

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfB)
Third Month, Third Day, 2024 (3/3/24)

Present were: Karen C. (clerk), Phil C. (recording clerk), Martha B., Cairn K., Jack H., Ellen M., Nan & Sky E., Patty R., Sylvia O., Pat S., Ted R., Margaret & Will C., Martha L., Diane S., Minette, Barb T., Cairn K., Jean C., Lisa H., Mary B., Phyllis S., Marcia O., Kim F., Jack L., Steve P., Ann R., Marjorie K., Nancy Jo S., Alison B., Wes J., Dot W., Karl R., JoAnne S., Christina F., and Bonnie P.

We met on this day both in person and via Zoom, beginning with centering worship and screen-sharing of BYM's Third Month Faith and Practice queries. From the initial silence, our Clerk welcomed Friends and reviewed AFM's anti-racist queries. Then, we proceeded with reports and action items from various AFM committees.

Ministry and Pastoral Care (M&PC) : Martha B. orally offered the first reading of the Spiritual State of the Meeting report (see attachment) which seeks to capture the essence of Friends' sharing over the past month. Friends expressed gratitude for the careful work of M&PC for its comprehensive and nuanced report; one Friend urged more attention to concerns about how our Meeting should act in order to move forward. Another urged that, at some future point, AFM should consider building a dedicated Meeting Room, as opposed to our current "multipurpose room."

Suggestions for further refinements will be welcomed by M&PC members after MfB in person or via email to ministry-pastoralcare@annapolisfriends.org until the Tuesday after next.

For M&PC, Martha also announced the beginning of a clearness for membership process for Ani Warneka and Alison Barrett.

Meetinghouse and Land: Kim F. reported a request from MHL and M&PC to sponsor and waive rental fees to use an AFM classroom (see attachment as to "Best Three Months" / Death Doula program) workshop; Library Committee and our Building Use Coordinator (BUC) also were consulted and agreed. The workshop open to the community, noting there will be a reasonable sliding-scale fee. Without our waiver of rental fees, costs for community participation would be much higher. Friends approved this waiver.

Next, Kim invited Friends to consider proposed amended policies for the Memorial Garden (attachments) to clarify current practices for the MG fund, which is under the care of the Meetinghouse and Land Committee in partnership with the Pastoral Care Committee. Friends approved.

Finally, Kim relayed MHL's request for input on the best format to learn about and discuss the AFM Building Fund, which they hope to initiate prior to next year's annual budget cycle. Friends suggested that the program should a) be in a hybrid format, b) provide food for those in person, if feasible c) include background of AFM's history on this point and d) permit discussion of AFM's priorities.

(Recording clerk's note: In-meeting approval for these MfB minutes stopped at this point, due to shortage of time.)

Quaker Market (QM) Committee: Cairn presented the results of their recent discernment meeting regarding potential causes to support with AFM's Quaker Spring Market: the first \$250 to be allocated to AFM's Young Friends for their discernment; equally splitting the remainder for 25% to each of three External 501(c)3 causes (Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Mennonite Central Committee for their relief work in Ukraine and Gaza, and the Native American Rights Foundation); and the Internal 25% to AFM's Meetinghouse and

Land Committee to be put toward steps in upgrading to ADA standards for safety and accessibility at the meetinghouse, particularly at entries and exits. Considerations included concerns for anti-racist values and our political context, noting that AFM Peace & Social Concerns (PSC) has concurred with this discernment of causes. (See longer report attached.) QMC expressed their gratitude to all who contributed time and thought in recommending potential causes to support, and their regret that we cannot meaningfully support all of the causes at this time.

