

**Bucks Quarterly Meeting for Worship for The Purpose of Business**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Day, Eighth Month 2023**

Held under the care of Plumstead Meeting

**Clerk:** Bill Daly (Middletown)

**Bucks Quarter Coordinator:** Wendy Kane (Newtown)

**Recording Clerk:** Terry M. Christensen (Newtown)

**Friends gathered** at 1:03 PM and settled into a period of worship.

**Welcome** – Bill Daly

**Review and Approval of Agenda** – Bill Daly - APPROVED

**Roll Call of Meetings:** Bristol – 3; Buckingham – 1; Doylestown – 0; Fallsington – 6; Lehigh Valley – 4; Makefield – 1; Middletown – 3; Newtown – 10; Plumstead – 11; Quakertown – 1 ; Solebury – 2; Southampton – 4 ; Wrightstown – 2; Yardley – 3.

**Review and Approval of Minutes from May 2023 Quarterly Meeting** – APPROVED

**Stories of Vitality & Strength** –

Lehigh Valley Friend reports that Lehigh Valley Meeting has a presence at Lehigh Valley Pride Day, which is taking place today; they are making use of the “Quaker Table in a Box” supplied by the Quarter.

Middletown Meeting Friend reports that this year they will again celebrate World Quaker Day (October 1<sup>st</sup>) with shared worship with Friends from Settle Meeting in the UK beginning at 9AM with Fellowship at 10AM (via hybrid).

Bristol Friend reports that their labyrinth is progressing nicely and that they are confident that it will be ready for the Historic Bristol celebration.

Southampton Friend reports that Southampton Meeting recently participated in “Southampton Days” carnival (with the assistance of Friends from other meetings); this event seemed to be an effective outreach effort and, in any case, generated a sense of community.

Yardley Friend reports that they will be holding their 67<sup>th</sup>(!) annual Flea Market on Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be 96 vendors, a Quaker tent, delicious food, and music. Also, they note that their labyrinth is always available.

Fallsington Friend reports that they will be building on the success of their recent presentation of a “Quakerism in a Nutshell” class and offer a “Quakerism 102” class in September. They are considering offering both courses next year as well.

### **The Future of Bristol Meeting – Melanie Douty-Snipes, Jim Fine, and Paul Shaffer**

Friend Fine reports that Bristol Meeting (currently a preparatory meeting under the care of Fallsington Meeting) is about to lose their member who serves as Treasurer. Moreover, their long-term Clerk, Paul Shaffer, is facing a professional relocation. This circumstance would leave Bristol (which currently meets for worship once per month) with no members or attenders. Friend Fine noted that Bristol is very, very secure financially and there are ample protections to secure guaranteed income for the foreseeable future.

On the positive side, two members of Newtown Meeting are transferring to Bristol (via Fallsington meeting since Bristol is a preparatory meeting). Also, Redemption Church (who rents the meetinghouse) has agreed to be responsible for maintaining the Bristol meetinghouse and grounds. Redemption Church is committed to the spiritual health of the Bristol community. Friend Fine reports that Wendy Kane has been instrumental in this discernment.

Fallsington Friend notes that Fallsington Meeting is still discerning its role in this collaboration; since there are/will be only two people in Bristol Meeting, what are the implications of this arrangement going forward.

Buckingham Friend asks about process; Bristol Friend discusses contract that has been drawn up.

Falls Friend notes that every month, some Fallsington Friends will be worshipping at Bristol.

Southampton Friend wonders about insurance; Bristol Friend notes this question has been addressed.

Wendy Kane notes that one of the soon-to-be members of Bristol has agreed to serve as Clerk of the meeting.

Fallsington Friend wonders about their role and the Quarter going forward; what is our responsibility toward very small meetings?

Newtown Friend points out that Quarter had similar concerns about Southampton Meeting in 2006.

Yardley Friend reports that early in 2000s, Friends Sid Cadwallader and Sam Snipes used to regularly attend Princeton Meeting when its future was uncertain; Princeton Meeting is now thriving. Yardley Friend further notes that Friends from Yardley Meeting will be happy to offer periodic attendance and support.

Wendy Kane wonders if Bristol can meet more often; Bristol Friend replies that more frequent meetings are possible.

Clerk Bill Daly consults *Faith and Practice* (F&P) and notes the leadership requirements for a meeting.

Fallsington Friend believes that it would be useful to have a visioning session focused on the future of Bristol meeting. Clerk Daly questions can we form a committee to discuss custodial issues of very small meetings?

**APPROVED**

**Committee Report – The Ad Hoc Technology Group – Richmond Shreve** (equipment list attached).

Friend Richmond Shreve opens his report by noting that technology opens our doors to those who cannot attend and enhances our inclusivity. Friend Shreve presented a list of equipment that will be necessary to stage a hybrid quarterly meeting. This list includes, among other components, microphones, a camera, a camera tripod, a projector, speakers, a projection screen, a USB mixer, a wireless hotspot, a laptop computer, a power source, and various cables. The total cost for this package is estimated to be \$4,631.

Discussion ensues. Buckingham Friend wonders what is the critical number of people to hold a hybrid meeting? – Ans: there need be only one person on-site; the Zoom host can be anywhere.

Friend wonders if an Ad Hoc Tech Group representative can be present to help a meeting set up? Ans: yes.

Clerk Daly asks if we want to commit to purchasing the requisite equipment.

Wendy Kane notes that we also need volunteers to operate the equipment.

Southampton Friend notes that Quarter will require several such volunteers.

Newtown Friend notes that if meetings wanted to commit to hybrid, they would have done so by now.

Plumstead Friend wonders how many meetings require extra equipment? Ans: Eight meetings (of 14 total).

Makefield Friend notes that individual meetings should have the choice of whether or not to offer hybrid option for Quarterly meetings.

Yardley Friend wonders if we have an obligation to carry the meeting to seekers from afar.

Buckingham Friend suggests that we can organize carpools for Friends who cannot drive.

Wrightstown Friend notes that they have members that regularly participate from afar.

Bristol Friend notes that we lean very heavily on volunteers; we should consider compensating a tech crew; this is also an opportunity to engage with younger Friends.

Fallsington Friend notes that technology has uses beyond Quarterly meeting.

Newtown Friend suggests an audio only approach.

Clerk Daly notes that high quality microphones are a necessity.

Wendy Kane notes that we have suffered poor audio quality in the past.

Quakertown Friend reports that they have no WIFI.

Fallsington Friend suggests that we move forward with purchasing request equipment.

Clerk Daly suggests that Ad Hoc Tech Committee examine what is required if we do audio only.

Newtown Friend notes that soon, Newtown Meeting's old equipment will be available and that with an appropriate WIFI hotspot, the old Newtown Meeting equipment could be used at next the next Quarterly Meeting

### **APPROVED**

#### **Quarter Coordinator Report – Wendy Kane (report attached)**

“Outreach” is a concern of many Friends these days. Most meetings are looking to reengage with members and seekers who have forsaken meeting attendance and/or fellowship. There is a particular concern about the return of young families and their children back to meetings. Meetings are exploring website improvement, the use of social media, engagement in community events, and signage on their properties. Quarterly Meeting has been very proactive in helping monthly meetings achieve these goals. Moving into fall – with the resumption of adult and children’s First Day programs, we hope this will be an opportune time to renew our bonds to our Quaker communities and take part in the spiritual nurturing and fulfillment we find therein.

Wendy Kane notes that Quarter is the only quarterly meeting with a coordinator. She has been wondering about the history of the coordinator position; it would be interesting to know whom has held the coordinator position in the past.

Wendy Kane reports that visiting meetings in the quarter is the highlight of her position; she especially enjoys attending various meetings for business.

Wendy Kane reports that everyone present had a WONDERFUL time at Friends Fun Picnic at Tohickon Valley Park. Wendy Kane notes that this location is very near the geographical center of Bucks Quarter. We will probably repeat this event at the same location next year.

Wendy Kane reports that Quarter Clerks continue to meet quarterly. The July Quarter Clerks meeting was attended by clerks from 8 (of 14) monthly meetings. Discussion topics included websites and having the expertise and volunteers to administer and maintain current content.

