Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends (SCYMF) Quarterly Gathering  
October 7, 2017  
Eugene Friends Church  
1:30 PM  

Cherice Bock, presiding clerk  
A.J. Mendoza, assistant presiding clerk pro tem  
Matt Staples, recording clerk.  

**Actions:**  

1) The following minute regarding the transfer of recording and licensing of ministers was approved: **Friends who want their recording/licensing transferred can bring it to their monthly meeting elders, or a group they trust if they are not part of a monthly meeting, and that group will bring it to Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends (SCYMF) as a recording or licensing transfer. SCYMF will receive the recording, while continuing to work on developing our recording process and philosophy.**  
2) The following recommendation was approved: that the clerks and members of the Bylaws/Faith and Practice Committee meet with David Hansen, attorney, for legal consultation and representation of SCYMF as we draft bylaws and articles of incorporation.  
3) The following recommendation was approved: that the clerks be given the authority to make decisions regarding some logistical items that will need to appear in SCYMF Articles of Incorporation.  
4) The following recommendation was approved: that the statement drafted by the People Work group be distributed among Friends as a statement of the values of this group  
5) The Youth Board was approved as an official committee.
Agenda:
1:30 Opening silence
1:40 Welcome visiting Friends and hear from traveling Friends
   - Julie Peyton
   - Mackenzie Morgan: traveling minute from Adelphi Friends, Maryland
   - Keith Barton
   - others
1:50 Update on meetings who have left NWYM, where others are at in the process
   - Silverton, Eugene, North Valley, Camas, others
   - Cherice: FUM affiliation: ask them to do discernment at the local level
2:00 Action Item: Recording and licensing
   - Approve transferring recordings and licensing from NWYM to SCYMF for anyone who requests?
   - Task force to work on recommendations for a recording process going forward
2:10 Action Item: Articles of incorporation approved by the yearly meeting
   - Update on bylaws
2:30 Committee and working group reports
   - Finance
   - Bylaws, F&P
   - Quarterly Gathering committee
   - Coordinating Committee
3:15 Break before continuing
   - People Work
   - Spiritual Care
   - Nominating Committee
     - What is the process/policy for filling vacancies in this interim year?
   - Prayer Team
   - Equity & Inclusion
     - Concern about Common Ground
4:20 Discernment re: annual sessions
   - Consider queries in silence, record thoughts
   - Discuss with a group of 3
   - Write themes
4:40 Fund-raising: Jan Wood
Cherice Bock opened the meeting with silence

Cherice: We are here to hear from one another what we’re working on and what we’re excited about, and to do the detail work of how we might move forward together.

Introduced the agenda

Cherice: A lot of this is reporting in the sense that we’re just hearing from each other, but I hope it’s a way to pay attention to the way that the Spirit is working with each of us in smaller groups to do the larger work it takes to create this new organization and start the ministries that we as a body feel called to.

**Visiting and Traveling Friends**

Mackenzie Morgan from Adelphi Friends Monthly Meeting, part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. During her time here, Mackenzie has visited West Hills, Newberg Emerging, and Reedwood.

Keith Barton from the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends: Representing Berkeley Friends. This is his second visit. He and the Western Association look forward to contributing. Berkeley Friends is interested in developing an association or membership with SCYMF.

Dave Cundiff from Olympia Monthly Meeting, part of North Pacific Yearly Meeting. He is not representing his monthly meeting or his yearly meeting, but since reading the epistle from annual sessions, Dave has had a concern to come and hold us in the Light.

Julie Peyton from West Hills Friends, shared about her experience attending annual sessions for Jamaica Yearly Meeting. She is involved with the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) as part of its traveling ministry core, a new program. Her first assignment as a traveling minister was to visit Friends in Jamaica in early August. Jamaica Yearly Meeting is part of Friends United Meeting. Christ-centered and charismatic. They expressed loving concern for Friends in the Pacific Northwest. If we would like to have a traveling minister from FWCC, they will send someone.

