because times of crisis are the times when we are moved from our comfortable complacency and become seekers for a larger truth that can speak to our condition. It is the time when society becomes open to a larger vision... For those tender to, open to, the crisis that is upon us we may well feel overwhelmed by an ocean of darkness. Yet, my friends, we live in an ocean of light." {Tony McQuail,1999}

In 2020, we in Ottawa Monthly Meeting had 62 active Members and 38 active attenders. We continue to have a large number of Friends who are inactive, 60 out of 138 recorded members, and we attempted to contact these Friends as we were able.

St. Lawrence Valley Friends Meeting had 6 actively involved members, and 14 active attenders. The average attendance at Meeting for Worship was between 10 to 12 people. Ottawa Monthly Meeting has St. Lawrence Valley Allowed Meeting under its care and we append a report from these Friends at the end of this report.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 our meeting has thrived and grown spiritually this year. Beginning in the second half of March, we started holding our Meeting for Worship on Zoom and despite some difficulties in establishing a protocol regarding the use of 'chat', we found that depth and openness to Spirit could also be found in a virtual Meeting for Worship.

We have been delighted to welcome Friends and newcomers to the Zoom Meetings, including members who we previously saw only occasionally. On the other hand, there are Friends who dislike the technology and/or find it difficult to access the internet and they are missed. Many of us miss the informal in-person contact which face to face Meetings provide. For a while during the summer a small group of Friends worshipped in person in the Meeting House while linked by Zoom, but this was closed when health regulations changed.

One of the unexpected blessings we have experienced is a broader engagement with the wider Quaker community such as worshipping at Pendle Hill, Canadian Yearly Meeting, Friends General Conference, Friends World Committee for Consultation and Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre. As a result, many have found renewed spiritual life, spiritual buddies or mentors, developed new practices, or used these opportunities to read, study and learn from online resources.

In September Ministry and Counsel introduced the practice of offering a short inspirational reading at the beginning of Meeting for Worship to encourage deep listening, waiting worship and advice for those giving ministry. It helps to settle us into silence and inform newcomers about Quaker Meeting for Worship. We continue to have ten minutes at the end of our regular

Meeting for Worship as an opportunity for Friends to speak of “joys and sorrows” from their daily lives. We have also had a period following our Zoom meetings for worship to meet in small informal groups in breakout rooms.

As a Meeting, and individually, we continue to support refugee housing and our local food bank through the purchase of grocery cards and donations, as well as Canadian Friends Service Committee and Canadian Yearly Meeting.

Our Meeting's annual retreat, which took place in January, before Covid restrictions were in place, was well attended. Margaret Slavin from Peterborough Monthly Meeting facilitated and led us on the theme “Change and Transformation.”

Early in the year some Friends met in Christian contemplation and Friendly Bible sessions before Meeting for Worship. These have been precious ways to deepen our community.

Towards the end of March, a regular midweek Meeting for Worship on Zoom was added on Wednesday evenings. Each week, 5 to 15 attenders are nourished by this worship. In September, this weekly Meeting for Worship was followed by “Things of the Eternal” in which Friends would share aspects of their spiritual journeys or practices, or speak about concerns close to their hearts.

Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee has continued to be active. This is mostly online but did include a well-attended annual commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which they co-organized with an Anglican peace group. Our Meeting is in unity in our desire that Canada signs the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Just before the pandemic, our large Meeting directory was broken into small neighbourhood groups akin to “Friendly Eights” for potential fellowship around supper. These small groups became a way to check in with one another in the early days of the pandemic and an opportunity for inward reflection. One outcome was three Worship Sharing sessions on racism/otherisms. One Friend shared that before we can embrace the “other,” we must first wonder what it might be like to be them.

Some of us followed the series of videos “Decolonizing the Bible: the Cost of Colonialism and Joy of Jubilee” from the Bible Study at Canadian Yearly Meeting in 2019 and two sessions on “Pathways: Using Quaker Testimonies and Our Personal Stories of Land to Move Beyond Traditional Settler Colonist Relationships” given by Elaine Bishop. Pendle Hill webinar series on Right Relations with Indigenous Peoples was held on Zoom in August. 20 to 25 Friends from our meeting attended.

Regional Gathering (June 5-7) was also held on Zoom.

We sometimes have trouble trying to deal with conflicts. Not being able to meet face to face has the potential of making this more challenging. The need to be more transparent about our issues while at the same time respecting confidentiality has been a challenge. We want to learn more about “gospel order.” Is there a place for healthy anger? How might we work toward lessening rebukes and judgements? We look for more opportunities to make use of the process inherent in Claremont Dialogues.

Our formal sponsorship of a Syrian family of six ended in May. For several years our Refugee Committee helped the family to obtain the necessary papers for their application for refugee status. Our Meeting, with assistance from another group, supported them financially for the year following their arrival in Ottawa and provided advice and practical help to get them established in a new land. The committee was laid down and the Meeting celebrated with the family at a special physically distanced garden party.

This was the year the renovations to the basement in the Meeting House were completed. It was the first major work done in the Meeting House since it was reconstructed in 1985 and we look forward to the time when Covid restrictions allow us to return.

In mid-December, Ministry and Counsel held a half-day retreat on Humility. At the end of the year, our annual Christmas celebration of poetry and carol singing was held virtually. Although the usual finger food potluck was not possible, on another day some Friends joined on Zoom from their kitchens, baking food for the holidays and celebrating together.