Wendy Kane reports that she is now incorporating a QR<sup>1</sup> Code into various documents. For example, there is a QR code that links registration for the Quaker Driving Tour.

**Budget & Nominating Committee:**

Wendy Kane notes that she will get into specifics of Budget and Nominating later in the meeting.

**Outreach Committee:**

Outreach met as scheduled on July 18th, via Zoom. Highlights from that meeting include printing Quaker Meetinghouse Driving Tour signs for 4 meetings, an overview of the outreach grants given for FY 22-23, presentation of an updated version of the popular "Pick the Quaker" activity, and approval for the coordinator to schedule a meeting of outreach and communication contacts across the Quarter.

**Coordinator-Clerk Meetings:**

In its annual review, Bucks Quarter Oversight Committee identified a goal of having the Quarter Coordinator meet with the Clerk of each monthly meeting. This past quarter, Wendy Kane met with Lisa Uchrin of Quakertown and Lance Mervine of Middletown.

**Yearly Meeting & Other Quaker Organizations:**

Wendy Kane accepted a second (final) term on the PYM Program Committee. She will continue as clerk of that committee.

Wendy Kane took part in a Friends Village Visioning Session regarding Paxson Hall (which is located in the heart of Newtown Borough). Friends from Yardley, Plumstead, and Newtown meetings also participated.

On July 23rd, Plumstead Meeting hosted a program, "The Lenape People in Pennsylvania", a presentation by Adam Waterbear DePaul. The event was very well attended. Wendy Kane reports that there was standing room only in the Plumstead Meetinghouse.

**Inreach – Care of Meetings:**

Wendy Kane reports that visiting monthly meetings and sharing worship with Friends is the best part of her job. This past quarter, Wendy Kane visited Solebury, Fallsington, Makefield, Quakertown, Wrightstown, Doylestown, Southampton, Plumstead, Lehigh Valley and Bristol.

The Friends Are Fun Picnic lived up to its name. Wendy Kane estimates that 75 Friends (representing 12 meetings), gathered at Tohickon Valley Park on June 17th for food, fun, and fellowship. This event was the first Quarter-wide picnic that Friends could recall. This site was chosen to encourage our Friends from the northern tier of meetings to attend which they did – much to the delight of all.

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<sup>1</sup> A "QR", or "quick-response code", is a type of two-dimensional matrix barcode that is used over a very broad context. For example, QR codes are employed in commercial tracking applications and, increasingly, in convenience-oriented applications aimed at mobile-phone users (termed mobile tagging). QR codes may be used to display text to the user, to open a webpage on the user's device, to add a vCard contact to the user's device, to open a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI), to connect to a wireless network, or to compose an email or text message.

Quarter Peace Fair Committee:

The Peace Fair Committee continues holding monthly meetings. Wendy Kane made an advertising video for the Peace Fair which is available on the Quarter YouTube Channel. The Peace Fair Committee is looking for more robust attendance by Friends and to that end, they will track attendance by distributing "Genuine Quaker" pins to anyone who visits the Quaker Tent.

PYM Annual Sessions:

PYM held its 343rd Annual Sessions on July 26th through July 30th, at The College of New Jersey. Wednesday and Thursday were in a virtual-only format, while Friday and Saturday were held in a hybrid format. Wendy Kane had the pleasure of introducing opening night Keynote Speakers, Tucker and Sameer Manchanda, of Newtown Meeting.

The Thursday day session was focused on Meeting for Business while the evening centered around a virtual version of "Quaker Jeopardy". Wendy Kane stayed overnight at TCNJ and was able to spend time in fellowship with Friends from around PYM.

Wendy Kane reports that PYM staff were well-prepared, and business was handled in a spiritual manner by the presiding Clerk. Saturday evening featured more fellowship and activities such as line-dancing.

The next gathering of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting will be continuing sessions at Arch Street Meetinghouse on Saturday, November 11th.

Bucks Quarter Outreach:

Wendy Kane announces that Bucks Quarter Outreach Grants: are available to every monthly meeting for FY 23-24.

Wendy Kane has made a special effort to post more stories of vitality on the Quarter website. These have also been posted to the Quarter Facebook page. Links to these pages are included in each issue of Quakerphernalia in the hopes Friends will visit the website.

Quarter Facebook postings continue on a regular basis.

**BREAK**

**Annual Report – Middletown – Lance Mervine (Clerk Daly substitutes for Friend Mervine; see attached report)**

Middletown Meeting continues to offer virtual meeting for worship (via Zoom) for those unable to attend in person.

They have invited their young Friends to help with meeting events such as their annual auction and the hosting of Bucks Quarterly Meeting (which Middletown hosted February 2023). Involving young Friends in these capacities has been appreciated. A young Friend has also volunteered to be trained to operate the audio and video equipment used to facilitate hybrid meetings.

Middletown meeting supports Bucks Learning Cooperative (BLC), a self-directed learning center for home-schooled teens. Two Meeting members serve on the BLC board and the BLC staff, students, and parents presented a well-received program at the February 2023 Bucks Quarterly meeting.

This past year, the Meeting Clerk was contacted by representatives of the Rainbow Room. This group is supported by Planned Parenthood and provides a safe space for LGBTQ youth to gather for fellowship and support. However, an ad hoc committee discerned that the physical space available would not meet Rainbow Room's needs, and further, the Rainbow Room would deprive Meeting of a First Day School room. This difficult discernment was disappointing to a number of Friends. A letter of support for Rainbow Room was drafted and shared with Bucks Quarterly Meeting, the Rainbow Room, Planned Parenthood, and the state senator for Middletown Township.

Meeting continues to be active in efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and preserve the environment.

Meeting is an active member of the Langhorne Area Ministerial Association (a/k/a the Ministerium or LAMA). Meeting participates in the annual Good Friday Cross Walk and Thanksgiving Eve service.

As has become the custom, the Good Friday Cross Walk began at Middletown meetinghouse with brief worship in the manner of Friends. The Meeting Clerk actively participated in planning for the event, including arranging for shuttle busses from Pennswood Village to transport participants back to their vehicles. Other Meeting Friends provided baked goods and refreshments for those who walked. Meeting received many compliments from participating congregations and Friends were glad to have participated in this event.

Meeting continues to explore opportunities for outreach and ways to grow membership.

**Special Report – FY 22-23 Outreach Grants – Wendy Kane (see attached report)**

Wendy Kane reports that the following meetings received grants in support of their outreach efforts:

**Fallsington** received funding for a social justice singer/songwriter concert series.

**Lehigh Valley** received funding to purchase a space at Lehigh Valley Pride 2023.

**Middletown** received funding to purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meetings.

**Newtown** received funding to hire an audio-visual consultant to discuss improving hybrid worship.

**Solebury** received funding to improve their website.

**Southampton** received funding to cover the cost of equipment that would improve hybrid meetings, such as a projector, screen, laptop, microphones and stands.

**Wrightstown** received funding to purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meeting; will be using last year's and this year's for the purchase of an OWL (automatically adjusting camera / microphone device).

**Yardley** received funding in support of its "Summer of '23" movie series.

**Treasurer's report – Lisa Parry Becker** (see attached report)

Our income and expenses for the fourth quarter of our fiscal year are close to budget. One meeting has not contributed the amount pledged, therefore we have a 5% shortfall (\$13,825) in meeting contributions. This will generate an overage in next year's budget. Advertising for Quakerphenalia is also 11% (\$137.50) below the budgeted expectation. In sum, our "gross profit" is 95% of budgeted expectation for this quarter.

For the fiscal year ending on June 30<sup>th</sup>, we have bank accounts totaling \$25,605.41. and Also, we have assets in Friends Fiduciary Corporation totaling \$50,301.85. Therefore, our total of equities and liabilities is \$75,907.26.

Also, after the end of the fiscal year, we received an insurance dividend which Quarter is disbursing.

Middletown Friend proposes Minute of Appreciation for Treasurer Lisa Parry Becker.