*Video of us sending a greeting - “Hi Jamaica Yearly Meeting!” - was taken.*

**Updates on meetings’ decisions regarding affiliation with Sierra-Cascades**

Cherice: What is your monthly meeting doing as far as deciding whether to remain with Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church, join Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends, or be independent?
Cherice Bock, North Valley Friends: We have a business meeting tomorrow night that will continue to determine whether we will stay or leave.

Jeanette Rutherford, Klamath Falls Friends: Our meeting is not very connected with NWYM, so my sense as clerk is that people are pretty ambivalent about what we do. We will have threshing meetings, and our goal is to discern together. My sense is that we’ll join SCYMF because there’s no reason not to and we’re small, unless something emerges that is a problem.

Lorraine Watson, North Seattle Friends: Meeting for business scheduled for one week from tomorrow. We’ll bring a report to that meeting. I anticipate that we’ll become members of SCYMF, but we need to go through the process and make that decision. We have people on many committees, we are heavily involved in this creation process, so that’s my anticipation, but we will go through due process.

Joanne Halgren, Eugene Friends: We’re happy you’re all here today, and happy to note that we minuted last Sunday to become members of SCYMF.

Judy Scott, Silverton Friends: On September 24, with the open guidance of Jan Wood, we have a final minute saying that we are going to be a welcoming church to the LGBTQ+ community. Our first discussion at our upcoming meeting will be over whether we want to be independent or join SCYMF.

Norma Silliman, Camas Friends: After annual sessions we had a preliminary meeting to talk about our relationship with SCYMF. It was planned to not make a decision; our next meeting is coming up on the 15th of October, and like North Seattle, we had a lot of people from our meeting involved in the evolution of this new YM. We anticipate that we’ll be a part of this meeting, but we want to be sensitive and follow Quaker process, doing true discernment and not leaving people feeling coerced, but feeling excited.

Barbara Dalziel, South Salem Friends: We are evenly divided. We are having membership meetings. We are not talking about the decision; our focus is just on talking to one another with love. I have no idea where we will end up.

Ruba Byrd, West Hills Friends: We’ve had several meeting-wide conversations in discernment, and in our last business meeting spent time on it, and we’ll continue the discernment process in our upcoming October meeting. We have a number of folks on committees and involved.

Paul Frankenberger, Newberg Emerging Friends: recently completed a Covenant of Separation that has been agreed to by us and Newberg Friends Church. We’re waiting to hear back from NWYM on their concerns about that. We’re meeting in Joyful Servant Lutheran Church’s building, which is a separate body.
Vail Palmer, Freedom Friends: We have been an unaffiliated meeting for the 13 years of our existence. We have just begun having some dialogue with representatives of this yearly meeting. The idea of becoming affiliated in some ways seems unnatural. There are concerns about various details, so I think it will be some time before we reach a decision one way or the other.

Bernie Bosnjak, Hillsboro Friends: We’re in the middle. We have people on committees in SCYMF; we also have one member left on a NWYM board. We have maintained connections to both for various reasons. When our decision is made it will be announced, but it’s great to be a part of this new birth. We pray for NWYM, that their direction is successful and growing.

Roger Watson, Tigard: “I have not been authorized or appointed to report.” In a discernment process, officially remain so in regard to relationship with SCYMF and NWYM. We are a small church, most committed to staying together, because if nothing else if we were to divide among ourselves we wouldn’t survive. Besides, we like each other. We’re working through that process, and it may be slow. Perhaps longer than next June.

Cherice: let’s take a few moments to hold one another in the light: our local meetings, SCYMF, and NWYM.