One Friend expressed concerns that QMC fundraising has not invested much in the Meetinghouse and suggested that 50% of proceeds be invested for AFM's future. Our Clerk suggested that the current allocations are consistent with policy previously approved by MfB and asked if Friends were led to reconsider the underlying policy of 75% external use and 25% internal use and defer action on the Spring Market causes. Several Friends spoke to the importance of respecting committee discernment and allowing QMC to move forward with preparations for Spring Market, which is only a couple of months away. Friends also spoke to the importance of focused, future consideration of funding and Meetinghouse priorities with sufficient time allowed for these. Friends approved QMC's recommendations for Spring Market causes with two Friends asking to be recorded as "standing in the way" ..

Stewardship and Finance Committee (S&F): For S&F, Jack reported that a \$5,256 surplus has been created by Friends' generous year-end donations and strong rental income. S&F recommended that this amount should be transferred to AFM's newly-created Retrospective and Restorative Justice (RRJ) Fund. One Friend asked whether these funds are backed by investments; Jack confirmed that they are backed by funds in our accounts.

Another Friend expressed the concern that "throwing money at a problem is not going to solve it" and urged that Friends consider instead saving this money for a dedicated worship room; yet another Friend urged putting such funds into AFM's Emergent Social Concerns Fund. One more Friend urged that we should trust our Committees.

Given the lack of time, our Clerk discerned that we should return to this issue next month. Our Clerk also noted that all committee's requested funding allocations have been fulfilled in the coming year's budget and asked that Friends send suggestions for any other uses of the 2023 surplus to Stewardship and Finance.

Announcements:

Our Clerk announced the upcoming Committee Clerks meeting on March 24 at 9:30 am and asked for agenda items.

For Peace and Social Concerns, Phil C. noted the need for additional volunteers for overnight shifts at Winter Relief later in March.

Conclusion: Due to the shortage of time, we concluded our MfB before reaching additional items and announcements. We will review the later minutes (beginning with Quaker Market discussion) at our next MfB. (Recording Clerk's note as to prior minutes: 2/4/24 minutes were made available online and minor corrections were made.)

We concluded with brief silence. *-These minutes respectfully submitted – Phil C., Recording Clerk.*

Annapolis Friends Meeting
Spiritual State of the Meeting for 2023
First Reading, March 3, 2024

Annually Annapolis Friends engages in a self-reflection process where we consider prepared queries, listening deeply to Spirit (the Light, God, Love, the Divine, etc.) and sharing our sense of Spirit's leadings for us aloud—with open heart. This process helps us gain clarity on our current spiritual state—both strengths and areas for needed growth. This report endeavors to capture the themes from our collective spiritual reflection on the 2023 spiritual state of our Meeting.

Many expressed the value of worshipping together in our community, and pointed to it being a **joyous spiritual community** in which individuals show great care for one another. We are an unusually dynamic and welcoming, exciting Meeting. “This Annapolis Quaker community is one of the best faith-based community enriching and enriched groups I have experienced ...[we] are doing something very right, very connected, spiritual and loving.” “I have been so moved by the worship and people. The spirit of altruism is what the Lord has shared. This, in conjunction with simplicity, has motivated me to reassess my own life. I have found much joy in attending.”

Many Friends spoke to AFM's **multiple forms of worship** and their impact on the spiritual experience of individuals, and the spiritual state of the Meeting.

Some expressed appreciation for the **many forms for spiritual growth** that our Meeting offers. One Friend writes: “My spiritual journey is greatly enriched by my interactions with AFM Friends in so many contexts, including meetings for worship, learning, and attention to business, committee meetings, work on Quaker Market and our silent retreats. Over and over, I am amazed and touched by the deep wisdom shared so freely by members of our community.” We are aware that each of these diverse gatherings have important spiritual meaning to those who participate in them. “It's important to understand all the spiritually rich things that are going on....I can't attend them all, but it is comforting to me knowing they exist and people care about doing them.”

