

**Ministry and Counsel Committee Charge**  
**Gunpowder Friends Meeting**  
**Approved at Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**  
**4th day, Second Month, 2024**

This committee seeks to ensure that all Meetings for Worship, including called meetings and Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business begin with quiet and reverent assembling grounded in worship; 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. Meetings for worship are ended when it is sensed that those present have been spiritually refreshed. The Ministry and Counsel Committee should:

- Serve as Hosts for Meeting for Worship (open our time of Joys and Sorrows, end meeting with a handshake, ask visitors to introduce themselves, name those who have been worshiping with us through the bridge, and request announcements). Each month on the same First Day as Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, a member of Ministry and Counsel will read the appointed Queries from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice, including advices and voices as led.
- 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 held in good order.
- Arrange special meetings for worship on behalf of those who are ill or imprisoned.
- "The practice of providing hospitality, care, and inclusion to all is an essential part of our being."\* We seek to live into and affirm this Value as we care for all members and attenders worshiping with us in all settings, whether they attend in person or through the technology assisted Bridge. (M&C affirms this as we feel it's important to lift up our care of those on the bridge.)
- Plan such activities which support the education and spiritual development of members on matters of religious and cultural understanding, including but not limited to: monthly forums, Bible Study, special retreats, and intergenerational functions.
- Receive requests for Clearness Committees from Friends seeking clearness around a leading to Ministry. Form and care for those committees.
- 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.
- Coordinate with the Care and Oversight committee on matters where our mutual efforts would benefit our work.

\* From our Mission Vision and Values statement approved First month 2020.

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### **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 may be prepared with reference to the Queries provided by the Yearly Meeting ministry committee and should cover such matters as:

- Spiritual condition of the Meeting; strengths and challenges.
- Nature of meetings for worship during the year. Quality of the silence, content and quality of the spoken ministry.
- Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business during the year: Range of concerns considered, attendance of members, implementation of the Meeting's decisions.
- Contributions of the meeting's various committees, working groups, caretakers, and individuals doing specific work on behalf of the meeting.”
- 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.