_God, even in the midst of the joy of this new space we’re creating, we feel division, brokenness of life-long relationships, and the fear of those broken relationships. We pray for strong guidance as we attempt to navigate this. Give us clarity about the ways to speak truth and love and to build the relationships we can, and the time that it’s right to move on. We pray grace, discernment, and clarity in all the meetings that will happen in the coming weeks and months. Give us a sense of direction and belonging. Amen._

One other thing regarding affiliation to move forward and work on is our relationship with larger Quaker bodies. We sent something out in the newsletter about Friends United Meeting (FUM) affiliation, we’ve been looking at what joining with them would look like. In a lot of ways it would be a good fit, but they do have a personnel policy that reads: “FUM’s purpose is to extend the body of Christ and energize and equip It is therefore imperative...that FUM’s employees evidence a Christian motivation,” it goes on to define that, and say that those who are employed by FUM are expected to have what they define as a traditional marriage between one man and one woman. So that would definitely be different. There are Friends within that body working to change that policy. We could discern together whether that is our calling, or if we should remain without a broader connection for awhile. That's something to take back to your monthly meeting for discernment.

**Recording and Licensing**

The first action item is to discuss our process for recording and licensing for those who are transferring from NWYM to SCYMF. We as the clerks are suggesting (although we as the body
can reject that and come up with something different) that we allow transfers directly from NWYM to SCYMF for recording and licensing to everyone who requests that transfer. Are there comments or suggestions regarding that?

[italics denote the clerk or representative responding to a question or statement from the body]

Would they be able to be recorded in both? I’m thinking about meetings that don’t know where they’re going to go, so this would be a question of job security for our ministers. That’s something we need to discern.

Would recording recognized here be dependant on monthly meeting membership, or can it be independent? We are hoping that individuals who want to affiliate with SCYMF can, and that if they want, they can have their recording through us wherever they go. We’re going to talk about membership separately. We want to provide people who want to move their recording with a sense of what they are able to do at this point. The sense if that is they don’t feel clear to be recorded in NWYM, they can have it transferred.

Some of us are recorded in other YMs. Is this particular provision exclusive? This would be a transfer from any meeting so we wouldn’t have to specify NWYM (probably).

It’s kind of a no brainer. Of course you are welcome to bring your recording and gifts. My fear of a rubber-stamp thing is that that would happen and we wouldn’t know about it. Instead, I would love to have a clearness committee bring recording nominees forward and say Yes we affirm this. The goal would be to not create another hoop people have to jump through, but a way to show support, celebrating again in this context people’s gifts. So there can be a group that comes around people transferring recording and recommends them as a transfer candidate.

There was a sentiment at previous meetings to have it as much as possible be grassroots rather than top-down. With that in mind I envision a possibility of having the recording occur at the local meeting level. That might be applicable for as many meetings we have who are discerning whether or not we’ll be part of this group. It might be better for the recording to occur at the local level and be transferred up, as opposed to a dispensation sent from the top. We’re only talking about this initial question of transferring people who are already recorded so they don’t have to go through another long process. We’re suggesting a separate group be formed to come up with a new recording policy for new recordings. That’s a separate question that we won’t deal with today because many of us have many ideas. The question before us today is transferring recordings in. What I’m hearing is that local support for ministers already recorded feel support at the local level, they are sharing it with us rather than a top down thing.

The one concern that I have that we make provision for is that in this situation we will have people recorded that aren’t in SCYMF meetings, so don’t tie it too closely to the monthly meeting.
I feel like there’s some tension between the desire to be casual and welcoming and not create huge structures, and wanting to be careful about creating the structure that we want even if it feels like the threshold is low. I’m concerned because we haven’t had a chance to talk about what recording means to us. So if we talk about it later, [and people who transferred recordings] do not meet the new criteria, that feels like a really uncomfortable conversation. Let’s not set ourselves up for hurting ourselves down the road. Is there a way of creating an intentionally temporary category, like “We agree to hold in our care these recordings until there is some further clarity about what to do with them.” Transferring recordings is like accepting that as a settled process, which I don’t think we’re ready to have. That was a conversation the clerks had as well: we don’t know how this will all look. And yet there are people recorded among us who we don’t want to lose their recording, and their legal benefits such as tax breaks or access to ministry settings that require a license. So allowing that space to move fluidly from NWYM to SCYMF makes sense from a logistical standpoint. So “holding recordings in our care” could be a good way to state it. Let’s take a moment to be still and sit with that.