Meetings for Learning are appreciated for their contribution to the spiritual richness of our Meeting. Using a blended meeting format, topics this past year included “Quaker Experience of Holding in the Light”; “Vibrant Committees”; “Bible Study: Old Testament begins and The Parables of Jesus begins”; “2023 Triennial in Kenya: ‘Come. Abide. Go.’” and a 3-part “Living Our Truth” worship sharing series. These were led by those at the meetinghouse as well as those at distance from Annapolis—often with partnered leadership in the blended offering.

Some expressed concern that because of the multiple forms of worship, we have **become splintered**, made up of many gatherings (8:00 meeting, Zoom, 11:00 meeting, other ways we come together). One spoke of us as a collection of “scattered bones” that needs to be pulled together.

Others spoke to the loss of opportunities for socialization, fellowship and meals together— at the heart of a sense of community. While recognizing the value of connection through technology, there was a **sense of loss of community times** together.

While some find the **technology less than satisfying**, others spoke to the rich gifts they had gotten from connecting to others through technology and blended meetings--that otherwise would have been lost.

Zoom has made it possible for Friends at a far distance to continue to connect with us, to worship with us, to lead us in meeting for learning, and to share with us deeply spiritual messages. "To my mind there is absolutely no question that being able to have **blended meetings have greatly enriched our Meeting.**" Some mentioned that technology has made it possible for those with **disabilities and health limitations** to worship with us in circumstances where attending in person would have been impossible.

Despite the range of perspectives articulated, there was a **desire for wholeness** expressed. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves how can we come to see ourselves as whole, as one Meeting, as one faith community?

- Can we acknowledge that those who worship in a structure within AFM other than the 11:00 Meeting, are not absent from Meeting nor are they lessening our own spiritual experience?
- Are we open to the idea that some experience one form/structure of worship as more personally satisfying, more spiritual, than another? Are we okay with that level of individual difference?
- What shift in our own inner sense of spirit is needed?

One Friend writes, "I hope we can lean into and embrace a perspective of being one worship community with various forms of worship and spiritual enrichment, which I believe we currently are. This is a micro-opportunity for us to exercise our muscles of **building understanding across difference** even within our small world, recognizing the array of preferences for ministry, access through technology, perspective based on age, gender and race, and even understanding of what it means to be Quaker."

In speaking to the queries, Friends noted that **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business** is an integral part of our worship experience as a community—and it was characterized as impressive and efficient. "It helps our efficiency to have items prepared in advance by committees, but especially for challenging issues, we always benefit from greater use of silent worship before Friends speak," and "We get a lot done, but we are so rushed."

Those new to the Business Meeting process have found it interesting and satisfying. There's a wish that more members understood the role of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and were able to participate in that process.

Several expressed concern about **discernment with spirit** in our decision-making processes and reaching unity – how that occurs and whether it is occurring well. One Friend reflected that how agreement is reached sometimes seems confusing.

Friends seek to **broaden our welcome**, wanting to explore how we can become genuinely inviting to those whose absence saddens us, weakens us, lessens us. And, if the absence grows out of disagreements, how do we care for each other even as we disagree?

We are aware of our **yearning for young families and children** to be part of our community. We have a generational divide. Our Meeting is composed mostly of older adults. Children's

Religious Education prepares and is present with almost no participatory audience of young people. As one Friend writes, “I hunger for the gifts that come when children and young families are here. I feel the difference in the Meeting when we stretch across generations.”

We also long for **greater racial and ethnic diversity** within our Meeting. We wonder if part of our “arrogance of certainty” stems from our lack of awareness. Most who attend the Meeting are white and involvement with people of other races is limited. “We don’t know what we don’t know.”

Yet, our work to be an **anti-racist faith community** continues. We bring our queries as an Anti-Racist Faith Community to Meetings for Business to guide our decisions. Our long-standing Deconstructing Racism group offers a forum for spiritual discernment, support, and accountability in actions that we intend to take against racism. As we grappled with how to respond to the call for restorative and retrospective justice, we struggled to engage spirit as we listened to differing voices and perspectives. We were supported by sharing readings and discussion during Black History month and came together for a session on “Journeying toward Justice and Repair” with Lynda Davis to help us deepen our understanding of Quaker roots through learning and reflection. We felt the tug of Spirit to move forward with a small step toward funding our Retrospective and Restorative Justice initiatives.