**APPROVED**

**Annual Report – Southampton – Stephen Moyer** (Friend Carolyn Michener substitutes for Friend Moyer; see attached report)

Southampton is a small but busy meeting. Southampton meets for worship twice each week; on Sunday morning (from 10 to 11AM) and on Tuesday evening (from 7:30 to 8:30 PM) using hybrid technology. While attendance is less than hoped for, they have, on occasion, been blessed by a visit from a family with a toddler.

Southampton continues to hold weekly vigils for Social Justice at the [busy] corner of Street Road (PA 132) and Gravel Hill Road. The vigil is held at 4 EDT and at 3 EST after the daylight savings time adjustment. Participants at the vigil include members of Southampton Meeting as well as neighbors from Upper Southampton Township and surrounding towns. The third(!) anniversary of their first vigil occurred in June 2023. In honor of this longevity, folks gathered at the Meetinghouse for a covered-dish meal and a "picture show" of photos taken three years before.

Southampton Friends Meeting continues to support the broader community. They provide low-cost meeting space for two Narcotics Anonymous chapters. Additionally, they offer space to Welcoming The Stranger (an organization which teaches ESL and does citizenship preparation). This past year we have also rented space to a group from a nearby church that needed a safe, third-party meeting room to air LGBTQ issues that were damaging their social structure.



On the third Sunday of each month Southampton gathers for forty-five minutes of discussion prior to Meeting for Worship. Over the past twelve months, they have discussed the pamphlet “Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice” by Dr. Harold Weaver (Pendle Hill #465) and begun discussions on “The Testimony of Integrity in the Religious Society of Friends” by Wilmer A. Cooper (Pendle Hill #296). These discussions are insightful and seem to attract attenders.

Like many Friends meetings, Southampton is facing the issue of aging facilities that require significant repair. Southampton Meeting has two buildings; a one-story meetinghouse that dates to 1968 and another three-story building (often referred to as “the House on the Hill) which dates to the 1920’s. This past year, they replaced the electrical panels in both buildings and installed a new HVAC system in their meetinghouse. These renovations will provide more comfort in the summer months and lower utility costs in the winter.

Friend Jim Michener has been very busy upgrading their meeting library.

Southampton Meeting is thoroughly engaged in Outreach. Their efforts have been enhanced by a grant from Bucks Quarterly Meeting (to which they expressed appreciation).

This year, Southampton Friends Meeting participated in “Southampton Days” (a carnival held in Tamanend Upper Southampton Park the first week in July). Using grant funds from Quarter, they rented a table at this event and staffed it with Quakers from Southampton, Wrightstown, and Newtown meetings. Wendy Kane provided Quaker flyers and handouts.

This event was a rousing success. Several visitors to the table asked, “Are you the people who do the vigil on Street Road?” Other conversations generated a sense of community.

Southampton Friends Meeting, after a prolonged discernment, has joined P.O.W.E.R. This organization is an interfaith, multi-racial, people’s movement of Pennsylvania congregations and individuals committed to racial and economic justice on a livable planet. It conducts campaigns in areas of education, justice, economic dignity, civic engagement, climate justice and justice reform. Southampton believes this will prove to be a very fruitful collaboration.

#### **Annual Report – Wrightstown – Irv Thompson (report attached)**

In the past year, Wrightstown has worked hard to recreate the sense of community that they enjoyed before the pandemic.

To that end, they are working to integrate the Nursery School families into their meeting. Wrightstown. To that end, the nursery school staff have established a vegetable garden for the Nursery School children and their families to tend.

Wrightstown reports that they have a solid core of attendees, averaging 25 – 30 people at meeting for worship.

They are preparing to celebrate their 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary later this year.

Wrightstown meeting is seeking a PYM Membership Development Grant to improve the audio amplification for those members who have hearing issues.

Wrightstown has changed their leadership structure by creating a 5-person “clerk’s team” which consists of, the presiding clerk, the recording clerk, the recorder, a rising clerk, and a past clerk. Initial indications are that this model has great potential. So far, we see that the duties can be naturally divided according to the gifts and leadings of the individual team members and that the job of clerk can become less burdensome.

Wrightstown has installed technology to improve the audio and visual experience for remote attenders as well as those attending in person. In this context, they have benefited from outreach grants from Quarter.

The Wrightstown Recorder confirmed that at the end of 2022 the Meeting had 196 members, down from 200 at the end of 2021. These include 175 members, 6 members under 21, and 15 associate members. Within the Meeting community, there have been four marriages and one birth. There were no further deaths in 2022 since those noted in last year’s Annual Report. They are sad to report that Anne Alden died in February 2023.

#### **Committee Report – Budget and Nominating – Wendy Kane**

Budget and Nominating has brought forward the name of Terry Christensen to serve as the Bucks Quarter representative to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Nominating Council.

**APPROVED**

#### **Annual Report – Yardley – Marna Matthews (see attached report)**

Yardley Meeting has been focused on outreach this past year. They have slowly built back the number of people attending meeting for worship. While they have had many engaging events for families such as “Movie Night” and “Game Night”, they have not enjoyed sustained attendance from younger families. This is attributed to the absence of an active children’s group.

They have had good success with their electronic arrangements for hybrid meetings.

Although their Religious Education committee has worked to develop lesson plans appropriate for a broad age range, attendance by children has been sporadic. They have difficulty planning activities for children because of the difficulty finding pairs of volunteers. They are currently offering First Day School twice per month.

Yardley’s Adult RE programs are offered once per month.

Over the past two years, Yardley has had problems with the flooring that was installed as part of the remodeling of their meetinghouse. The contractor had, evidently, used the wrong adhesive and the floor tiles continued to come loose. Ultimately, Yardley

retained an attorney to negotiate with the contractor. This issue seems to have been resolved.

Yardley meeting offered support to St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Yardley when several of the LBGQT banners displayed at St. Andrews were vandalized. Yardley Friends sent a letter of support to the St. Andrews congregation and posited signs similar to those that had been vandalized on their grounds adjacent to North Main Street in Yardley. They also continue to display two banners on their front porch: "Welcome" and "Love thy Neighbor – No Exceptions".

This past May, Yardley celebrated the opening of their new Labyrinth.

This past year, Yardley meeting mourned the loss of four members: Maury Benbow, Ruth Blattenberger, Laura Clappison, Rose Koch, and Graham Leonard. Each of these Friends had contributed much energy, love, and fellowship to the community when they were active here. Yardley meeting also hosted a memorial service for a member that had passed away in 2021.

On a happier note, Yardley member Sarah Crofts and Kirk Gosweiler were joyously wed under the care of the meeting at the Yardley Meetinghouse in May

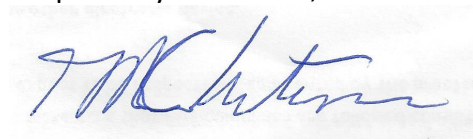
#### **Announcements –**

Recording Clerk Christensen requests that future annual reports of monthly meetings include a Recorders report. More specifically, and from a historical context, it would be helpful for monthly meetings to report gains and/or losses in membership, the number of adult and young Friends, and the average attendance at meeting for worship.

Southampton Friend asks if it would be useful to amend their report via email; yes.

**Closing Worship** – After a period of silent worship, the Clerk adjourned the meeting at 3:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Terry M. Christensen, Recording Clerk

#### **Addendum 1:**

Middletown Recorder, Jerry Belew, reports that Middletown started 2022 with 86 members, 83 of whom were over 21 years of age, and 3 members were under that threshold. Over the course of 2022, Middletown gained two members and had one resignation. Also two members reached the age of 21. Middletown meeting began 2023 with 87 members, one of whom is under 21 years of age.

Report of the Coordinator to Bucks Quarterly Meeting  
August 20, 2023  
Under the Care of Plumstead Monthly Meeting  
Held at Plumstead Monthly Meeting

“Outreach” seems to be the word I hear from Friends these days. Most meetings are looking for ways to entice members back for both worship and fellowship. They are also looking to bring new Friends – especially young families - to their meetings. They are exploring website improvements, social media, community events, and improved signage on their properties. The Quarter has been as proactive as possible with helping them to achieve their goals. As we move into the fall and the resumption of both adult and children’s first day school programs, we hope this will be a time for everyone to remember their Quaker communities and the nurturing and spiritual fulfillment they find there.