What rises?

I’m no guru on recording, so I may be misstating everything. It seems like recording is where the community notices that God is flowing through that person. I don’t know what you do with someone who is recorded but God isn’t flowing through them any more. But whatever you do now is probably whatever you do in that setting, I’m sure there’s already a process for that. I think it’s about the flow of God through that person. Do we have to withhold something for closer review?

I have a question: if we hold something lightly or however we do, if someone’s recording is only in one place or another, and someone recorded leaves NWYM and comes to us, but we then later decide that the definition of recording changes to not include them, we can’t just drop their recording. You want people to trust that they will remain recorded if they transfer their recording to us. That seems fairly reasonable.

I don’t want to lose the idea of holding it lightly, it provides protection, lets them know that we’ll capriciously change the process. I don’t know how to incorporate that into this statement. I guess we have the sense that we need to honor the work people have been through and hold the recording for them here, but not have it “have a but.”

We are also accepting transfers from yearly meetings other than NWYM? Yes. And we’re also doing work in the future on what does recording mean. For those transferring in, we support them, our process should look like a ceremony to invite them into our midst and celebrate together, rather than issuing a decree that yes you are or no you aren’t a part of us. It will not be another hurdle, but an invitation.
I am not recorded and I don’t know the process. It’s an act of love and integrity. They were recorded in an established structure. It’s important to receive that as a gift at the beginning, because the whole point is to be welcoming and inclusive. If we can’t even do that with the people whose sense of calling we have carried, I don’t believe we can do that with our meetings. It’s important to honor what has been bestowed upon them. I understand the temptation to say “yes but” but we need to trust that God will bridge that gap, these things will work themselves out. I like the wording of receiving their recordings.

How did NWYM think about transferring recordings from other meetings? We have these people recorded. I hope that in the long run we’ll accept recording from everyone, but for the time being do we want to do that?

If a pastor comes from another Friends association besides Evangelical Friends International, and if they’re pastoring in one of NWYM’s churches, their recording comes with them. If someone who is recorded comes and attends one of NWYM’s churches, there is a board, Leadership Development, prior to the restructuring, a clearness committee would meet with that person and come to a decision. It was pretty much a rubber-stamp? Yes

Cherice clarified again that we don’t need to consider every question pertaining to recording now, we only need a resolution on what to do in this specific situation, and that it sounded like there was consensus around that. Matt brought a potential minute to the body:

Friends who want their recording/licensing transferred can bring it to their monthly meeting elders, or a group they trust if they are not part of a monthly meeting, and that group will bring it to Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends (SCYMF) as a recording or licensing transfer. SCYMF will receive the recording, while continuing to work on developing our recording process and philosophy.

Approved

Those who would like to be on a group that wants to work with this can let the clerks know. Some of that is the work of the F&P committee, but they have a lot of work to do already.

Articles of Incorporation/Bylaws

On to another thing we need approval for:

Marie Matsen, Eugene Friends Church, Clerk of Bylaws/Faith and Practice (F&P) Committee: I hope this is just housekeeping. We’ll be asked to approve this by March 2018. We need to approve who does the details. Legal representation: Rich Brown from Newberg Emerging Friends gave us pro-bono work for July annual sessions. He and/or his firm will not be able to continue as our legal counsel for a number of reasons. They cannot continue to represent both yearly meetings. We found an elegant solution just a few days ago from Rich: he suggests we
use David Hansen, whose wife is a minister at 2nd Street, so he’s familiar with Quakers. We talked with him preliminarily, and he is interested in learning more about representing us. So we recommend that representatives from the clerks and the Bylaws/F&P Committee meet with him and reach an agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached, they will be authorized to find and hire other appropriate legal representation (we don’t anticipate this).