St. Lawrence Valley Friends Meeting welcomed participation by physically distant Friends during our Meetings via Zoom. The intent was to focus on worship sharing in response to queries or special topics suggested by Friends. Sometimes the Spirit leads us to chatty check-ins, however, which are filling a need in several of our members. Most of us have been vaccinated, and as spring slowly arrives we will contemplate returning to an “in-person” Meeting for Worship. We can meet outdoors and/or socially distance in our small group.

During this pandemic, when we have had so many restrictions place on us, let us turn inward to focus upon gratitude for all we do have and can do.

## **PELHAM EXECUTIVE MEETING**

*How have our individual and corporate actions in the wider world enriched and strengthened the spiritual life of the Meeting community?*

Spiritual nourishment came from a deep level of personal and intimate sharing among members; also, from working together to donate financial and physical resources to helping others e.g., food bank donations, continuing work with Syrian newcomers, virtual anti-racism support and political letter writing that brought positive outcomes. We expanded our awareness of some

cultural realities and differences within our members and communities thus allowing for a more welcoming, understanding and open feeling for many. We received spiritual nourishment by being open to learning new things with each other. We are blessed to have a rich 'Afterwords' that leaves us feeling inspired by the sharing. The ensuing thought and discussion after silent worship in Meeting affects our individual spiritual life.

*How was your Meeting's spiritual life affected by 2020? Can you think of specific experiences of being spiritually nourished within the context of the Meeting?*

Zoom has been a powerful virtual meeting tool that changed us and the way we meet, bringing many benefits. We were early adopters utilizing this tool to not only continue but also to expand our Meetings by allowing participation from Friends homebound with ill health and new attenders at a distance. We continued to feel connected, nurtured and spiritually fed. It also feels easier to do inter-visitation bringing community to each other.

An attendee avoided business meetings in the past. With zoom, no travel and a more compressed time frame they now do attend. "I learn a lot and surprise myself instead of feeling impatient, I look forward to it. I have enjoyed business meeting." One Friend grew up in Meeting and feels spiritually nourished by once again being able to attend despite distance.

Another attendee feels spiritually nourished despite distance by the embracing welcome and practice of Meeting for Worship. Another Friend says they are involved in a lot of zoom meetings now and although they have eye issues they prioritize Niagara Quakers meeting because it is "important to my spiritual path".

Friends felt spiritually enriched by the virtual ability to attend worship in multiple venues including, Friends of Colour worship, Canadian Friends Service Committee worship, Pendle Hill worship and so many other numerous meetings and gatherings that expand a feeling of closeness, community and connectedness, including the virtual Canadian Yearly Meeting. One enrichment we've experienced, not related to zoom, is that one attender has begun offering blessings through song before or after worship.

*How has your Meeting dealt with conflict among members and what would help the Meeting to deal more constructively with conflict?*

Without a formal Ministry and Counsel we have dealt with conflict among members in an ad hoc manner. In one case, a process was eventually suggested that was inclusive of all involved, kind, reflective and most of all allowing. Participants were allowed to decide to participate or not, to look at community differently, allowing relationships to be maintained regardless of differing perspectives. It was productive, respectful and positive.

In another conflict, while respecting the confidentiality of the individuals involved, two Friends were designated to reach out to those involved and became an ad hoc visitation committee; it is

unclear how helpful this may have been. But a member of the ad hoc committee reported that it was handled honestly and sensitively addressing the needs of the Friend involved who in turn decided on the resolution that was most comfortable to that Friend.

The possibility of forming a Meeting of Ministry and Counsel (M&C) will be considered by our ad hoc Roles and Responsibilities Committee before being brought to a business meeting. Having an M&C make prayerful consideration of the spiritual care and counselling for the Meeting could help us develop clearer guidance for such matters as conflicts, as well as on visitation, and vocal ministry.

The conflict between confidentiality and transparency for community is a delicate balance to be looked at with a case-to-case view but Meeting does need to discuss how the 'reporting back' will take place after these 'incidents'. A suggestion was made to receive permission back from the Friends or Attenders involved in the conflict on what to report back to Meeting so that Friends and Attenders have clarity that the issue was addressed and a resolution was reached or not reached.

*What does the ideal “beloved community” look like? What must we do to make it a reality?*

An ideal beloved community would have a firm foundation in worship as an ongoing part of daily life. A standing M&C would undergird that worship. In ‘Afterwords’, a time for intimate, vulnerable sharing does allow a close and beautiful, strong knit community. We would do well to check in with each other and newer attenders to foster feelings of belonging and being wanted; to take the time to teach newer attenders about various aspects of being a Quaker, e.g., vocal ministry; encouraging attenders to share and participate when they are comfortable doing so. We can find more things to laugh about together. Laughter is healing, whether on zoom or gathered together. We are finding the constant living stream of Spirit that Quaker life provides a wonderful connection to.

## **PETERBOROUGH MONTHLY MEETING**

For us, a “beloved community” is one in which we care deeply for one another and make sure we keep in touch with all. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shutdown/isolation were a shock to us. Our usual meeting place that we rented was closed. We discovered Zoom and by May we had a single Zoom Pro account so that we could meet for our usual hour plus time for afterthoughts, joys and sorrows and announcements. At the same time, we formed a phone network, whose members are each tasked with staying in touch with a short list of members and attenders. These phone calls were solace to one attender who died of cancer during the first lockdown and to two members who live in a retirement facility. Through this network we keep in contact with those who cannot join us on Zoom.