## Inreach

### Care of Meetings

Visiting monthly meetings and sharing worship with them continues to be the highlight of my job. This quarter’s rotation included Solebury, Fallsington, Makefield, Quakertown, Wrightstown, Doylestown, Southampton, Plumstead, Lehigh Valley and Bristol. In addition to worship, I attended Meeting for Business at Quakertown and shared a potluck meal at Lehigh Valley.

### Friends are Fun Picnic

The picnic lived up to its name! About 75 Friends from around the Quarter, representing 12 meetings, gathered at Tohickon Valley Park in June. We ate food, we played games, and we made new F(f)riends. Many commented that this was their first time at a Quarter picnic. Turns out this is the first Quarter picnic - at least in the memory of current Friends. The site was chosen specifically to encourage Friends from our northernmost meetings to attend - and they did.

### BQ Peace Fair Committee

The committee continues to meet monthly; vendors and non-profits continue to sign up to participate. I made an advertising video which is available on the BQ YouTube channel [Peace Fair Promo short version](#). They are looking for more attendance by Friends, and to track attendance we will be distributing “Genuine Quaker” pins to anyone who visits the Quaker Tent.

### Committee Meetings

- **Clerk’s Meeting:** At our July clerks meeting we had representation from eight of our fourteen meetings. We discussed websites and the webmasters who administer them. Most meetings have a web presence but find it difficult to maintain and post current information; volunteers are spread too thin or there isn’t the technical expertise for the job. We all agree that engaging young Friends in this area is key, as well as expanding our presence on social media to engage our current younger friends and attract new families.

- **Budget & Nominating Committee:** At the quarterly meeting of the Budget and Nominating Committee Terry Christensen was nominated to serve on the PYM Nominating Council; approval for this appointment will be brought to the August Quarterly Meeting.
- **Outreach Committee:** The committee met as scheduled in July; highlights from that meeting include printing Quaker Meetinghouse Driving Tour signs for 4 meetings, an overview of the outreach grants given for FY 22-23, presentation of an updated version of the popular “Pick the Quaker” activity, and approval for the coordinator to schedule a meeting of outreach and communication contacts across the Quarter.

### Coordinator-Clerk Meetings

One of the coordinator’s goals identified at the annual review was meeting with each monthly meeting clerk to get a sense of the state of their meeting and explore how the Quarter can offer support. This quarter I met with Lisa Uchrin, Quakertown, and Lance Mervine, Middletown.

### Yearly Meeting & Other Quaker Organizations

- **PYM Program Committee:** I was asked, and accepted, a second (and final) three-year term on this committee; I will continue as clerk.
- **Mercer Street Friends Community Schools Clothing Drive:** The drive was quite successful, with most of our meetings participating. Bags and boxes of new and lightly used clothing were collected; it was a great community effort by Bucks Quakers. Bernadette Trapp, Community Schools Director, was most grateful.

### Event Attendance

Within the Quarter:

- **Doylestown Friends Visioning Session:** Friends held a visioning session to discern how the meeting would like to move forward after the pandemic. I was asked to clerk/facilitate so that all Doylestown Friends could participate fully in the discussion.
- **Ad Hoc Tech Committee Meeting:** A small group of Friends met to discuss issues raised at our last Quarterly Meeting - specifically how can the Quarter provide hybrid technology and volunteers to monthly meetings when they are scheduled to host Quarterly Meeting, and they are unable to provide it themselves.
- **Friends Village Visioning Session:** I was invited to be a part of a visioning session about Paxson Hall, located in the heart of Newtown Borough. Other Bucks Quarter Friends were there including from Yardley, Plumstead and Newtown meetings.
- **The Lenape People in Pennsylvania:** There was standing room only in the Plumstead Meetinghouse to hear Adam Waterbear DePaul speak about the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. The meeting experimented with EDDM - Every Door Direct Mail - to advertise the event, which proved to be a great success.

Through Philadelphia Yearly Meeting:

- **PYM Quarterly Meeting Leadership Gathering:** a small group of Quarter leadership gathered virtually to discuss issues of importance to Quarters. We had presentations from PYM staff from the Friends Counseling Service and the new Director of Communication.
- **PYM 343rd Annual Sessions:** July 26th-30th – held virtually and hybrid at The College of New Jersey. Wednesday and Thursday were virtual-only, and I had the pleasure of introducing the opening night keynote speakers, Tucker and Sameer Manchanda. Thursday was business during the day, and in the evening was virtual Quaker Jeopardy. The next three days were in person, and I stayed overnight at TCNJ - evenings are the best time for casual conversation with Friends from around the yearly meeting. PYM staff were well prepared, business was handled in a spiritual manner by our presiding clerk, and there was plenty of fun with Saturday night line dancing and mocktails, including “Margaret Fell on the Rocks.” The next gathering of the yearly meeting will be Continuing Sessions at Arch Street Meetinghouse on Saturday, November 11.

Greater Quaker Community:

- **Mercer Street Friends Leadership Event:** As a current Board member I am encouraged to attend. Bucks Quarter Friends Odie and Bob LeFever accepted the Robert M. Appelbaum Service Award.

## Outreach

Bucks Quarter Outreach

- **Bucks Quarter Outreach Grants:** are available to every monthly meeting for FY 23-24.
- **Website:** I have made a special effort to post more stories of vitality over the summer, which were also pushed to our Facebook page. The links are included in each issue of *Quakerphernalia* in the hopes Friends will visit the website:
  - [Bucks Quarter Goes Hybrid - Take 2](#)
  - [Some Friendly English Friends](#)
  - [Local Expert Assesses Historic Plumstead Meetinghouse](#)
  - [Summer Fun with Bucks Quarter Quakers](#) - this story was posted to the PYM website.
  - [The Healing Power of a Quilt](#)
- **Facebook:** postings continue on a regular basis.
- **Times Publishing:** Quaker stories continue to be published on a monthly basis. In June there was an article about the Juneteenth celebration on the grounds of Middletown Meeting and in July was an article highlighting Doylestown’s vigil commemorating Hiroshima Day on August 6th. We continue to submit a monthly advertisement for Bucks Quakers as well.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Kane

Coordinator, Bucks Quarterly Meeting

# Report of the Technology Task Force

## Hybrid Meeting Roadshow

There are many pros and cons to introducing technology into our traditionally simple meetings for worship. But experience shows that technology allows Friends to participate who are infirm, distant, or otherwise separated. At Newtown and other meetings technology facilitates outreach to new attenders and those who are ill or must be absent for other reasons.

The ad-hoc Technology Committee was asked to consider the cost and feasibility of assembling a kit of equipment that would work for Meetings that don't own in-house facilities for Zoom Meetings. The list of gear that is included in the materials for today's meeting is representative of what would be required to bring a quarterly meeting such as this one to a virtual audience. We dubbed the project the "Hybrid Meeting Roadshow."

The kit would include a laptop, camera, projector, screen, microphones, and speakers as well as other accessories.

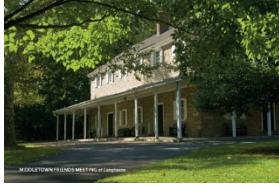
We believe a roadshow kit such as this can be deployed in just about any indoor setting and will allow those present in person to be seen and heard by those participating in the Zoom call. Likewise, the projector and loudspeakers would allow those present in person to hear and see those in remote places. A collateral benefit would be sound reinforcement and big screen visuals for those speaking in person to be understood clearly in a crowded meeting.

Members of the technology committee have gained considerable experience in assembling systems of speakers, microphones, cameras, and computers to produce hybrid events, and have applied what they have learned to specifying the Road Show equipment. We have also learned the challenges of training ourselves and others to successfully operate the equipment. Although it's not a trivial undertaking, it's something that a small team of committed people can do to serve our quarterly meetings.