We continue to wrestle together with finding our way forward. Questions about **Quaker process and discernment** raised during this Spiritual State of the Meeting process call us. We continue to **address contention among us** related to financial policies, fund raising and restorative justice efforts from the previous year that fray our fabric. We acknowledge that it is “prayer, worship, community gatherings, and the groundswell of devotion” that will give us the spiritual strength to mend, renew and expand our community and continue to flourish.

We remain mindful of the unending work needed. What is the relationship between our anti-racist work seen as **activism**, and our anti-racist work held as **spiritual work**? What seeds of individual calling, and calling at a collective level are being planted now?

As one Friend notes of the urge to be more inviting and inclusive, “We need more thorough knowledge of the self-understandings of different religions, a more extensive understanding of the differing expectations for DEI among ourselves, and a deeper understanding of the Meeting committing to serve and care for the spiritual and human needs of people who participate.”

We wonder how to **hew to our beloved traditions** without being blind to the **ways those traditions may create barriers** to new people just entering our community. How might those traditions conflict with what we yearn for? Are there practices that dissuade people or are similarly unwelcoming to others (e.g., Is Friendly 8s just for couples?)? In our manners and expectations, do we subtly project disapproval or a lack of welcome? Are we open to feedback about that?

We note the **significant effort required** to make a community like ours function effectively, and while some individuals have stepped in—especially during the pandemic—to keep us functioning, that level of individual effort may not be sustainable. Many members have expressed concern about workload that is exhausting people.

- How can we celebrate the efforts of those who have found themselves offering a great amount of time and energy in response to the challenges created by Pandemic season and also explore whether that level of effort is sustainable?
- Are we able to discern where our commitments as a Meeting outpace the resources of our volunteer members? Are we willing to explore other ways to get critical work done?
- Can we accept our frailties when we can't do it all? As in hiring tech support for blended meetings, we shouldn't be afraid to take the load off those of us not in our prime.
- How can we create inviting space for participation and leadership of those whose life stage or circumstances means their efforts are necessarily more limited or bounded?

Friends expressed their concern for **our ability to care for one another** as we age. "What weighs on my mind is our ability to provide pastoral care." Are we able to look clear-eyed at the implications of the generational divide for getting the work of the Meeting done and for caring for our membership?

What discernment might lead to **greater health for all**? Are there paths forward that we are overlooking?

During the year, messages in worship have expressed concern about **war and the conditions that lead to war**. There has been regular posting in our newsletter of global opportunities to worship with Quakers for those in Ukraine and beyond. Assistance for those who are caught in the intersection of violence has been given through donations from our emergency funds. Our support for a local family from Afghanistan who was resettled to the United States continued. Yet, despite a query asking about the **peace testimony**, very few spoke to this as part of our spiritual discernment process. Perhaps this reflects a sense of powerless and despair expressed by one of us, "My takeaway with a lifetime of such concern is quite simply: world peace is beyond our reach and our longing for this serves only to make us 'feel good'. The best well-intentioned governments can do is 'damage control' of inevitable wars." How do we make our concerns heard and not become overwhelmed by the enormity of it all? Or how might peace within us and among us, be the place to start?

As we reflect on 2023, we wish to **honor and grieve the losses** felt by some long-time members of the community who miss what Meeting once was **and also spot the beginnings of what Meeting is becoming** and might be. One Friend writes, "I see the meeting as feeling a little un-moored since the pandemic....I am optimistic we will find a cadence again, especially if we can see this as a time to experiment with new ways of doing things as we move toward a new 'comfortable' routine."