We found Zoom to be surprisingly enriching to our spiritual lives. Peterborough Monthly Meeting UK had approached us in 2019 about establishing a connection. It came about in the spring of 2020 when they sent us a Zoom invitation inviting us to join them in their mid-week meetings. Some of us have been enriched by online participation in wider Quaker gatherings: a virtual Friends General Conference, a virtual Canadian Yearly Meeting gathering, and a virtual Friends World Committee for Consultation Northeast Regional Gathering. Some Friends participated in CFSC's online workshops on conflict resolution. In June, Peterborough MM was responsible for the program in a virtual St. Lawrence Regional Gathering. It was good to see more distant Friends and we got to explore more of Zoom possibilities in the spiritual realm.

Regarding conflict within the Meeting, we met with a couple of Friends to resolve difficulties with their living situations.

Meetings during the pandemic have been smaller, whether on Zoom, outdoors, or in a rented space (with COVID precautions observed). We gained several new attenders. We conducted our business meetings and in-reach programs on Zoom as well. One particularly enriching session was the sharing of poems that were important to us.

We continue to connect with the wider community. The peace network vigil has continued since it is an outdoor event and usually less than five people show up; a sixth arrival will simply slip away discreetly. This network and our poverty working group that formed in the fall make connections with the wider world in areas that we feel are important. One member attends a virtual spiritual potluck (whose theme is unity) that occurs once a month, bringing readings from our Faith and Practice as her contribution; others bring readings, songs, and teachings from Bahai, Indigenous, and Moslem traditions.

## **SASKATOON MONTHLY MEETING**

Saskatoon Monthly Meeting met in-person during January and February of 2020 in much the same way we had in previous times. This all changed in March when our usual meeting place closed and we entered the pandemic lockdown. We began holding Meeting for Worship (MFW) via Zoom in April of 2020. At first, we met once a week during our usual time, but we have added a midweek Meeting as well.

We have been joined by new attenders and seen more steady attendance from the majority of Meeting "regulars". We have also seen regular attendance from isolated Friends living in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and BC. We have had an inquirer join regularly from Australia.

For two of our members, Zoom is difficult because they teach all week on Zoom and need a break from it, so they haven't been attending often. We miss their presence and look forward to worshipping with them again.

We have had more representation at Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) in Session, Representative Meeting, and spring and fall Western Half-Yearly Meeting. Some of our members have worshipped with other Meetings across Canada and at Pendle Hill (PA) and joined Canadian Friends Service Committee's weekly midweek worship

Some have felt less depth of worship via Zoom than in person and others haven't. Large meetings that have more than one participant's screen are more challenging in respect to feeling connected to all who are there.

We have had fewer business meetings, partly because we needed to do less business because of CYM being in a new format and some business being done by Representative Meeting.

Our MFW is typically quiet. It is harder to know if there is more vocal ministry than previously, in part because we have added the worship sharing at the end of MFW.

We have experimented with new formats, such as a short visiting period when we join the meeting, a meeting facilitator, readings, worship sharing, and a longer visiting time at the end. Weekly meetings on Thursday evening for worship and visiting are another experiment.

2020 was a fruitful time. We look forward to attending twice a week. This has increased our camaraderie and connection and fostered our spiritual growth.

Our Meeting was a haven from a very anxiety-producing outside world, a place to express fears, get support, take spiritual risks and not fear judgement for that. This all increased in 2020, especially with the midweek meeting. The quarantine and health problems/issues increased isolation and the year felt much longer. We felt it was a great gift to have a community.

We missed the ecumenical relations with other groups, especially with the committee that works on planning the annual Pride worship service. We missed walking together in the Pride parade and attending or speaking at the Pride worship service. We also missed taking our greetings to the annual Peter's Day celebration at the Doukhobor Prayer Home and being there for their service and lunch.

CYM was a totally different experience. A virtual experience cannot match an in-person one. The loss of the in-person meeting was felt more by those who thrive and have strong community links to groups such as Young Friends and Young Adult Friends as well as various youth and LGBTQ2+ communities.

We noticed that, in previous years, Friends attending or sojourning from another Meeting would have a travelling letter or a request to sojourn. This function is now temporarily fulfilled by the person organizing the Zoom invitations, who screens possible new attenders to determine their connection to Friends and to answer questions they might have about Friends and our Meeting.

We talked about how we see our "beloved community". It is not the same as being harmonious. It is, rather, a place where we express differences in unique voices and where we can take risks.

It is more beloved because of our differences. We may show greater tolerances for each other (or occasionally we may not), but we make a commitment to go on together.

It is a place of trust, generosity, and safety where we can take risks without fear of lasting harm. We need a base or foundation of safety from which to take risks. It is a trusted group: generous, forgiving, and encouraging that provides a foundation for growth and mutual support.

It is a place where we are tender with each as we share and mourn and gather strength: a place to work through conflict, where we have trust and safety. And we join together as a community for a larger good.

We have structures in place such as worship sharing and committees of care where we can express where we are with the expectation of being heard.

## **THOUSAND ISLANDS MONTHLY MEETING**

There are three components to this report. We reflect on the challenges and opportunities of our Meeting during the pandemic, followed by our reflections on the spiritual life and growth of the Meeting, and finally by listing some of the activities undertaken by Members and Attenders.

### **Meeting as a Community during the Pandemic**

Although we found the pandemic very disorienting and disruptive to our personal and Meeting lives in the early days, converting to Meeting by Zoom was accomplished fairly successfully over the longer term. Our co-Clerk generously provided TIMM with use of her paid Zoom subscription. Although we experienced some technical difficulties, particularly in the early days, and at least one member was not very comfortable with Zoom, we settled into a peaceful and welcoming routine by the end of 2020. We were also delighted to welcome some new Attenders. We noticed that people who live at a distance, were ill, or with mobility challenges could attend TIMM more easily, flexibly, and frequently when we moved to virtual gatherings. Some felt the opportunity for informal sharing was lost, but on the other hand, that participation was equalized, and we all learned more about each other during communal sharing. We observed that the risk of driving in dangerous weather was reduced and may have benefited the environment. Some members were also able to attend other Meetings and a Worship Group in addition to TIMM, which was also enriching. One observed that “it has been a blessing and one light in the pandemic to be able to do this.”

