

MINISTRY AND ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
Report to Illinois Yearly Meeting
June 2013

First, Ministry and Advancement wishes to present one Minute requiring action and a second Minute to be recorded:

1. Ministry and Advancement recommends that care of Macomb Worship Group be transferred from Spoon River Monthly Meeting to Clear Creek Monthly Meeting.
2. Ministry and Advancement has reviewed and affirms again the Yearly Meeting's continuing endorsement of Carolyn Treadway as pastoral counselor and Beth Burbank as chaplain educator. We believe that our pastoral care professionals need support not only from their colleagues but also from Friends who are concerned primarily with their spiritual welfare.

During last year's annual session, Ministry and Advancement (M&A) created a survey that we took or sent to each of ILYM's Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups in the Fall. Each community was invited to assess and share with us its strengths and how interested its members might be in utilizing the various resources that M&A members or the field secretary were prepared to provide. About half of the surveys were returned to us, and more than one Meeting expressed appreciation at being asked to identify its own priorities and interests instead of a Yearly Meeting committee trying to do so. Each completed survey informed and inspired us to focus on your expressed priorities, so we thank all who responded.

Ministry and Advancement's programs and workshops this year were presented to local Meetings rather than regionally. Our field secretary has been leading sessions as varied as Quaker decision making, identifying sources of conflict, unprogrammed worship, and final wishes. In addition, one member of M&A led several Bible study sessions, and another provided adult education on welcoming newcomers.

Our field secretary, yearly meeting's clerk, and experienced adjunct members David Finke, Margaret Katranides, and Maurine Pyle, helped us visit or contact all 22 Meetings and Worship Groups. Concerns in common are aging and dying, outreach and welcoming, and keeping young Friends. Several Meetings have shrunk to less than a handful of Friends as a result of death and infirmity. On the other hand, new life is springing up as the Worship Groups of Macomb, Illinois, and of Elkhart, Indiana, increase their grounding in Quaker faith and practice. Several Meetings report thriving First-Day Schools, while others struggle to attract any children or to provide for the few that sometimes appear.

Our visits allow us to learn about and to share how Friends are creatively addressing common concerns. For example:

- Duneland has a single phone number that automatically sends an electronic message to everyone in the meeting when an inquirer leaves a voice message; Friends can even read the content of the voice mail.
- A couple in South Bend makes a point of inviting to dinner any newcomer who has visited their meeting twice.

-- Evanston's Ministry and Counsel Committee is enlisting a small group of members to bring a Meeting for Worship to Friends who are unable to leave their homes.

-- Meetings using the Godly Play and Faith and Play curricula for First Day School have been successful in recruiting many adult Friends (other than parents of young children) as short-term teachers. Overcoming the fear of working with young children has brought joy and spiritual growth to both generations.

-- Friends General Conference has a new program to assist small meetings, and we are looking into what could be provided within ILYM.

Adult Young Friends in the metropolitan area have continued monthly potlucks, and those at a distance are using social media to stay in touch and to reach out. We regret that Adrian Nelson, a co-clerk of this group, was unable to continue serving on M&A. We also regretfully accepted Gwen Weaver's resignation earlier in the year.

Fernando Freire and Bridget Rorem represent M&A on ILYM's Personnel and Property Use Committees, respectively. Both of these Friends have expressed leadings to help those committees remain spiritually grounded while achieving their functional goals.

Looking ahead, we see a need for closer connections with and among those Friends who have special responsibilities for pastoral care and spiritual growth in their monthly meetings. In larger meetings, these will be members of a ministry committee, but we also include individuals in small meetings who customarily are led to these roles. If you are one of these Friends, we hope you will attend the "Joys of Ministry" workshop that Judy Wolicki and Wil Brant are offering on Friday and Saturday afternoons. This will be an opportunity to share visions and ideas, and to receive encouragement and support.

We encourage you to call upon any member of the Ministry and Advancement Committee, including the field secretary, to assist your Meeting in finding resources (people or literature), planning programs, conducting workshops, and offering other activities to advance your worship community's unity, outreach, and spiritual growth. We'll do our best to answer your questions or find another resource that can.

Finally, we need your support. Help us to become better acquainted with you and the other members of your Meeting or Worship Group. Tell us about your Meeting's needs. Share your good ideas. Most importantly, pray for us and hold us in the Light, that we may be faithful to our Guide and to the charge we have from you.

Joan Pine, Clerk
Ministry and Advancement Committee