We had talked about hourly rate and scope of work, we would need to decide those conditions.

Would it be expected to be temporary for this process or permanent? *We won’t sign on the dotted line for anything permanent in these upcoming meetings. It’s up to this body to decide on anything past this process.*

This attorney’s wife attends 2nd Street. Is he a NWYM member? *No.*

Add that Rich Brown is going to be on our Bylaws Committee. *Yes--not as our lawyer, just as a member of the committee. What that means is that our bylaws are going to be in real good shape.*

As a member of the transition team from NWYM, we’re going to need legal services additionally to at least look at documentation as the severance occurs. We will need occasional contact at the very least.

Do we feel clear to approve this recommendation? **Approved**

Second item: really housekeeping, has to do with articles of incorporation. There are three items that are things that we do not all need to decide, but that we approve the clerks to decide them: registered agent, incorporators, physical address (alternate corporate)

Don’t we have to have a separate registered agent for the state of Washington? *The yearly meeting one can be in Oregon because we’ll be registered in Oregon.*

Each individual church will have to have their own Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. Our intent is to provide a template and support and whatever is necessary to get individual meetings to that point. Some may have already done that, so they’ll just have to revise those briefly. The churches in Washington, Idaho, and California will need their own registration base.

You said each will need…what exactly? *Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, yes. Rich indicated we could make it very simple by referencing SCYMF. We just won’t be equipped to be an umbrella organization for other churches.*

Do we approve that the clerks can make these non-difficult decisions so we don’t have to bring them to the whole body? **Approved.**
Committee and Working Group reports

Finance:

From each committee, we need their anticipated expenses so we can begin to make a budget.

How do we contribute? *Through the rest of the fiscal year, to NWYM with SCYMFi n the memo.*

Yes, we need feedback from all the committees specifically between now and December 31st. Let Cherice Bock and Eric Muhr know of any costs that will need to be “liberated,” and they will funnel it to us. The items we know of right now are attorney fees; we need to know what that number will be. Roger Watson has agreed to track down some of those numbers. Roger should be compensated. The publication time to create the messaging and make sure everyone is informed: we are aware that there is a cost but we don’t have a number. So if all of you could now add to that all the numbers you are aware of.

So the request is for each committee to work on your budget, specifically expenses before 12/31. Are we going to be on a fiscal year or calendar year for budget? *We don’t know.*

Cherice: Okay, so we’re just making an annual budget, and we’ll apply it to the correct times when that’s settled.

Faith and Practice:

Julie Peyton, Clerk:

First thing: fear not. I’ve read some Faith and Practice publications from several yearly meetings. Every one of these has, in the introduction, a reference to the advice written in 1656, by the elders of the meeting at Yorkshire, which came at the end of this legalistic section sort of document, with lots of “do this, don’t do that” language. It reads:

*Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*

Bylaws:

We’re going to enter into a process in which we want you all to participate. We’re going to be sending out some questions that we want you to consider as individuals, local meetings, then we want to issue a challenge and strong encouragement for each monthly meeting to get together with at least one other to discuss these questions. By that means we’re addressing some hard issues from the bottom up. We’re at least listening to each other’s concerns and
thoughts. While our bylaws are a legal document, they go hand-in-glove with Faith and Practice. It might not end up being too difficult, but we expect some wrestling. Different models of decision-making. Where do decisions predominantly lie? Congregational model where they are largely at the monthly meeting level, local congregations determine our organizational policy? Or do we have a model on the other end where the larger organization embeds in Faith and Practice all the possibilities of what we believe and how we act? I expect we’ll fall somewhere in the middle but more toward monthly meeting autonomy. What is the purpose of SCYMF? Why do we need an organizational body and what is it to do?