We did spend a lot of time consulting in the early days of the lockdown on how we might be able to meet in person again and what Health & Safety Directives (HSD) might be required. We had no idea that the impact of the pandemic would prevent us for meeting in person even as of the writing of this report in 2021. Given TIMM’s small size, concerns were expressed about the burdens on members who would be responsible for implementing and monitoring HSD. A number of members were concerned about their or others’ health risks and wanted to be sure that a “remote/virtual” meeting connection would still be available in the future.

The pandemic prevented us from hosting the usual Memorial Meeting for long-time Attender and dear friend Lyn Horwood, wife of Bert Horwood. Instead, we devoted worship on a Sunday to a Meeting for Worship Sharing restricted to a maximum of 25 people. The query “How do we remember Lyn Horwood?” elicited heartfelt ministry which has been shared in a Memorial Minute.

### Spiritual Life and Growth

We reflected on the experiences of Members and Attenders and our spiritual life and growth over email and in two Zoom sessions held after Meeting. Some feel more hopeful about the Meeting than ever before, and felt our Meeting community has become more lively. Although we missed the breaking of Meeting with a circle of hands, and our shared monthly meal and opportunity for fellowship, we hope for a glorious reunion and banquet when it is safe to do so again. Although many are trying to stay hopeful that things will work out, we acknowledge that it has been difficult for many to be so physically isolated during this time, especially those that live alone.

We held our co-Clerk Kate Johnson in the Light in her work as chaplain at Queen’s University with isolated students during the pandemic. One of our members has been taking CYM course on “the Light” and on “Leadings”, and has enjoyed CYM’s month check in on our spirituality.

We wanted to record two other events in the life of TIMM. We report belatedly that we joyfully accepted Wesley Weima into membership in 2019. We acknowledge with sadness the passing in 2020 of our Co-Clerk Dale Andrews’s father, Robin Andrews, who had attended our Meeting for many years prior to 2007.

### Activities by Members in the Community in 2020

Within the Quaker community we have been active in Representative Meeting and have undertaken discernment for the Change and Sustainable Transformation Working Group.

We work as best we can with other groups in the local community. Our co-Clerk contributes to inter-faith work, we maintain relationships with the Kingston Unitarian Fellowship, and we make charitable donations to a number of worthy groups. Four members have supported the development of Luke’s Place Kingston, a proposed affordable housing initiative for people with intellectual disabilities. Several members continue to participate in the Alternatives to Violence Program. One of our members (in the context of her work) produced a report “Stymied, Stigmatized, and Socially Excluded” which examines the unmet legal needs of people incarcerated at a local provincial Detention Centre.

## **TORONTO MONTHLY MEETING**

January began with plans for a TMM retreat. In February we hosted about 35 Friends for Representative Meeting, and we launched a new “First Time at a Quaker Meeting” pamphlet. Three weeks later we sent out an urgent announcement that Friends House was closed. Friends were invited to worship, wherever they were, on Sunday morning and to “hold everyone on the

planet in the Light.” Within a week we moved our Meetings for Worship online and formed a “COVID Committee” to make decisions regarding Friends House and TMM employees.

This sudden technological shift brought generations together in new ways. Older Friends gratefully turned to younger ones for technical expertise and support. New and developing relationships empowered younger Friends to voice their needs and preferences and suggest ways to encourage more participation by those hungry for spiritual meaning. Just as we need their technological wisdom, they seek to understand how and why we do what we do. We are finding new ways of being together and sharing what is important in our spiritual lives.

We miss the physical sense of a gathered Meeting at Friends House, the fellowship shared at committee meetings, and the unexpected but deeply meaningful personal encounters. We miss shaking hands after Meeting for worship, and the togetherness of tea time. As spring turned to summer, we missed time spent at Camp NeeKauNis.

While there has been loneliness and pain, there are also blessings and strength. Our online Meetings for Worship now include Friends who were unable to come to Lowther Avenue because of distance or disability, and Ministry and Counsel surveyed Friends about post-pandemic online and in-person combinations. The doorkeeper’s duties were revised for Zoom. Our mid-week Meeting for Worship, held on Wednesday evenings, also moved online: a loyal following of 7 to 11 people meet for 45-minutes of silent worship followed by worship sharing. As the year came to an end, we acknowledged the ease of online events on chilly winter evenings. Gatherings online included a Memorial Meeting for Worship attended by Friends from across Canada, a farewell party, and a New Year’s celebration. (There was also a small summer outdoor gathering to celebrate a Friend’s 101st birthday!)

The Meeting of Ministry and Counsel led some responses to the pandemic. They met frequently, working with younger members and attenders to enrich the spiritual life of our community and to coordinate practical help for shopping or errands. They also established a Discretionary Fund to provide temporary financial assistance for those facing difficulties through loss of income.

M&C members made several rounds of telephone calls, contacting everyone in the TMM Directory, following up on those with difficulties, and adding new attenders to the list. These calls led to many interesting conversations. Newcomers and younger Friends who were pleased to be asked to read the announcements after Meeting for Worship may also help with the next round of calls.

We could benefit from better awareness of courses and resources on Quakerism available online, and books can be borrowed from Friends House Library. We should reach out without fear of proselytizing: a committee for Outreach and Education was suggested. Our process at Meeting for Worship for Business is not always understood. Some have difficulty with the pages of minutes and reports circulated after Monthly Meeting. How can we accommodate those who process information orally or visually? Can we explain and model how, in the face of differing opinions, we seek unity through corporate silent worship.