## Hybrid Meeting Roadshow

Number	Item	Description	Cost	Power Demand
1	Laptop	<a href="https://www.amazon.com">amazon.com</a>	\$600.00	60 watts
2	Camera	<a href="https://www.monoprice.com/product?p_id=35520">https://www.monoprice.com/product?p_id=35520</a>	\$200.00	5 watts
3	Tripod	<a href="https://www.amazon.com">amazon.com</a>	\$35.00	
4	Projector	<a href="https://www.amazon.com">amazon.com</a>	\$1,100.00	350 watts
5	2 Microphones	<a href="https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1554099-REG/shure_blx288_pg58_h11_blx288_pg58_dual_channel_wireless_handheld.html?">https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1554099-REG/shure_blx288_pg58_h11_blx288_pg58_dual_channel_wireless_handheld.html?</a>	\$549.00	4 watts
6	2 Speakers	<a href="https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1547279-REG/samson_rs110a_300w_active_speaker_10_and.html/specs">https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1547279-REG/samson_rs110a_300w_active_speaker_10_and.html/specs</a>	\$400.00	200 to 400 watts
7	Screen	<a href="https://www.amazon.com">amazon.com</a>	\$70.00	
8	USB mixer	<a href="https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1701783-REG/yamaha_ag03mk2_b_3_channel_mixer_usb_interface_for.html">https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1701783-REG/yamaha_ag03mk2_b_3_channel_mixer_usb_interface_for.html</a>	\$162.00	
9	Wireless hotspot	<a href="https://www.amazon.com">amazon.com</a>	\$40.00	10 watts
10	Cables, etc		\$500.00	
11	Cellular Service	Mint = \$15/month (T-mobile network) ... annual cost \$180 with 5 GiB/data use. Verizon ~\$480 -- <a href="https://www.t-mobile.com/home-internet">https://www.t-mobile.com/home-internet</a>	\$500.00	
		<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,156.00</b>	
12	Portable Generator	For venues without electricity. (Option A)	\$300.00	800 peak, 600 avg
13	UPS	Uninterruptable Power Source and Surge protector	\$175.00	
14	Portable Power Bank	For venues without electricity. (Option B) 1000wh = up to 2 hours power. Extend with auto battery connection?	\$700.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>		(Including option A above)	<b>\$4,631.00</b>	





Middletown Friends Meeting  
453 W. Maple Avenue  
Langhorne, PA 19047

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State of the Meeting Report to Bucks Quarter  
Eighth Month 15, 2023

While we continued to offer virtual meeting for worship on Zoom, for the most part we have returned to in-person (hybrid) worship. It has been such a joy to be able to meet in person again, which Friends appreciate all the more after being apart for almost 3 years.

Our young Friends are invited and encouraged to help with meeting events, such as our annual auction in the fall, and quarterly meeting, which we hosted in February. Their participation at these events was greatly appreciated. The young Friends also held a drive-through toy and food drive in December for the Bucks County Housing Group's food pantry in Penndel. One young Friend has volunteered to be trained to run the equipment to facilitate hybrid meeting.

Members and attenders often provide rides to or from meeting for worship for several of our members who do not drive.

A copy of our monthly minutes is printed in extra-large type for one of our visually impaired members.

Our Ministry & Nurture Committee sends cards and flowers to members and attenders who are ill or who have suffered a loss in their family. We share joys and concerns in our newsletter.

Our meeting supports the Bucks Learning Cooperative (BLC), a self-directed learning center for homeschooled teens. BLC rents our schoolhouse, participates in some of our community events, and holds some classes in the meetinghouse and garage. Two of our members serve on the BLC board. At our invitation, BLC staff, students, and parents provided a well-received program at the February 2023 Bucks Quarterly Meeting.

The meeting wrote a letter to PennDOT to protest their plan to increase non-local traffic on Route 413 through the African American community and past its churches. The plan would also be detrimental to the physically and developmentally challenged community at Woods Services. Several meeting members have been active in the Borough planning committee, working with a traffic engineer to come up with alternatives and traffic-calming strategies to minimize the impact of the planned changes.

Our meeting supports the African American Museum of Bucks County and recently made a substantial donation to their building fund. Several members are actively involved with the group, including one who has researched and written a book about the Boone Farm in Middletown, the future home of the AAMBC, and is donating the proceeds from the sale of the book to the museum.

The Meeting provided support for a Langhorne community member who held a Juneteenth celebration on the meetinghouse grounds on June 24. This event was first planned for June of 2020 but had to be postponed until now because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Meeting covered

the liability insurance for the event and arranged for parking at the nearby Heritage Farm and golf carts to transport attendees from the parking area through the woods to the event. For the past three years we have worked with this same community member to display a large Juneteenth banner in front of the meetinghouse.

Last fall, our clerk was contacted by representatives of the Rainbow Room, a group sponsored by Planned Parenthood that provides a safe space for LGBTQ+ youth to gather for fellowship and support. The group currently meets in a church in Doylestown and after receiving a large state grant was looking to expand in the lower part of the county. They were very interested in using our FDS/childcare room, and Friends were initially quite receptive to the idea. An ad hoc committee met with Rainbow Room staff to negotiate the details, but it became apparent that their requirements would not only leave us without a FDS room, but the physical space would not meet their needs. This was a difficult decision, leaving a number of Friends very disappointed. A letter of support for the Rainbow Room was drafted and shared with Bucks Quarter, the Rainbow Room, Planned Parenthood, and our state senator, who was instrumental in getting the grant money. Middletown Friends were joined by members of other Bucks Meetings during the first three weekly meetings of youth at the Rainbow Room. A local conservative Christian church and supporters of former PA Gubernatorial candidate Douglas Mastriano sent followers to protest the Rainbow Room's opening at St. James Episcopal Church in Langhorne.

The largest funeral service in modern times at our cemetery took place on July 28, 2023, with over 350 coming out for a graveside service. The service was for Sherri Jokic, a non-member who lived with her backyard facing the cemetery. Sherri's husband reached out to our Clerk a week before his wife passed, and asked if he could purchase graves. An emergency business meeting was held by email and Meeting granted permission, as the cemetery is reserved for members first.

**Some of our environmental efforts include:**

- A section of our graveyard is designated as a green burial ground, with one green burial thus far.
- We recycle, not using paper or plastic products when reusable dishes and utensils are feasible.
- We set the thermostat low when the building is not in use.
- We have a butterfly garden that is certified as an official Monarch Waystation by Monarch Watch.
- All trees trimmed on our property, as well as all leaves raked are composted in the woods behind our graveyard.
- At our Food Pantry and Toy drop off collections our young friends greet the cars waiting in line with signs that asks them to turn off their engines as we go to them to pick up their donations.

The meeting has been an active member of the Langhorne Area Ministerial Association (aka the Ministerium or LAMA) for decades, sending a meeting representative to monthly meetings and participating in community events such as the annual Good Friday Cross Walk and Thanksgiving Eve service. Last fall, our clerk attended a meeting of LAMA for pastors, only to find himself under attack and the Quaker faith questioned by some area pastors. There is a growing conservative movement in the Ministerium led by Langhorne Presbyterian, which has dropped

out of PCUSA and joined an evangelical branch. The Presbyterian Church also asked the Boy Scouts to leave, after meeting on church grounds for decades. The general feeling among the pastors seemed to be that the Ministerium should not be dealing with social justice issues; the main focus should be on tending to one's flock and exalting Christ. One pastor quoted information from FGC's website that stated that Quaker belief in Jesus is optional. This pastor said that he was uncomfortable being yoked to non-believers (Quakers) in the annual Cross Walk and bearing witness. Other pastors said that maybe the Cross Walk has seen its time and takes the pastors' energy away from preparing for Easter services at their own church. Reaching out to the community and planning joint programs such as the Thanksgiving Eve service no longer seems of interest. The clerk noted that there were no representatives from the Catholic, Baptist, or AME churches present at the meeting, and that there were a few who defended him and the Quaker meeting.