Another question: should monthly meetings only have SCYMF membership if they’re open and affirming, or do we grant it for them as long as yearly meeting level membership is open to all?

Other membership and autonomy questions will be the toughest. In bylaws there will be stuff like How do we conduct business and who gets to participate? We strongly encourage you to join together with at least one other meeting to talk about this. When you do that, invite individual non-affiliated members. We’ll figure out a way for you to know who those are so you can invite them in.

**Quarterly Gathering:**

Rachel Hampton: We would like to plan for our next quarterly gathering to be in January or February. Both Camas and West Hills have volunteered to host. We recognize that snow will prevent many from being able to gather, but we want to meet with those who can. Annual sessions will be wherever we can find an opening. We’ve looked at 5-10 camp or retreat-type organizations.

*Break*

**Coordinating Committee:**

Joann Boswell: Each of us on the committee is connected to one of the other committees to find out what they’re doing and what they need in order to keep the wheel moving, gently and kindly. We work with the clerks as well to find out what they need from us. We also want to work ourselves out of a job, to organize well enough that we’re not needed. We love the view, to be able to look out and see everything that’s happening. This is exciting.

The Faith and Practice Committee is interested in seeing minutes or statements our meetings have made around human sexuality. If your meeting has made one of those statements, send it to juliepeyton@gmail.com. The Faith and Practice Committee will work with those.
People Work:

Norma Siliman: So many have had difficult experiences and many have felt alienated. As the new yearly meeting, we want to bring healing, to bring people into a safe space. We aren’t going to be able to do all that, but we want to keep our antennae up and to know what people need. We identified three areas to focus on: reaching people who want to be a part of SCYMF. Focus inward to those who aren’t leaving, and outward to people who feel alienated or unconnected. Learn how people need support and connect them to the right resources.

It’s a small committee, and if you’d like to join us, we could definitely use a few more people.

How do we even get in touch with these people? People who are marginalized or alienated are hard to get in touch with. But we did confer with the Equity & Inclusion Committee, and we have a letter we want to send out and share widely, post it freely anywhere you want, as a welcome letter.

Question: Will that letter, how it actually gets posted, have a way for people to reply? We probably need to think that one through, I just put a link to the website. [Cherice]: we’ve been working on ways for people to use the website to contact us. For now, send it to the clerks and we can forward it. That would be the way to address it right now. Nothing will take the place of each of us connecting with those that fit in this large category of the people who have been hurt.

Do we feel like the suggestion of sending out this letter as, not an epistle, but as a representation of what came out of our time together today? Approved

Youth:

Tracy Wilson, Silverton: Firstly, at annual sessions we were not originally approved to be a committee, so I would like to request that. Our members are Jen Hanziel, North Valley; Forrest Cammack, Tigard; Vicki Stave, Eugene. Our goal today in meeting with the youth here is to find out what youth programming they were involved with or know of that they would like to continue as requested in the joint-epistle drafted at annual sessions. A big one was about camp. Many of you know the not-quite-satisfactory standing of Twin Rocks. To our youth this is a second home. To have that change or potentially be lost is hard. Our goal moving forward as Twin Rocks finalizes what they will be offering to us, what the Association will decide in terms of ownership and accessibility, we hope to turn around as quickly as possible to have programming this summer. That’s scary to me: it takes a lot of planning and finances to put on a Twin Rocks summer camp. My understanding of the current proposal is that we will have our own week there, but only if we have a certain number of people there and a certain level of finance. To the finance committee: That is the one thing we are hopeful we will need finances for. But that will require the administration to come to this place, and for our youth to get behind a new summer camp. I and this group do not want to see a break in youth programming, because the longer
break there is, the harder it will be to jump back in, and they deserve to have as much of their spiritual home preserved as possible.