Committee work is a good way to make friends with Friends and learn about Quaker life and work. As we learn to value Quaker ways of being, we may be led to make connections through Canadian Yearly Meeting, reinforcing deep spiritual links and friendships. Our Yearly Meeting needs our support, and we also need better communication between Monthly and Half-Yearly Meetings.

CYM's membership in the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) is reflected in the work of TMM members on CCC Committees and Commissions, and CCC's endorsement of the UN International Decade for People of African Descent is reflected in a TMM group focusing on anti- Black racism. Other TMM members work on refugee concerns, climate action and relations with Indigenous Peoples. Some miss the Peace and Social Action Committee which has been temporarily laid down

Looking back on our year was revealing. One friend spoke of the Meeting's support through the illness and death of her partner. Another spoke of the integrity and courage shown by Friends whose lives who model their beliefs. We heard comments on the spiritual grounding of the work of Friends. Some make time at home for meditation and stillness. Others journal gratitude for what was previously taken for granted, and make conscious choices about the activities of daily life.

The Beloved Community exists, and it includes both joy and anger. We want a community that can live its testimonies with integrity, a community that has stable and sound structures to deal with conflict. Young Friends and older Friends can work together toward a vision of the future and a deepening of the Spirit. Through hope and love we can bring new answers to new questions, we can bring our inward light into community, and our outward expression of the Kingdom of God.

West End Worship Group: The West End Worship Group meets on the first Sunday of the month. We used to gather in Friends' homes, but with the onset of the COVID pandemic a few meetings were cancelled. During the summer we had distanced gatherings in Friends' gardens, but with the cooler weather, we finally moved online. Our Meetings for Worship are usually silent, but afterwards we spend time catching up on events of the previous month. We miss the opportunity to enjoy refreshments and socialize in person, but we continue to deepen our friendship through sharing our personal stories and discussing Quaker concerns. We welcome new members. Our contact list has about 30 names, and attendance at our monthly gatherings are attended by an average of 8 to 12 people.

Downtown Worship Group: The Downtown Worship Group has been an important part of life for its members for more than a decade, as they shared monthly worship, consideration of themes and queries, life stories, and tender concern for each other. But, with death and illness, attendance has diminished to three remaining members. Because of COVID restrictions, the group has not met in the last year, and, with great reluctance, the members feel it is time to lay the group down. Over the years, we have become loyal spiritual and emotional supports for each other, aided by the warm hospitality of some members who opened their apartments for meetings. We cannot recommend too highly the value of such continuing small worshipping groups. The consistency, trust, and deep exploration that can build is of great substance.

## VANCOUVER MONTHLY MEETING

There was a time when what we now describe as “the State of Society” report was phrased as a *query*: “How has Truth prospered among you?” ‘Truth’ was then understood as the Light and the ‘Way of Friends’ as a lived reality.

Looking back on and summing up a year unlike any experienced before will have to be done differently than in previous years. We do it more by feeling our way through than by listing activities and events. In this “pandemic year” planned arrangements and schedules went by the board due to health regulations initiated by governments to deal with issues related to COVID-19; these scheduled arrangements were replaced by ‘ad hoc’ and trial and error. Challenges of the new situation called for creative responses. A friend organized open-air picnic events for Friends to gather during suitable weather. As the year progressed, ways opened among us, as we learned to hear the inward counsel of the Spirit.

Our midweek Meeting for Worship continues, now meeting virtually, as does our monthly singing before the First Sunday worship.

In 2019, we lost a longtime Friend who was a positive, patient and constant presence within Vancouver Monthly Meeting. Early in this unusual year we held a memorial meeting for our Friend that garnered a full house. We learned together how profoundly, constructively and differently this enigmatic man, despite a lifelong struggle with mental health issues, impacted each of our lives.

Also, we undertook a gathered meeting, using Delphi methods and the skills of guide-Members, to share our feelings about the urgent need to provide emotional safety for all Friends and attenders. During this process we recognized how vulnerable we may paradoxically become when we are within the sharing and supportive community of Friends.

After very thoughtful work on the part of her clearness committee, the Meeting approved our prayerful support of a Friend’s participation in Prayer Circle Action and Earth Witness in solidarity with Indigenous resistance to Trans-Mountain pipeline expansion project. Other members have also made notable witness to this cause.

During this pandemic, the first blow dealt to the Meeting was having to close our Meetinghouse and discontinue a physically gathered Meeting for Worship. Happily, despite its irony, this lull in use of our building allowed time for much needed (and decades in planning) renovations that will increase the versatility and the accessibility of our place of worship. Our in-person gatherings were replaced by virtual Meetings. Some found this electronic “community of worship” difficult. Some, having spent their work-days on Zoom, felt it was too much for it to also intrude on worship. Others just did not sense this method of worship was ‘in right ordering,’ thus did not attend. Some found this technology beyond their skills or access. That left us, as a faith community, feeling incomplete. The presence of these Friends is missed. Some Friends, however readily adapted to virtual worship. Some who live too far away happily returned to worship with us. We have also enjoyed a regular stream of new visitors, several of whom have found space in our midst.

Friends are finding different ways to be present for each other, with phone calls, emails and interlocking small circles allowing them to keep in touch more intensively. Some Friends whose lives were more solitary had more time for finding their strength coming from within. Just as Friends' spiritual lives differed before the pandemic, so our ways of making up for what had been lost, has varied. What has not changed, though, is the sense that we are 'written on each other's hearts', as George Fox reminded early Friends.

