

Morningside Minute Supporting the call for a Jubilee Year by QM

April 7, 2019

Morningside Monthly Meeting supports the seasoned leading of the New York Quarterly Meeting Ministry and Counsel Committee (NYQM M&C) in calling a Jubilee Year from July 2019 to July 2020, during which time all but essential QM business will be laid aside in order to “attentively create space for spiritually nurturing” of the quarter community.

Morningside Meeting Ministry and Counsel considered the matter of a Jubilee Year; and on Sunday, March 17, the committee held an after-meeting for worship discussion for all Morningside Friends. The queries sent by NYQM M&C were read and discussed toward the creation of this minute.

Although Morningside will not be calling a Jubilee for itself, it agrees with NYQM M&C that it is the appropriate time to call a Jubilee to renew and refresh the Quarter. Morningside also sees this as a time of renewal of the Spirit of Trust between meetings and an increase in Meeting participation in QM.

During this Jubilee Year, Morningside Meeting holds Quarterly Meeting and its constituent Monthly Meetings in the Light and expectantly listens for how the Spirit may use Morningside in this process of rest and spiritual renewal.

In Friendship,

Jane Alexandre
Clerk, Morningside Monthly Meeting

Morningside Monthly Meeting After meeting discussion on the NYQM's Year of Jubilee

Sunday, March 17, 2019 at 1pm

Clerked by Jerry Reisig, 8 in attendance

After some silence, the clerk summarized what a Jubilee Year was and attenders read the Queries. Many of us have considerable history and experience participating in the NYQM, sitting on several committees and clerking, others have very little, and still others had never attended a QM business meeting. We were asked to refrain from referring to the QM as “them” vs “us” and to consider the relevance of the QM to its monthly meetings.

At the beginning of our meeting, and after queries were read, various perspectives and experiences of the QM were voiced.

Query #1: Is this leading being brought to us in the right spirit?

Query #2: what obstacles and challenges does it offer us?

- The ‘how’ feels daunting.
- Listen to God.
- Do we trust the Spirit? The Spirit will help us work out the particulars.
- There is an underlying level of mistrust among us, how do we address this?
- QM’s are an unpleasant experience, how do we make QM into something we look forward to?
- Being strangers and distrusting one another will inhibit our giving over to the process.
- A small percentage of Monthly Meeting Friends participate in the QM, how do we get more involved?
- Of those who participate there is much contention and disagreement
 - How do we open the way for these F(f)riends?
 - What obstacles and tensions can we remove?
- Those with long experience expressed that over time the QM has become more spiritual.
 - M&C long ago (20+ yrs) wrestled with these same concerns
 - The Jubilee Year is seen as an extension of these long standing observations

Query #3: What opportunities for growth does it bring with it?

- Inclusion; bring all into the Jubilee experience.
- Deepen connections among us, get so we look forward to the QM.
- Build a larger scale community with wider participation.
- View the year as unfolding, organic, as we move through it.

Query #4: Are we willing to participate in the success of the leading?

Query #5: What other related considerations would we undertake as we season this leading?

- This is an opportunity to get to know one another.
- How do we rest and what does that look like?
- How do we participate in this? How do we discern undertaking this?
- Can we make the QM a nurturing, supportive and positive experience?
- How do we make connections with others and have a supportive community.

- Jubilee Year is an opportunity to do things differently.
- Hope to create a radical shift in how the QM is experientially seen.

Thoughts for going forward for the Jubilee Year:

QM Meetings:

- Take time during the QM meetings for worship to share on exploring larger Quaker concerns (Monthly Meeting areas of interest, social justice concerns).
- Change the meeting time of the QM to 9:30, followed by worship at 11 and a potluck, with a short program after the potluck.
- Make a fun event at the end of the QM. Long ago there was an ice cream social at the rise of meeting
- After thinking through actually closing Monthly Meetings worship on the day of the QM for all go to the QM host meeting, we saw logistical and communications problems, as we have many visitors to our meetings that won't be aware of the change of location
- Place less emphasis on business for the year and more on being part of QM experientially.

Intervisitation:

- Intervisitation is important; designate an occasional day where monthly meetings take turns hosting all the other meetings.
 - Get the word out in a timely and joyous manner
 - Possibly provide transportation (the 'Love Bus') to encourage and facilitate those with challenges to get them there.

Workshops and Retreats are seen as important ways to get to know one another, develop common shared experiences, and nurture our spiritual growth and connections

- Workshop on how to be present during conflicts so QM can lessen the inevitable differing perspectives; some of which has to do with how we talk to one another (respectfully, listening, rather than a relentless reiteration of a single perspective).
- Open up retreats and other Monthly Meeting events and share with the wider QM
- In-city 'retreats' can be organized with in-depth discussion on specific topics: forgiveness, developing trust, how to talk with each (communication patterns), aspects of Quakerism.

Mid-week worship seen as very important!

- The recent commencement of QM/M&C sponsored mid-week worship at 15th St. is not well-known and needs to be put out there – maybe email the Monthly Meeting clerks to announce during Sunday worship, put in their calendars, and announce at business meetings.
- Once a month at the mid-week worship, have one of the standing committees host a pre-worship potluck; bring your own dinner, drinks and desserts provided, meet the committee members, discuss concerns.