Middletown Friends were appalled, disappointed, and angered by the way our clerk was ambushed at this meeting. It was noted that the Ministerium was formed as an ecumenical organization for all faiths, not just Christian, as our late Friend Charlene DiMicco often pointed out to the group. Many Friends felt we should step aside until a new organization that better reflects the Langhorne community is formed. But then the Ministerium (minus the Langhorne Presbyterians) decided to go ahead with the Cross Walk. Friends decided to participate, choosing to not let the prejudice of one group influence our actions. As in years past, the walk began at our meetinghouse with brief worship in the manner of Friends. Our clerk was instrumental in planning the walk, obtaining a shuttle bus from Pennswood Village and making other arrangements. Other Friends provided baked goods and refreshments for the group. We received many nice comments from participants from the other churches and felt good that we were a part of this community event.

We have been talking for some time about outreach and ways to grow our membership but other events always seem to arise that need more immediate attention. While we understand the role of a strong First Day School (FDS) program in attracting new families, our youngest attender is now 10 years old and most of our young people have aged out of our traditional FDS program. We have a good core group of active Friends but sometimes, when considering potential events or initiatives we have to ask if there is enough energy or interest to make these things happen. Perhaps we could benefit from PYM materials and support in the area of growing our meeting.

Grace and Peace === from the Friends of Middletown Meeting

Meeting	Project Description
Bristol	
Buckingham	
Doylestown	
Fallsington	Funding for a social justice singer/songwriter concert series
Lehigh Valley	To cover the cost to reserve a space (a booth/table) at Lehigh Valley Pride 2023
Makefield	
Middletown	To purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meeting
Newtown	To cover the cost of an audio visual consultant to discuss improving hybrid worship
Plumstead	
Quakertown	To create a website and printed outreach materials for the meeting.
Solebury	To fund website improvements
Southampton	To cover the cost of equipment to improve hybrid meetings, such as a projector, screen, laptop, microphones and stands
Wrightstown	To purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meeting; will be using last year's and this year's for the OWL purchase
Yardley	To defray costs of Summer of 23 movie series

## BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

### 2022/2023 Profit and Loss: 4th Quarter

	JUL 2022 - JUN 2023	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>				
Interest and dividends FFC	\$ 2,024.56	\$ <u>2,020.00</u>	\$ 4.56	100%
<b>Total Interest and dividends</b>	<b>\$ 2,024.56</b>	<b>\$ 2,020.00</b>	<b>\$ 4.56</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Monthly Meeting contributions</b>				
Additional	\$ 300.00			
Pledged	\$ 264,070.00	\$ 278,195.00	\$ (14,125.00)	95%
<b>Total Monthly Meeting contributions</b>	<b>\$ 264,370.00</b>	<b>\$ 278,195.00</b>	<b>\$ (13,825.00)</b>	<b>95%</b>
Other contributions	\$ 600.00			
Quakerphernalia advertising	\$ 1,062.50	\$ 1,200.00	\$ (137.50)	89%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 268,057.06</b>	<b>\$ 281,415.00</b>	<b>\$ (13,957.94)</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 268,057.06</b>	<b>\$ 281,415.00</b>	<b>\$ (13,957.94)</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Contributions</b>				
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting	\$ 208,724.00	\$ 208,724.00	\$ -	100%
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 208,724.00</b>	<b>\$ 208,724.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Gifts/Donations</b>				
Camp Onas	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100%
Chandler Hall	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100%
Friends Home and Village	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100%
<b>Total Gifts/Donations</b>	<b>\$ 900.00</b>	<b>\$ 900.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Programs, Activities, Outreach</b>				
Operating	\$ 6,005.79	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5.79	100%
<b>Other</b>				
Advertising	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$ (400.00)	82%
Liability Insurance	\$ 1,143.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 43.00	104%
Outreach Committee Activities	\$ 300.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ (1,700.00)	15%
Programs for Peace	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,700.00	\$ (1,500.00)	12%
Quakerism Classes		\$ 500.00	\$ (500.00)	0%
Young Friends and Other (net)		\$ 350.00	\$ (350.00)	0%
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 3,443.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,850.00</b>	<b>\$ (4,407.00)</b>	<b>44%</b>
Personnel	\$ 70,640.55	\$ 71,033.00	\$ (392.45)	99%
<b>Total Programs, Activities, Outreach</b>	<b>\$ 80,089.34</b>	<b>\$ 84,883.00</b>	<b>\$ (4,793.66)</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 288,813.34</b>	<b>\$ 294,507.00</b>	<b>\$ (5,693.66)</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ (20,756.28)</b>	<b>\$ (13,092.00)</b>	<b>\$ (7,664.28)</b>	<b>159%</b>
<b>Other Income</b>				
Unrealized gain/loss (FFC)	\$ (328.99)			
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>\$ (328.99)</b>			
<b>Other Expenses</b>				
Kirkbride expenses	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ (500.00)	93%
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 6,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,000.00</b>	<b>\$ (500.00)</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>\$ (6,828.99)</b>	<b>\$ (7,000.00)</b>	<b>\$ 171.01</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ (27,585.27)</b>	<b>\$ (20,092.00)</b>	<b>\$ (7,493.27)</b>	<b>137%</b>

# BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

## Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2023

	TOTAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
First National Checking	25,605.41
Petty cash	0.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$25,605.41</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$25,605.41</b>
Other Assets	
Friends Fiduciary Corporation	50,301.85
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$50,301.85</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$75,907.26</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	
Equity	
Kirkbride Estate	9,196.43
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Unrestricted Net Assets	95,365.24
Net Income	-28,654.41
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$75,907.26</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$75,907.26</b>

Annual Report from Southampton Monthly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends

To Bucks Quarterly Meeting, on August 20, 2023

Regarding the twelve month interval from August 2022 through July 2023.

Dear Friends,

The events of the past twelve months at Southampton have a richness and increased diversity that we regard with pride.

The basis for our Meeting, continued from past years, is our twice-weekly Worship using hybrid technology. Sunday mornings we worship from 10-11 am, and Tuesday evenings there is worship from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. Our attendance is smaller than we wish, although some Sunday mornings are lit with the delightful presence of a young family with a toddler.

Also continued from past years is our hosting a weekly Vigil for Social Justice at the (busy) corner of Street Road (PA 132) and Gravel Hill Road. The vigil is held at 4 EDT and at 3 EST. We are grateful that the night-time vandalism, which marred the vigil signs left displayed between Sundays a year or two ago, has ceased. Participants at the vigil include members of Southampton Friends Meeting (“SFM”) and also neighbors from Upper Southampton Township and surrounding towns. The third anniversary of the first vigil occurred June 2023! In honor of this longevity, folks gathered at the Meetinghouse for a covered-dish meal and a picture show of photos taken three years before.

Members continue to participate in the Earth Quaker Action Team (an arrest at a demonstration) and in the PYM group “Addressing Racism Collaborative.”

Southampton Meeting continues to provide low-cost meeting space for two Narcotics Anonymous chapters. Welcoming The Stranger, which teaches ESL and does citizenship preparation uses our space as well. We also rented our facility this year to a group from a nearby church that needed a safe, third-party meeting room to air LGBTQ issues that were damaging their social structure.

Adult Religious Education – Once a month, on third Sundays, we gather for forty-five minutes of discussion before Meeting For Worship. In the past 12 months we discussed “Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice” by Dr. Harold Weaver (Pendle Hill #465) and started discussing “The Testimony of Integrity in the Religious Society of Friends” by Wilmer A. Cooper (Pendle Hill #296). The discussions are useful and seem to attract attendees.

Facilities Improvements – At the Southampton Meeting we have two buildings, a Meetinghouse (one story, 1968) and what we call the House on the Hill (a three-story residence built a hundred years ago). This year saw the electric panels in both buildings replaced, modernizations that are sure to be applauded by our insurance company. Moreover, the Meetinghouse has a new HVAC system. This means more comfort (A/C) during summer months, and electric bill savings during the winter months (heat pump).

More modernization is planned, however: After twenty-three months of Visioning sessions we have reached the point of hiring an architect to create plans of remodeling the hundred-year old House on the Hill. We are agreed that we want a modern kitchen, new bathrooms, and better space for gatherings on the first floor, and upstairs apartment space with a separate entrance.