## **VANCOUVER ISLAND MONTHLY MEETING**

Being together in worship is vital to our spiritual lives. Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic modulated our life as a Meeting during 2020.

The year was in two parts, marked by a day in mid-March when we were suddenly confronted with the emerging global pandemic. Following the guidance and direction of BC's Provincial Health Officer (Bonnie Henry) we could no longer worship in our much-loved Meetinghouse. As with life, we have each chosen what works best for us regarding our desire to continue worshipping — some opting for small, safe groups in private backyards, parks or the Meeting House garden, and some navigating the challenges of online technology. Zoom had the advantage of being available to people reconnecting from far afield or otherwise unable to attend. On the other hand, meeting in person had the distinct advantage of being directly in each other's spiritual light and social energy. All ways of meeting offered opportunities for deep intimacy and F/friendship.

While technology-mediated Worship did not work for everyone, and some have a deep conviction that it is wrong, we were able to sustain some sense of community, and conduct Worship and Business online. We have muddled through, and tried to remember to "be kind, be calm, be safe."

We deeply grieved our lack of physical connection to each other. We missed our flourishing garden and the Meeting House with its creaky floor and familiar sounds. We were sad to not all be together, yet rejoiced as some Friends were able to join us once again — reconnecting online, after many years of isolation. These Friends have been separated from us by geography, sickness, travel, commitments to child care, and other responsibilities. These renewed connections-have brought new life into the Meeting. Our small midweek Meeting continued to enable deep sharing, and was a particular point of contact for some new and returning Friends. We have experienced a reduction in vocal Ministry, as some Friends were less comfortable giving Ministry in online Worship.

At times we struggled to accept the changes wrought by the emerging pandemic. We were thankful for the joint work of the Meeting's leadership team (Clerks, Trustees, Ministry & Counsel). We continued to hold regular Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business despite the greater difficulty reading the sense of the Meeting. We missed those not present, and a few usually engaged Friends felt uncomfortable with some of the decisions reached in their absence.

There was a Memorial for Michael Phillips just before lockdown, and a day-long acknowledgement for the life of Don Startin in a Friend's garden. August saw a gathering of Friends at the Mary Lake Retreat and later, the ringing of Peace Bells. There was a Meeting House picnic in the fall. There was a remarkable Christmas singing in Zoom with more than 30 participants – including family members welcomed from Germany, Ottawa, Nova Scotia, and all parts of Vancouver Island and the Mainland joining in.

The Property Committee completed a remarkable renovation of the back stairs and deck, creating wonderful new and safe spaces for many more Friends to meet in the garden during the summer. Resident Friends undertook a major clean and decluttering of all the Meeting House rooms. The librarians undertook a complete review and organization of the extensive Victoria Meeting House library.

In the spring of 2020, the members of the new Communications Committee worked diligently with seasoned Friends to seek ways to experience the Spirit within the Internet medium. With thanks to a bequest from Helen Martin, a new website was completed in January 2020, with its embedded calendar. By the fall, a reconfigured Fern Street Newsletter began dropping into the Inboxes of Friends. Many Friends used the old landlines and new mobile services, personal visits, Canada Post, and the Internet to reach out and connect, giving comfort, advice, guidance, and Ministry.

COVID-19 stalled our attempts to improve knowledge of, and relationships with, Indigenous peoples. We remain saddened by our continued inability to reach unity on a territorial acknowledgement. On the other hand, some Friends had the leading to give peaceful testimony in old growth logging protests and letters to politicians on anti-nuclear proliferation and over-use of incarceration.

Some of us enjoyed the economic, environmental, and timesaving benefits of our *virtual* drives or flights to attend Western Half-Yearly Meeting and Canadian Yearly Meeting.

The work of committees has continued. Some Friends have found video technology (Zoom) and other online tools (Google Drive, for example) surprisingly effective in their Meetings. Some Friends have reflected that at times they have felt rushed, rebuffed, or overruled in perhaps less than Friendly ways. We will need to reflect on our Quakerly welcome, orientation and education practices. We will need to heal.

We are particularly thankful for the continuing witness of our resident Friends, who cared for the property and diligently provided regular photographs of flower arrangements in the Meeting House.

One Friend summed up this year's experience in these words: "I hope that when we can all be together as a community again, that we will have some kind of healing or worship sharing or something, because there have been some hard times through this; there's been some hurtful things said and done, and you know, we've all had times when we felt maybe a little bit more sensitive or angry." Another suggested "perhaps someone will lead us on a round of weeping and

then we can go forward together.” On a more humorous note, another Friend wise-cracked “I’m just looking forward to getting a haircut!”

We look forward to shedding tears of joy when we rekindle our beloved community in person. We will appreciate it with all our hearts, more deeply for having been separated.

## WINNIPEG MONTHLY MEETING

*Dear Well and Beloved Friends, it requires great self-denial and resignation of ourselves to the Spirit, to attain that state wherein we can freely cease from being defensive when wrongfully accused or misunderstood...Whoever rightfully attains to it has in some degree learned this blessed lesson. But many others, having their religion chiefly by education and not being acquainted enough with the Spirit do manifest a temper distinguishable from that which comes from the Spirit.*

—John Woolman

We began 2020 with the always studiously polite yet firmly radical words of John Woolman, reminding us that the things we think we understand will often be upended by experience. As the year unfolded, we were all to require “great self-denial and resignation of ourselves to the Spirit.”

