

## **Ministry and Counsel Committee Charge**

### **Gunpowder Friends Meeting from Baltimore Yearly Meeting 1988 Faith and Practice Affirmed by Ministry and Counsel on 9/22/2019\***

This committee seeks to ensure that each meeting for worship or business begins with quiet and reverent assembling; that it proceeds on the basis of a silent and attentive search for Divine guidance; that the meeting is served by spoken ministry that is inspired as way opens, and is addressed to the conditions of those present. Meetings for worship are ended when it is sensed that those present have been spiritually refreshed. The Ministry and Counsel Committee should:

- Counsel and support those who are led to speak out of the silence in meetings for worship. Inexperienced speakers especially may need to be encouraged and advised. Those who are inclined to speak unacceptably, at undue length, too often, or too soon after another speaker, may need prompt and loving counseling.
- Assure that appointed meetings for such occasions as marriages and memorials are appropriately held.
- Arrange special meetings for worship on behalf of those who are ill or imprisoned.
- Plan retreats, or other gatherings smaller than the regular meeting for worship, in order to deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting.
- Welcome newcomers and visitors to Meeting. (Leaflets to help newcomers understand Friends' practices and a visitors' book to record names and addresses are useful in this connection.)
- Consider requests for travel minutes and make recommendations on them to the Monthly Meeting.

## **Report on the State of the Meeting**

Ministry and Counsel drafts annually a report which assesses the Meeting's spiritual condition and needs. The Monthly Meeting should thoughtfully consider this draft and give it final approval. The report should be prepared with reference to the Queries and should cover such matters as:

- Spiritual condition of the Meeting; strengths and failings.
- Nature of meetings for worship during the year. Quality of the silence, content and quality of the spoken ministry.
- Meetings for business during the year. Range of concerns considered, attendance of members, implementation of the Meeting's decisions.
- Contributions of Peace and Social Order, Religious Education, Ministry and Counsel, Overseers, and other committees.
- What is most needed to deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting and to strengthen its witness on behalf of Friends' testimonies to the world.

This report is forwarded to the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings after approval by the Monthly Meeting.

\* As of 9/22/2019: We concur that the statement reflects what we do on behalf of the Meeting. Our charge, broadly stated, is to care for the spiritual health of the Meeting. We want to have clarity about how the work of advancement and outreach is done at Gunpowder as it is not work that is expressly in our charge. We will continue to coordinate with Care and Oversight about welcoming newcomers to Meeting and how to provide special Meetings for Worship for those who are ill or not otherwise able to be with us on First Days.