

Minutes of Abington Quarterly Meeting held Fifth Month 4, 2025
at Abington Meeting and on Zoom

AQ clerk Mike Mrozinski opened the meeting shortly after 9am, and we settled into silent worship for several minutes. Then Mike announced the queries for this quarterly session: What is the essence of a Quaker Community? Who are we? ;What makes us a religious society to be a part of. How do individual friends establish and maintain a covenant relationship with their religious community? A number of friends -- at least half a dozen -- responded with reflections on what the Quaker community represents to them. Mike followed, expressing his appreciation for what had been shared, and asserting there is lots of work for us to do as a Quarter.

We **approved** the minutes of our 2nd month AQM session.

Mike introduced George Schaefer and Cecilia Vaculari the executive administrator of PYM. They came up to the podium and George told us about the lawsuit responding to Trump's order directing ICE to enter houses of worship. New York and Baltimore Yearly Meetings have joined with PYM as plaintiffs in this suit against the Federal Administration. An injunction has been issued limited to protecting the Meetings that are party to the suit.

At present we Quakers are waiting for a court to make a definite ruling on the case. A somewhat similar Mennonite case was dismissed on the grounds that not sufficient harm had been demonstrated.

For present purposes a judicial warrant is required before ICE (immigration and customs enforcement) can enter a house of worship. When confronted by ICE personnel we have the right to read any purported warrant they may produce, and may remain silent to any questions. The injunction does not include Friends' schools. Rebecca Cratin made the essential point that the suit is based on the expectation that anyone coming into a Quaker meeting house is there for worship, not merely for sanctuary. There are resources on our websites offering advice about how to respond if ICE shows up.

It being almost time for Abington's 10am meeting for worship session, Mike suggested we take a brief break before settling into MwW.

Just as we settled into the worship session Mike had to leave to respond to a family crisis that came up unexpectedly. Amelia Diamond, a past clerk of the

quarter, stepped in to clerk in Mike's absence. At 11:25, after the rise of Abington's MfW. we accepted Amelia as acting clerk and resumed the Quarterly Meeting.

George and Cecilia returned to the lectern and she clarified the current status of the lawsuit. George commented that the Justice Department seems to be going after the law firm that represents us. Amelia thanked George and Cecilia.

We turned to the subject of membership development. This is a concern shared by our monthly meetings and PYM as well. Amelia thanked Lanza, the Quarter's communications coordinator and Loretta Fox of Abington MM for their efforts on the Outreach Committee. A friend who had served on PYM's membership development granting group, told us that it is easy to apply for these grants. He said that in his experience these grants are approved quickly in most cases. Grantees should be prepared to conclude their work with a written report about results. Lanza assured us that she is willing to help any of our meetings fill out those grant applications, and will serve as resource for related technical ideas.

Judy Inskeep of Gwynedd MM noted that Trenton MM invited the local community to a barbecue style picnic. Byberry has hosted a similar occasion. A relatively new member asked us about the distinction between proselytization and community engagement. Lanza responded that these outreach events are simply open to anyone, and are publicized locally so community residents are aware of these opportunities to socialize, and explore what Quakers are doing.

A friend suggested we might consider having a "Quaker Art Festival" or a musical event. Amelia noted that we become known for what we do; what can we put out there that should appeal the community.

Rebecca Cratin of Plymouth MM noted that these prospective events may benefit from better communications among the monthly meetings. If there is a good idea resulting in an event being scheduled, other meetings of the Quarter should pitch in to publicize it.

Jeff Plaut of Abington MM asked if there is a Quaker hat, or a t-shirt. He suggested these might be offered on a website. A friend said PYM's website offers Quaker bumper stickers. George said PYM also has a t-shirt. Lanza said she has a "Quakers against gun violence t-shirt" She said she would like to figure out how make these various offerings easily available.

We took up the report of the nominating committee. Amelia started with the finance committee, that needs to replace a few retiring members.

Secondly, the communications committee would like some new members to help work on the ideas just aired in our discussion.

Thirdly, the Abington Quarter Fund granting committee has funds available, and is looking for a few more members to help make grants.

Also, the Quarter would like to have a rising clerk.

Karen Russell, President/Secretary of Incorporated Trustees of AQM, said **Allen Stokes** and **Jeff Markovitz** have been approved by their monthly meetings and now need the Quarterly Meeting's approval. We then **approved** them both.

George Schaefer asked us to approve Ron Inskeep (Gwynedd) stepping down as a representative from the Quarter to PYM. This was **approved**.

At 12:10, our business being concluded, we settled in for several minutes of silent worship. Amelia then thanked those present for attending, thanked Abington Meeting for hosting, and suggested we proceed to the “light lunch” provided in the adjoining community room.

Respectfully submitted by Dan Turner.