Our Meeting for Business on March 15<sup>th</sup> understandably opened without a Clerk’s reading as we hurried to respond to the impending lockdown due to the novel coronavirus (Covid 19) global pandemic with two agenda items: provisional approval of a budget, and direction to our Ministry and Counsel to consider how we would gather for Worship if we were unable to meet in person. By the next week our Ministry and Counsel invited us to, in the words of George Fox, a “Glorious Holy Experiment:”

*With consideration for our desire to continue as a worshipping community in the midst of social distancing, and to continue as an engaged community with one another, you are invited to Meeting for Worship this Sunday online.*

*... We are hoping this will also provide an opportunity for those living at a distance to join in, to share in the joy of being together (virtually) as we listen and tend to the Spirit.*

This experiment has continued every week since. Unable to meet in person, Winnipeg Friends soon began reaching out to one another with phone calls, food, letters, help with gardening, and creative methods of appropriately distanced fellowship. A Friend, for example, started a “Quaker Daily Inspiration” email, which she then sent out every day for the first two stress-filled months of the pandemic, bringing solace and connection to many across the Canadian Quaker community. By spring, Friends began to hold small Meetings for Worship in back yards, common rooms, and Vimy Ridge Park, whilst also maintaining our online meetings.

*At its best, a Quaker Meeting is not just a collection of individual seekers, but a community of faith, a covenant community, knit together by our common seeking of God. We are like spokes on a wheel: as we draw closer to our centre in God, we also draw closer to each other. And as Douglas Steere has reminded us, 'to come near to God is to change.'*

—Thomas Gates, 2004. 3.38, *Faith and Practice*, Canadian Yearly Meeting

In April, we gathered together to do Business for the first time online. We approved Ministry and Counsel's proposal to start a monthly online Meeting for Healing, which continues to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of each month at 7:00 pm. We joyfully welcomed and accepted the Transfer of Membership of Jane Orion Smith and Janet Ross from Yonge Street Monthly Meeting to Winnipeg Monthly Meeting.

*Are your meetings for church affairs held in the Spirit of worship and dependence upon the guidance of the Light? Do you take your right share in them? Do you maintain your respect for other persons however strongly you may differ from their opinions? Do you refrain from using hurtful and provocative language? Are you sufficiently conversant with your spiritual practice to be able, when difficult questions arise, to consider them with an informed mind as well as a loving and tender spirit?*

*Advices and Queries of London Yearly Meeting, 1964, Query #8*

In May we sent a donation to Friends World Committee for Consultation, approved our Reconciliation Report to Canadian Friends Service Committee, and endorsed a letter to the Mayor of Winnipeg regarding the annual Lantern Festival for Peace.

Responding to the uprisings against police violence around the world, our June Meeting for Business addressed Quaker responses to policing.

July 25<sup>th</sup> was a truly joyful day as Allison Penner gave birth to Rudy Arthur John Penner-Findlater, adding a new member to the wonderful household of Allison and Ian and Henry.

*How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.*

*Advices and Queries of London Yearly Meeting, 1964, Query #18*

In September we warmly welcomed Caileigh Morrison as a member of our Meeting. On September 27<sup>th</sup>, in a remarkable feat of innovative organizing, the annual We Are All Treaty People Celebration usually held at the Forks, was heard on the radio.

*How does a Quaker meeting work? Its foundation is the conviction that God is not a distant remote being but a living presence to be discovered in the deep centre of each person...The Quaker experience is that, in the silence, as we are open to one another in love, we help each other by sharing our strengths and weaknesses. The Quaker conviction is that as we go deeper into ourselves we shall eventually reach a still, quiet centre...each of us is aware of our unique*

*value as an individual human being, and each of us is aware of our utter interdependence on one another.*

—George Gorman, *Quaker Spirituality*

In October, responding to a letter from the Canadian Council of Churches asserting their Support for United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we asked member Elaine Bishop to draft a letter expressing our support for the Declaration, along with our sense of urgency and timeliness.

*Friends are reminded that our Religious Society took form in times of disturbance, and that its continuing testimony has been the power of God to lead men and women out of the confusions of outward violence, inward sickness, and all other forms of self-will, however upheld by social convention.*

—*New England Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*, 2018, Advices

*Me: Can I fail at spirituality?*

*Elder: No. You were always spiritual.*

*Me: How do I get better at it?*

*Elder: By remembering that deciding is not doing and wanting is not choosing.*

*Me: I don't get it.*

*Elder: Move in the direction that brings you closer to Spirit in all things. The trail will be revealed and the helpers will come to you.*

*Me: That's it?*

*Elder: It is more than enough for one lifetime.*

—Richard Wagamese

The Advice & Query for our Meeting for Worship on December 13th was number 30, “Are you able to contemplate your death and the death of those closest to you? Accepting the fact of death, we are freed to live more fully. In bereavement, give yourself time to grieve. When others mourn, let your love embrace them.” The next day, on December 14<sup>th</sup>, our beloved Friend W. Ruth Wood died in her bed at home, “suddenly but peacefully,” at the age of 85.

Our Meeting for Worship on December 20<sup>th</sup> became an online remembrance of Ruth, attended by some of her family, with many stories shared of her vivid, idiosyncratic and loving life. Her presence abides in our community, as do the lives of many family and friends who died this year, when the process of loss and mourning has been challenging and complicated.

So many worked so hard to keep our Meeting going this year. We're especially thankful to our Ministry and Counsel and Religious Education Committee, who both provided creative guidance and programming in these largely unprecedented times. Our spiritual practice calls us to care for our larger community as well as our faith community, and Winnipeg members and attenders have responded in multiple ways to provide direct support to community-based organizations and marginalized people.