Outreach – Southampton Meeting wishes to express appreciation to Bucks Quarterly Meeting for the outreach grant we received during FY23. The first one hundred dollars went to purchase an eight-foot projection screen – a granddaddy version of the screens grade-school teachers might set up in front of

their classroom for a slide show or movie. The screen was lying neglected in a camera store, where it used to be rented out, but demand has dropped off in the age of large screen TVs. The screen saw its first use in the Meetinghouse for the “picture show” mentioned above, which we held in recognition of the third anniversary of the vigil.

The remainder of the grant, with a private donation, went to purchase a projector. The model purchased was recommended as being bright enough to use in a lighted room (not just in a darkened theater). We will be trying it out soon.

New outreach events this year:

- A musical member entertained members and guests with an hour of fiddle playing.
- The founder of the Bucks County Anti-Racism Committee, Kevin Levin, gave a speech in our Meetinghouse.
- “Southampton Days” is a carnival held in Tamanend Upper Southampton Park the first week in July. They offer space for rent for advertising and meeting carnival-goers. We rented a “table” (using funds from BQM – thank you!) for two evenings. We staffed it with Quakers from Southampton, Wrightstown and Newtown Meetings. The advertising materials were loaned to this effort by Wendy Kane. (Again: thanks to the table staff and to Wendy.)

The event was a rousing success. Lots of visitors asked “Are you those people who do the vigil on Street Road?” The conversations generated feelings like “I belong here in Upper Southampton and so do you. This is a community.” While their parents were talking, children, probably 3 dozen, took advantage of the coloring pens and blank tiles to express themselves artistically. After drying, the art work went home with the artist along with an Edward Hicks “Peaceable Kingdom” postcard.

- This year, after long deliberation, Southampton Friends Meeting joined P.O.W.E.R. This organization is an interfaith, multi-racial, people’s movement of Pennsylvania congregations and individuals committed to racial and economic justice on a livable planet. It conducts campaigns in areas of education justice, economic dignity, civic engagement, climate justice and justice reform.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Michener, for the Trustees of Southampton Monthly Meeting



## **Wrightstown Monthly Meeting Annual Report to Bucks Quarterly Meeting**

August 2023

In 2022 and 2023, Wrightstown Meeting focused on two main challenges: rebuilding community and re-envisioning leadership. This Annual Report consists of the report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting that we submitted to the Ministry and Care Committee of PYM's Quaker Life Council in March 2023, and an August update to that report.

### **March 2023 Report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting:**

In discussion of the queries provided, our thoughts coalesced around two major areas: what we had achieved, and what we felt we could do better (and, in some cases, what we had plans in the works to do better).

In the past year, we've worked to re-create the community we had before the pandemic. Our momentum built during the year with many of the actual achievements coming in the latter half of the year. In working to create and strengthen our community, we achieved the following:

- We have a solid core of attendees at each Meeting for Worship (now around 25 – 30 people each week).
- Our Care and Counsel committee has done an excellent job of reaching out to keep current members and attenders connected, and of sponsoring some in-person events.
- We have installed technology to improve the audio and visual experience linking our remote and in-person participants. We've benefitted from Bucks Quarter Outreach grants to do this.
- We have hosted different kinds of in-person events: picnic, outdoor music concert featuring the Fools and Prophets (formerly Faith and Practice) and some of our home-grown talent; monthly "Meet and Eats." These events have grown in frequency as we emerged from our pandemic shells.
- We continue to participate in providing the Penn's Park Food Pantry with food, contributions, and lending hands.
- We have a vibrant Nursery School which interacts in the greater community in profound ways.
- We have continued to provide part of our grounds to PDC Athletics for baseball tournaments and to the Middletown Grange for parking at its annual August event. The Bucks County Folksong Society meets monthly in our building.
- We were prompted by Lancaster Meeting's minute decrying Christian Nationalism and the "Urgent Call" issued by a group of weighty Friends to meet several times and discern responses.
- We purchased several copies of books on racial justice (*How to Be an Anti-Racist*, *White Fragility*, *So You Want to Talk About Race*) and urged members and attenders to take them and read.
- To mitigate the effects of climate change, we have actively been pursuing ways in which we can be greener stewards of our property by collecting our leaves to create compost, leaving some for leaf litter to promote insect growth, converting some to wildflower meadow for pollinators, and explored mowing greener and/or less.
- We have appointed a Climate Witness Liaison.
- We are now going through the learning process of creating a 5 person leadership "clerk's team" (including the presiding clerk, the recording clerk, the recorder, a rising clerk, and a past clerk). Initial indications are that this model has great potential. So far we see that the duties can be naturally divided according to the gifts and leadings of the individual team members and that the job of clerk can become less burdensome.

Our yearnings are best summed up in this list of what we feel we could do better. In some cases, we have made nascent efforts to get there:

- Although we have people with the required clearances providing childcare at Meeting for Worship, few children and young families have been attending Meeting, and we have no formal First Day School program. We have been unsuccessful in finding leadership to revive it.
- We have failed in many ways to connect with our Nursery School families and to pull them into the embrace of our Meeting. We have belatedly created a 6-point plan to remedy this, led in no small part by one of the Nursery School families that joined our Meeting before the pandemic.
- We are rejuvenating our Spiritual Exploration Group (SEG), which before the pandemic met monthly for 75 minutes before Meeting for Worship. It will once again meet monthly starting in March 2023, this time in hybrid form. These discussions have been almost exclusively attended by our members and attenders.
- We would like to do better at providing literature and following up with new attenders at Meeting.
- We have talked about rejuvenating our Outreach “conversations” which were similar in nature to our SEG, but used Meetup to engage a wider audience and took place on weekday evenings to engage a different demographic.
- Although we still contribute to the food pantry, we feel we could be more hands on with them again.
- Some people would like the Meeting to be more active in advocating for social justice. Our Peace and Social Concerns committee has not been active. Not many people are aware that we have books about racial justice to lend, and we would like to encourage people to read them.
- Meeting members have not yet actively engaged with our Climate Witness Liaison, but we hope to schedule opportunities for her to build interest and connection.
- The Nursery School staff hopes to start a vegetable garden on campus for the children and their families to tend.
- We would like to have more socialization after Meetings for Worship and recreate our annual “progressive” dinner (which does not involve travel).
- Most people in our leadership and clerking roles are well on in years and have served many terms. We continue to struggle mightily to identify new, and younger, members and attenders willing to take on these roles.

We will be applying to PYM for a Membership Development grant to continue to improve our audio, especially for those in our Meetinghouse who are hard of hearing. It seems likely that the Yearly Meeting could act as a clearinghouse for ideas from around the Yearly Meeting to assist us with our yearnings. We could also use resources from PYM to help revive our First Day School.

### **August 2023 Update:**

Our Recorder confirmed that at the end of 2022 the Meeting had 196 members, down from 200 at the end of 2021. These include 175 members, 6 members under 21, and 15 associate members. Within the Meeting community there have been four marriages and one birth. There were no further deaths in 2022 since those noted in last year’s Annual Report. We are sad to report that Anne Alden died in February 2023.

The Spiritual Exploration Group has met every third Sunday morning of the month since March and is going strong. It is well attended, drawing anywhere from 10 to 20 participants each time. Several people have volunteered to lead the discussions on a topic of their choice.

A small but enthusiastic group is planning a series of events to take place from September 2023 to May 2024 in celebration of the Meeting’s 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. These will range from brief “opening” programs before Meeting for Worship to a public event on our grounds sometime in the spring.

The vegetable garden designed by a Nursery School staff member and cared for by Nursery School families received enthusiastic support from the Meeting and is thriving. To further connections between the Meeting

and the school, Meeting members attended the Nursery School's end of year picnic. To kick off the celebration of Wrightstown's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Meeting will provide cake and ice cream for the Nursery School's opening social event in September.

The Meeting approved the proposal of member Michelle Hunter, a teacher of special needs children, to offer a six-week early intervention summer program for young children with autism on our campus starting in June 2024.