We might think of this as a period of **continuing revelation**. We find strength and resolve in the silence and we strive to grow as a community. A Friend notes, "I appreciated...worship sharing on the spiritual state of the meeting. If only other organizations and institutions could adopt this quiet, respectful, insightful approach to annual reviews, we would have so much more calm and congruence in this poor, agitated world!" Our work awaits.

March Meeting for Business
March 3, 2024

Proposal: Host and Provide **Classroom Space for the “Best 3 Months” Program** Providing AFM library or classroom space at no cost for seven sessions of the “Best 3 Month” program beginning March 12, 2024.

1. Ministry and Pastoral Care supports offering this program, noting that there has been significant interest expressed in the content. Our meeting community will benefit from more knowledge in this topic.
2. Most (perhaps all) of the participants are from the AFM community. Hosting this program will provide local access for interested community members and will keep program costs down for their participation.
3. Although the presenter is charging a fee, it is modest with an ample sliding scale to support participation.
4. The session will be held during the week when there is no other demand for use of the space. There is AFM coverage in the building.
5. Having community members who attended this session will be a resource for the AFM community.

Background:

On Feb. 11, Susan Elliott, a conscious death Coach and death doula, spoke to AFM on “Death Becomes Us: Our Final Creative Act.” About thirty people (19 from AFM) attended this 1 pm session. There was significant interest in a more in-depth workshop among those present.

Nancy Jo Steetle has organized a follow-up workshop to run from March 12 through late April or early May. The workshop includes seven (7) meetings in person for about 1.5-2 hours per meeting, although the meetings may not be held every consecutive week.

The workshop series is offered at a price of \$350 per person. To accommodate access for as many people as possible, Susan Elliott will offer a sliding scale of \$150-\$450. Any money paid over \$350 will be used to fund scholarships. She is also willing to barter in-kind services.

AFM has a long-standing commitment to enabling the broader community to have low-cost space in our building. Under our rental policy, the classroom would cost \$100 for 2 hours for each of the seven sessions. This would significantly increase the cost of the workshop for the participants and may limit participation.

Support:

Three individuals from our Meeting previously participated in this workshop, recommend it highly, and have advocated that AFM allow the program to be hosted at the Meetinghouse by MPC as a learning resource for our community.

The proposal has been discussed with and received support from the BUCs (Building Use Coordinators); Meetinghouse & Land co-clerks; Ministry & Pastoral Care co-clerks and the Library committee co-clerks.

Presented by:
Martha Baer, on behalf of Ministry & Pastoral Care

Policies & Procedures Governing the Use of Annapolis Friends Meeting's Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden of Annapolis Friends Meeting (AFM) shall be used for the interment of the cremated remains of deceased members, former members, or regular attenders of the Meeting and their immediate families. Others may be interred as approved by the Memorial Garden subcommittee within the Pastoral Care Committee. If there is a question, the Meeting for Business will be consulted.

Ashes shall be interred without urn or container, with an appropriate graveside ceremony at the discretion of the family of the deceased. It is the intention of AFM to maintain a sense of order & simplicity in the garden. The markers can be either of two types or both:

- 1) An engraved, bluestone to identify only those persons whose ashes are interred, with name, years of birth and death. The flat, gray bluestone will measure not greater than 18" x 18" x 2" and may be smaller. The bluestone shall be placed in the ground selected for groundstones.
- and/or:
- 2) An engraved standard metal marker placed on the bronze plaque with years of birth and death of the named deceased.

The subcommittee shall provide guidance to the family in the selection of the stone and/or metal marker. The family will be notified of the cost and be asked to pay. No one shall be denied the use of the garden because of lack of funds. In these instances AFM will bear the cost of either a marker or a stone or both. No person shall acquire a right to any Meeting property or any interest therein by virtue of this payment. No space shall be reserved in advance of death. Due consideration shall be given to family relationship and wishes.