Youth Yearly Meeting: will depend on the decisions of the youth council and on NWYM’s Board of Youth and Young Adults. If it goes as the youth requested, they will have a youth yearly meeting separate from either body’s annual sessions, which gives the youth the opportunity to be fully involved in our annual sessions. We want to contact as many youth and youth leaders as possible to find out what they want.

Let’s go back and talk to our youth about this and gather people around you that are excited about building a camp for this summer.

First of all thank you so much to this committee. You’ve done tremendous work and these are complex issues. Having been at the Reedwood [Twin Rocks Association] meeting, we should not count on having Twin Rocks access. We need contingencies.

Date of next Twin Rocks Board Meeting: Nov. 19th, 3:00 p.m., Reedwood Friends.

Please take this back to your meetings, to those who are excited about working on a camp. Let them know. This is a foundational thing we want to be about: supporting our youth and having programing for them. We are all in agreement that we want the youth to be a standing committee. Can we approve that? **Approved.**

Katherine: now we need to invite our youth on this board. Yes, that’s what we recommended. *We want the board to be at least half youth, and we want a youth co-clerk.*

**Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee needs to know the clerks of the committees (we have most but not all). We need the committees to tell us how many people they want (we shouldn’t be choosing the number of people for the committees). If you don’t have enough on your committee, tell us so we know what to look for. It would be helpful for us to have a paragraph about what each group does that the clerks could write to send to the Coordinating Committee to send to us so that when we’re trying to get people to be on the committees, we know what to tell them. We would like to know how often the committees meet, and in what form (online or in person). Please send that to the clerks of the coordinating committee.
**Spiritual Care:**

Sue Scott: We’re a clerkless committee, I just happen to be the person who takes notes. We’re not exactly a committee that doesn’t know what we’re doing, but we’re waiting to see what we’re expected to do, what God wants us to do. One main thing is that we want people to get connected and get to know each other. We hope to put resources that individuals and churches can access on the website. We talked about the importance of listening to stories, so we’ll probably be doing that. We did identify that traditionally Friends have things like clearness and care committees. Reconciliation is another thing that was mentioned, there’s a passion for that, and discernment. In the future look for some questions from us. One is “how did you get here? What do you hope will happen? What can you contribute?” Answer these in any way you want.

**Prayer:**

Carol Whorton, Klamath Falls Friends: We elevated this group from a “prayer team” to a committee, because we recognized that SCYMF would not happen unless we prayed. People should remember that that’s what we’re built on. We are praying Friends, that’s what we do. We have an agenda: to pray. To listen to how God is leading us and pray about it. That’s it. We have been praying since the announcement that NWYM has been splitting, and here we are today. It was said “maybe that’s why these committees have been going so well.” It is good to know that God is with us, and so we pray.

We realized that thus far we have been praying as God leads us, but we realized that we wanted to do something more, to receive prayer requests, so we need a pathway for that to happen. The newsletter? I’ll be the point person, and I’ll let the other team members know. If there’s something confidential, mark it as such and it will be held in confidence. What else can we say when our joy is full?

**Equity and Inclusion:**

A. J. Mendoza: This committee was created when I wasn’t here, and I’m the clerk. So far I am loving it. Our first outing as a committee... [laughter and applause, “oh this is going to be fun,” “alright take three.”] We felt led to write a minute, which spoke to the need we felt to actively oppose racism. It included some queries. We were able to send that out in the Bulletin, and have received incredible feedback both from SCYMF and the larger Quaker universe. After having our first time doing something, which was kind of crisis response, we thought What are the parameters, How will we operate? We will be primarily inward-facing. We exist to serve the yearly meeting in a way that hasn’t been done before. It’s experimental, but surrounding our yearly meeting’s desire to be Christ-centered Friends, undergirded by the spirit of Acts 4, of Christians just taking care of each other. Our work will in large part be set as we go, based on what is brought up as a concern from other parts of the body.
Imagine if an Equity and Inclusion Committee existed in NWYM in 1950. There was a significant dropoff in the number of women who were being recorded, but there wasn’t a mechanism for that to be institutionally noticed, to say that maybe we can start a new program to support these people or a scholarship to seminary. That would be an instance where having an inward-facing committee could be helpful.