Our minutes and reports can't contain the disruption, frustration, and fear, nor the beauty, silence, and perseverance shown to us in the last 12 months. And 2020 doesn't ever really end—it will tag along with the rest of our days together. But there is so much to be grateful for. This year has reminded us that we should, “live answerable to the design of our creation,” to come back to John Woolman, and so we must continue to strive for true and just peace in the world and in ourselves.

## **WOOLER MONTHLY MEETING**

The past two years have been ‘difficult’ for Wooler Monthly Meeting. We are a very rural Meeting with a very small actual membership who attend with any regularity - often only three to five persons.

In the past year we have been ‘open’ and ‘closed’ a number of times due to the pandemic. At the present time (April ‘21) we have been officially closed again for two months due to Government edict and we will remain closed until Ontario is ‘opened up’ again.

When we re-open it is hoped that the group of Friends who meet in Picton, Ontario, will join with us for our usual twice-monthly Meeting.

Our financial situation remains static but not problematic. The new out building is now finished and is in use for storage of fire wood, among other things.

When we met in the past we always had lunch together after Meeting and spent time getting to know one another better and exchanging points of view on many things... a time we all looked forward to and hope will come again soon.

Wooler Meeting House and the Meeting itself remain in a somewhat suspended state that we hope will be over as soon as possible.

## **YONGE STREET MONTHLY MEETING**

The year 2020 brought us great challenges, as we discerned the best way to continue with our Meeting for Worship and other Meeting activities. The corona virus had a divisive effect on us in several ways. It led to disagreements over how to meet and how closely we needed to follow all the public health advice. It pushed us into using technology to continue our worship together and conduct our business and committee meetings. It forced us to think more of those in our community for whom technology is a barrier, both practical and perceived.

We have missed our meetinghouse and did rejoice for the few months during the summer when we held Meeting for Worship in the meetinghouse on alternate first days. A women's group has been able to meet a few times at the meetinghouse and some impromptu meetings were possible on the lawn after Meeting for Worship. Our committees have continued to be active and meet

over Zoom. The participation in meeting for worship by the children of three of our families has brought us much joy.

Another challenge came when we received a request from a local charity that supports homeless and other disadvantaged individuals. It was a request for a section of our land on which the Inn from the Cold would build a new facility for 20 transitional housing units plus support offices, kitchen, etc.

The Meeting held two special meetings: the first was with several of the people behind the request to allow the meeting to obtain information directly from those involved. The second was a Specially Called Meeting for Worship with attention to business to consider the request.

Through our discernment we discussed other possible ways in which Inn From the Cold could obtain land adjacent to our meetinghouse. We did not have unity on the original suggestion of offering a portion of our land on which to build a new facility. Under the meeting's direction, the clerk wrote a letter of support for their application indicating that we would welcome them as neighbours.

This issue brought out some strong feelings with opposing points of view, and the decision of the meeting was not easy for some to accept. A few have a sense of a conflict between those drawn more to the contemplative side of Friends' faith and practice versus those drawn more to the Testimonies for social action.

Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel had asked each meeting to reflect on four queries:

How have our individual and corporate actions in the wider world enriched and strengthened the spiritual life of the meeting community?

With the technology available, many of us have been able to maintain attendance at our meetings for worship, thus strengthening our relationships with those others present. This same technology has made committee meetings more manageable, but it seems, more frequent, so that Friends have met with others across Canada on various CYM committees or in CYM sessions. Many Friends are involved in local initiatives, though because most of us do not live in Newmarket, we are not as active there, as some other Friends think we should be as a local faith community. The concerns of the world often make their way into ministry. Many of us feel that our corporate worship also makes its way into the work we do in the wider world.

2. 2020 was a year like no other in recent memory. The pandemic brought many challenges to the way in which we worship and communicate, but Friends have also reported unexpected blessings. How was your meeting's spiritual life affected?

This query is addressed in the first part of this report. But here are some quotes:

"this is really amazing to see everyone. I really like it."

"I like the visitors we have had on zoom, plus some people we don't normally see because they live too far away."

"It was challenging to imagine how we would gather in silence over Zoom and still be open to the collective energy that often gathers in Meeting for Worship. It's taken some time to reach that centered state and to feel that cohesion."

3. Conflict in meetings could be a tool for transformation and an opportunity for connection and growth, but Friends have traditionally viewed it with misgiving. How has your meeting addressed conflict among your members? What would help the meeting to deal more constructively with conflict?

There has been an undercurrent of tension between individuals with strong views. The meeting has not been able to come to a sense of resolving this tension.

One member recently told us: "I see the long line of attenders and members who have left the meeting because conflict is never addressed in a positive way. It is mostly swept under the rug." Another has said: "Conflict amongst Friends is not dealt with at our meeting. I tend to want to avoid talking about it with M&C or the meeting as a whole. I know that I am part of the problem. People who have conflict with me tend not to talk to me or avoid me all together. I then react in the same way, sometimes hoping the individual will not be at meeting. What doesn't help is that it becomes a whisper and then it "ends" without any constructive conversation but the hurt feelings are still there."

We are looking at opportunities in the coming year to address such issues more directly. Finding a neutral third-party facilitator will be a first step.

4. What does the ideal "beloved community" look like? What must we do to make it a reality?

We sense that such a community would be one where everyone trusted each other in a spirit of love and were able to be open about their feelings without fear of hurting or being hurt. It is where we walk with integrity and mutual respect and work together on common goals, or at least see the value of the other in the goals they set themselves.

We are challenged by our living in different areas far from the meetinghouse, so that much of work, family life and community activity occur without regard to the meeting or other members and attenders. Not having the opportunity to be social on the other six days of the week is a drawback.