Day-to-day care, administration and record keeping of the interments shall be the responsibility of the subcommittee. The records of memorials shall be kept and administered by the subcommittee. The subcommittee composed of three persons to be nominated and approved by the Meeting for Business of the AFM, shall serve for a term of two years. Individuals may volunteer for more than one term. The subcommittee will provide an annual report to the Meeting for Business of AFM documenting its activities for the year.

Memorial contributions for the Garden will be welcome at any time. Improvements to the garden will be made in accordance with the master plan and with the approval of the subcommittee and Pastoral Care Committee. The Meeting for Business of AFM shall be informed.

Changes to these procedures may be amended at any time with the approval of the subcommittee and the Meeting for Business of AFM.

As approved by AFM 1/2/05 revision
(Memgardenpolicy10205rev)
2nd revision 1/7/07 (change committees)

Quaker Market Committee Report

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, third month 2024

During the Quaker Market Committee's recent discernment meeting regarding potential causes to support with AFM's Quaker Spring Market coming up on 4 May, committee members felt led to recommend the following allocations from proceeds:

The first \$250 to be allocated to our Young Friends for their discernment, with the remainder split evenly among the following four causes:

External (all 501(c)3)

- Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) for their work to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay
- Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for relief work in Ukraine and Gaza
- Native American Rights Foundation (NARF)

Internal

- AFM's Meetinghouse and Land Committee for steps in upgrading to ADA standards for safety and accessibility at the meetinghouse.

Many factors were considered in the discernment process, including how causes resonated for us spiritually, civil rights/anti-racism/anti-indigenous racism, the environment, the context of ongoing AFM and past Quaker Market contributions, timing with respect to the 2024 presidential election, excellence at what causes do, and the urgency of need.

The results of QMC's discernment have already been circulated to the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, per AFM's existing Fundraising Policy. P&SC has affirmed their agreement with all of these recommended causes.

Since one of the goals of the Quaker Market Committee (QMC) is to provide education regarding causes, as well as financial support, here is some background on each.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is an extremely effective local organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. CBF uses a variety of approaches to accomplish its work, including:

- **advocacy** for science-driven laws and regulations that reduce pollution, restore vital natural systems like oyster reefs, forests, and wetlands, and encourage smart growth;
- **education** through public meetings and adult education classes, as well as through local schools, where they provide immersive field experiences and professional

development courses for tens of thousands of students, teachers and school administrators each year;

- **restoration work** performed in conjunction with partners at local, state and federal levels to reduce pollution at its source and rebuild the Bay's natural filters—oyster reefs, forests, soil, and wetlands; and
- **litigation** to hold governments and polluters accountable to their clean water commitments through carefully chosen legal action.

CBF has a concern for environmental justice and equity, and is actively engaged in supporting legislation and projects with these concerns in mind (e.g., working to connect small and urban farmers in Baltimore and PG County with conservation assistance to help build local sustainable food systems and promote regenerative farming techniques, working to support legislation to get local communities the funds they need to perform studies of stormwater flooding and sewage backups in Baltimore so the city can develop innovative solutions to reduce pollution, and working with the Nansemond Indian Nation to support oyster restoration in the Nansemond River as one pathway to rebuild connections to their ancestral waterway).

QMC members felt particularly drawn to support CBF as a local, highly effective environmental organization that has the know-how and scope to be able to partner with schools, local non-profits, First Nations tribes, and all levels of government to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay, which benefits all who live within or travel to the watershed, and aligns with Friends' Stewardship testimony. The targeting of some projects to specifically benefit people of color also aligns with Friends' Equality testimony.

More information can be found at CBF's website <https://www.cbf.org/>.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) works on five continents in over 40 countries, sharing God's love and compassion for all through relief, development and peace work. They have been doing this work for over 100 years. Everywhere they work, MCC partners with local churches and agencies whose understanding of community resources, needs and context helps shapes programs that meet real needs and make a lasting difference. As part of their relief efforts in areas of conflict or disaster, MCC provides funds for emergency food, shelter, and supplies, as well as supporting long-term recovery projects. Development efforts include working with vulnerable communities to strengthen and sustain their access to food and water, better health, education and income generation. MCC actively works for peace as they teach conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills, address systemic injustices that can lead to violence, respond to psychological needs through trauma healing, and facilitate dialogue where conflict divides.