The posture of our committee will never be hostile toward SCYMF members. We acknowledge we are all on a journey and will meet people where they are. This committee will celebrate our successes because we will be joyful.

We operate with an equity framework not a diversity framework. If you haven’t been introduced to the difference: The work of diversity is finished when folks on the margins are in the room at the table, and it stops there. Equity takes time and constant work. In a diversity model, it is assumed that everyone benefits the same when they are offered the same support. Equity is about everyone getting the support they need.

By its nature, this committee cannot five-year-plan our work. We don’t know what we don’t know, but we know that we will know. Church doors do not open and stay open. When left unattended they always creep back shut. This is how we will challenge ourselves: to always hold the door open; to work as a yearly meeting to learn how to hold the door open better, together; to find a button that opens it easily.

Our big thing that we want to focus on in the next 12 months is an education program around gender and sexual orientation and identity. Our yearly meeting has minuted that we want to support these people, but we don’t know how to best support them. We want to help congregations that have decided they want to be welcoming and affirming, but don’t know “now what.” We’re thinking of bringing in guest speakers and looking for expertise outside ourselves.

Jan Wood, North Seattle: I want to commend you on the post-Charlottesville statement. It was masterful and wonderful and spoke our mind and I was so proud that it was released so quickly. I am so proud of us.

Cherice: Thank you everyone for sharing and for your good work. It’s exciting to hear everything that’s happening and everything coming in the next months.

**Discernment re: Annual Sessions**

This next part will be interactive. We have a couple of queries about the annual sessions. This is partly logistics: when, what, how, how long. But then also a little deeper: what do we want it to be about? What do we want to do together during that time? What do we hope continues from our experience of last summer or previous annual sessions? What do we want to avoid that we’ve experienced in the past, what do we want to improve on?
Centering Silence over the following queries: What good things would you love to see happen at the annual sessions of Sierra-Cascades YM of Friends? What pitfalls should we try to avoid at annual sessions?

Now let’s meet with a group of three or four, share your ideas, and be ready to be able to present these to the Quarterly Gathering committee. Take about 7-8 minutes.

[We took about 7-8 minutes]

Thank you for doing that work. Feel free to continue those conversations this evening over dinner. Contact the Quarterly Gathering committee with those thoughts, they want to hear them.

**Closing**

We would like to close with a couple of things. One suggestion was that we create a minute of gratitude to one another for all the things our committees have done.

It takes work to listen well and hear God speaking through one another. We have one more way to participate before we leave. Jan Wood will lead us in a closing song.

Jan: Oh it’s going to be more than a closing song. One of my highlights of annual sessions was the impromptu offering at the end. As clerks do, thinking fast on their feet, I asked who has a hat? What emerged was Joann and Matt brought Lee Foster’s cowboy hat. We put that at the front, and I was reminded of the way that Quakers do offering. Carol-Ann and Patty couldn’t be here, but I remembered the happy moment as they bring all their offerings forward, joyfully singing dancing. We raised over $1000. The reason this is important is because, between now and the end of the year, we need to raise probably $10,000. We have raised a little over $4000, and North Seattle Friends is challenging other meetings: we will match up to $1000. So our meeting could put forward up to $2000. You can send a check, but it will save you a check or paypal fee if you just give it now. Derek will sing while we come up, all of us, and he will keep singing while we count the money so we will know how much we’ve raised. This isn’t like giving money to an organization. It’s us giving money for ourselves. Alright, start dancing forward! To whom should checks be made out? NWYM, with SCYMF in the comment line, PROMINENTLY.

*God is the bread, God is the feast*  
*Come to the table, even the least*  
*Shall be filled to overflowing*  
*Overflowing Joy*

Offering was just over $2,000