The Meeting's Environmental Stewardship Committee is actively researching options for installing solar energy and reducing our dependence on oil by using heat pumps as our primary source for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning in the Meetinghouse, Social Hall, and Nursery School. The Peace and Social Concerns Committee has stated its intention to become more active over the coming year.

We hope that all this community-building progress will generate greater involvement from Meeting members and help to attract new families. Unfortunately, the Meeting is still stalled when it comes to reviving its First-Day School program and cultivating the next generation of Meeting leaders. The new "Clerks Team" model is working well in terms of sharing responsibilities and generating ideas. However, we have not yet identified a fifth member of the team to serve as a rising clerk, and there is very little new leadership – or new membership -- on committees for the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Irv Thompson, Co-Clerk

Jeff Cogshall, Co-Clerk

Alice Maxfield, Recording Clerk

Nancy Culleton (she/her/hers), Assistant Recording Clerk

Wrightstown Monthly Meeting

Yardley Friends Meeting  
Annual Report to Bucks Quarter

August 2023  
Submitted by Marna Matthews, Clerk

This has been a year filled with lots of outreach by current members and attenders to the outside public and to former attenders. We have slowly built back up the numbers of people attending meeting for worship in person, and have had many engaging events. Younger families have attended once or twice, but since we do not have an active children's group the families have not revisited. We continue to build connections and programs to engage with important issues.

Our electronic arrangements for hybrid meetings for worship worked quite well all year. The Zoom connection failed only twice. We were happy to participate in the PYM "All Together Worship" while sitting in our own worship room together and be online. Our handheld Bluetooth microphones have helped solve the sound issues. The community has adjusted well to using them. We have held hybrid meetings for business during most of the year.

Religious Education committee has worked hard to develop lessons that can be offered to children of varying ages. We have sporadic attendance from children. It has been hard to plan the activities and to have a willing pair of adults available. We are now offering lessons twice a month, and are considering how best to offer daycare for any children under the age of seven.

Adult religious discussions, or community Ponderings, have occurred generally once a month. We have had guest speakers such as Susi Hoskins who discussed issues and advocacy with the elderly, and George School teacher, Tom Hoopes, told us about working with teens. Chiyo Moriuchi shared the annual report of Friends Village with us. Shirley Lee Corser of The Gather Place, an old A.M.E. church in Yardley, gave us a presentation on historic local black personalities. Mark Eastburn, a teacher at Princeton High School, (former teacher of First Day School at our Meeting) spoke to us about the work he is doing with immigrant students in his science classes. He told us about their personal struggles of survival in a new country with little family support.

On October 16, 2022 we hosted with the Peace Center of Langhorne and the United Christian Church of Levittown the playing of the film ***Walking While Black: L.O.V.E is the Answer***. The event was open to the public and the trained moderators helped all of us, including two police officers, process the racism issues raised in the film.

The movie ***Organic Roots*** was shown on Friday November 18, 2022. The director Al Johnson answered questions about his friends, the beginning group of farmers who founded the first organic farmers collectives in the Northeast.

Other group activities included gathering to decorate the building and tree for the Christmas season, and regular Games Nights each month. We had an informal "Come

Back” Day on January 29, 2023 and were pleased to see several former attenders and friends. A Winterfest night of food with a bonfire in our outside stone fireplace was held on a chilly evening. When the floor was available for foot traffic, we held some Red Cross blood drives in the building.

The Medicinal Herbs Project continues in three garden beds. Singular Botanicals, in Chester, is the business that coordinates the project. They have brought in many Quaker communities from all over the area to participate. We grow plants for them to use for herbal supplies for the Chester community.

Several meetings for worship were devoted to discussion of the guidelines to use for determining categories and amounts of donations to other non-profit institutions. The following four topics were used as guidelines this year.

- Environmental and Climate Change Support
- Education
- Immigration and Human Respect
- Peace & Social Action

The annual September Flea Market was a big success in 2022. We host about a hundred vendors who sell a huge variety of items. The meeting sells donated books, “white elephant” items, and lots of food. The weather was particularly conducive for the outdoor event. We are very grateful for all the current and previous members of our community who spend hours preparing and working at the Flea Market. As we do every year, we agreed it was a marvelous way to spend our time, in spite of the very hard work and summer heat. Our main goals of Fundraising, Community Outreach, and Community In-reach were happily met again.

For a second year, negotiations continued with Holland Floors for replacement of faulty flooring of the entire meeting house that was installed in October 2021. After little to no progress, we ended up using an attorney, Dawn Burke, to write a letter to the company stating our expectations for a floor replacement. Finally the company agreed to order new tiles, new glue and to fix the original errors. As of the second week of August 2023 Yardley Friends have another new floor. We did not have to pay for the replacement. We are very relieved that the two year process is over. Our clerk of the Property Committee, Drew Sites, deserves a large amount of credit for persevering to get this result.

Several welcoming signs and flags posted at a neighboring St. Andrews Episcopal church in Yardley were heavily vandalized. The signs included rainbows and were an indication to the LGBTQ community that they would be welcome at the church. As a sign of solidarity, Yardley Friends Meeting sent a letter of support to the parish at St. Andrews. We also posted similar signs of welcome on the street along our property. We are relieved to report they have not been vandalized or stolen. We also have two large banners hanging on our front porch with messages of Welcome, and Love Thy Neighbor, No Exceptions.

Lancaster Meeting sent a minute of concern about the rise of a Christian Nationalism Movement. We had a discussion in meeting for business about how we could deal with our concerns. It was felt that the action of individuals is important. Two of our members, Rosa David and Mercy Ingraham went to worship in Lancaster and spoke with them about this issue and our shared concerns.

Three members attended the PYM Thread Gathering Hand in Hand: Religious Education & Outreach as Partners. They expressed their positive feeling about the program. The title of the presentation and discussion was "*Spaces, Schedules, Relationships — How Being Prepared Supports Outreach*". The information gained at the event helped the children's religious education committee set goals for how to re-energize and reorganize the Meeting's children's classes.

Our Meeting library is receiving attention from two new committee members who are sorting and reorganizing the books and pamphlets.

YFM approved the proposal to support Immigrant Rights Action (ImRA) in Doylestown as an event sponsor in the name of Yardley Friends Meeting at the Gala in the Michener Museum (using a private donation) on Thursday May 4<sup>th</sup>. Several members attended the gala, and are working with the organization to help immigrants with legal and personal issues.

YFM approved participation in a Quarter-wide service project to provide clothing for the children who attend the three Community Schools served by Mercer Street Friends. We collected clothes in a variety of sizes and Wendy Kane took them to the school for us.

This year, community attendance was much higher for the three movies we showed outside on the large screen at the summer monthly Movie Nights. Only one of our summer month Movie Nights was rained out. The movies were shown in conjunction with the Yardley Borough Recreation Committee, which helped with publicity and loaned us a speaker and microphone. We are very grateful for funding assistance from the Bucks Quarter Outreach Funds..

We had a Celebration of the new Labyrinth on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of May. Over forty people attended our picnic and ceremony dedicating the labyrinth, which was built by many members of our community. It was a delightful event.

We continue to support our member Ted Taylor in his role as chaplain at Robert Woods Johnson hospital. He has had a very challenging set of years working with families, staff, and volunteers throughout the years of the pandemic. We approved a travel minute for him to attend an annual conference, Quakers in Pastoral Care Counseling conference (QPCC), at Earlham College. "Yardley Friends Meeting commends Ted Taylor for his work as chaplain and religious mentor at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton. He is a valued member of our community." He also acts as the Treasurer for the Meeting, and runs the equipment that enables our hybrid meetings.

We have experienced the loss of four members during the past year, and hosted a family memorial for the loss of another member in 2021. We honor the memories of Maury Benbow, Ruth Blattenberger, Laura Clappison, Rose Koch, and Graham Leonard. Each of these people had contributed much energy, love, and fellowship to the community when they were active here.

Under the care of the Meeting, member Sarah Crofts and Kirk Gosweiler were joyously wed at the Yardley Meeting House in May 2023.

In conclusion, the Yardley Friends Meeting community has had a busy year concentrating on making connections throughout the nearby community, and maintaining relationships within, with the Quaker Spirit as our guide.