QMC felt particularly drawn to MCC's work in Ukraine and Gaza. In Ukraine, MCC is working to provide emergency housing, trauma healing, and practical supplies such as blankets, hygiene kits and food packages. Committee members felt particularly touched by

an account of partners who are addressing the emotional needs of children and families traumatized by Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in 2022, through group therapy, art therapy, therapeutic horseback riding and massage. <https://mcc.org/our-stories/addressing-emotional-pain-war>

In Gaza, MCC is providing emergency relief with existing partners, distributing locally purchased food packages, hygiene items and bedding as well as cash transfers to families in need. They are also working to help children cope with the trauma. In the West Bank, partners are providing food assistance and agricultural supplies and training for people who have been affected by the violence there.

MCC laments the violence and mourns all lives lost in Palestine and Israel. They continue to advocate to the Canadian government, the U.S. government and the United Nations community to speak out and encourage an immediate ceasefire and safe paths for humanitarian aid, and to hold all parties to the same standard of international law. MCC will continue to work with partners in both Palestine and Israel toward a just peace for all. <https://mcc.org/what-we-do/initiatives/disaster-response/palestine-and-israel>

QMC members felt strongly that in alignment with Friends' Peace testimony, we need to support relief work in both Ukraine and Gaza with a portion of QSM 2024 proceeds. As an arm of a fellow peace church with a long history of effective relief, development and peace work in many countries, and active partners on the ground in both Ukraine and Gaza, MCC quickly fell into place during the discernment process as an integral piece of the Quaker Spring Market 2024 recommended complement of causes.

More information about MCC and their work can be found at their website <https://mcc.org/>.

Native American Rights Foundation (NARF) was established in 1970, with a mission to hold governments accountable by fighting to protect Native American rights, resources, and lifeways through litigation, legal advocacy, and expertise.

Their work is concentrated on five priorities:

- **preserving tribal existence** (through secure and permanent land bases and rights of self-determination);
- **protecting tribal natural resources** (including land rights, water rights, hunting, fishing and gathering rights, environmental protection, timber rights, and prudent development of mineral resources);
- **promoting Native American human rights** (in areas such as education, health, housing, voting and civil rights, and religious freedom rights);
- **holding governments accountable to Native Americans** (for the proper recognition and enforcement of the many laws and regulations which govern the lives of Indian people); and

- **developing Indian law and educating the public about Indian rights, laws, and issues** (establishing favorable court precedents in major areas of Indian law, as well as the compilation and distribution of Indian law resources to everyone working on behalf of Indian rights).

NARF's work aligns with Friends' testimonies on both Stewardship and Equality. The work that NARF does to protect Native American voting rights felt particularly timely in the leadup to the 2024 presidential election. Native Americans must often travel long distances to vote, many do not have home addresses or mail delivery, making registering and receiving a mailed ballot difficult if not impossible, and Native Americans still face racial discrimination and hostilities when casting their ballots.

More information can be found at their website <https://narf.org/>.

QMC members felt led to recommend that the **Internal 25%** of Quaker Spring Market 2024 proceeds be awarded to **AFM's Meetinghouse and Land Committee** to be put toward **steps in upgrading to ADA standards for safety and accessibility at the meetinghouse**. Of particular concern are the meetinghouse doors that are not at ground level. QMC sees these upgrades as an issue of civil rights. We want everyone to feel that they are welcome to come to the meetinghouse and can do so safely, even if they are differently-abled.

In closing, QMC would like to express our gratitude to all who contributed time and thought in recommending potential causes to support, and our regret that we cannot meaningfully support all of the causes at this time.