

Concord (NH) Monthly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends Ministry and Counsel Committee Description

Approved by the Committee on 10.xii.2003

General Responsibility:

The Ministry and Counsel Committee of the Concord Monthly Meeting oversees and nurtures the spiritual life of the Meeting so as to foster spiritual growth of each Member and Attender.

Membership:

Humility of spirit and confidence that the power of God will work in each person are essential to service on the Committee. The Committee shall have at least six appointed members. Appointments are intended to be for staggered three-year terms. A majority of the members shall be Members of the Meeting. The Clerk(s) of Meeting and the Meeting Recorder shall be *ex officio* member(s) of the Committee.

Organization:

The Committee is responsible to Meeting for Business. The Committee shall annually appoint a Committee Presiding Clerk from among its members. The Committee Presiding Clerk shall be a Member of the Meeting. The Committee Presiding Clerk should be an active participant in the life of the Meeting. The Committee shall annually prepare an expense budget request for submission to Meeting for Business. The Committee shall be responsible for the Meeting's relationship to Ministry and Counsel activities at Dover Quarterly and New England Yearly Meetings. The Committee submits a nominee(s) to Meeting for Business for appointment to New England Yearly Meeting's Ministry and Counsel Committee.

Specific Responsibilities:

Promote Preparation for Meeting for Worship –

The Committee should encourage personal prayer, meditation and devotional reading to promote growth in the spiritual life and prepare each worshiper for corporate worship.

Enhance Meeting for Worship –

The Committee should be especially attentive to the quality of Meeting for Worship. The Committee should encourage those whose vocal ministry gives evidence of true spiritual insight and offer guidance to those whose messages seem inappropriate to Meeting for Worship. The Committee should also be constantly aware that the opportunity for silent communication with God during Meeting for Worship is basic to the spiritual life of Meeting.

Provide Pastoral Care –

The Committee should come to know all Members and Attenders, to share their joys and sorrows and find ways to encourage and help them. When needed the Committee may convene a clearness or other special committee to help a Friend(s) who is (are) seeking guidance or desire support from the Meeting.

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Encourage and Administer Membership –

The Committee should assist young and new seekers to become acquainted with the organization of Meeting. The Committee should labor with inactive Members for restoration of their interest. The Committee should help seekers understand Friends' principles and testimonies and encourage them to apply for membership when appropriate. The Committee considers all applications, transfers, affirmations, or terminations of membership before presenting these to Meeting for Business for action. After accepting an applicant into membership, the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel will send a *Letter of Welcome* to the new member.

Propose a State of Society Report –

At the end of each calendar year, the Committee may set a process to prepare and report on the state of the Monthly Meeting for the calendar year just passing. After approval, the Committee may forward the *State of Society Report* to the Meeting for Business during the second month of the new year.

The report should be a searching self-examination by the meeting and its members of their spiritual strengths and weaknesses and of the efforts made to foster growth in the spiritual life. Reports may cover the full range of interest and concerns but should emphasize those indicative of the spiritual health of the meeting. Meetings may wish to consider one or more of the following:

- quality of worship and spiritual ministry;
- efforts to foster spiritual growth;
- stand taken on Friends' principles;
- personal and family relations;
- relations with community and other religious groups;
- participation in general activities of Friends;
- significant activities, outreach, or concerns of the local Meeting;
- youth of the Meeting;
- Meeting community.

Recognize Gifts in the Ministry –

The Committee should identify, support, and promote those Members who have a sustained gift of ministry. The Committee may recommend to Meeting for Business the recording of such gift.

Care of Marriage and Other Committed Relationships –

The Committee should support and promote satisfaction in marriage and other committed relationships. The Committee should be available for a clearness process for such relationships.

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Compose Memorials –

In commemoration of the life of a deceased Member, the Committee may, if appropriate, compose a written memorial and submit such for consideration by the Meeting for Business. The Committee should be available to help conduct memorial services for deceased Members.

Conduct Programs –

In cooperation with other Meeting committees, the Committee should provide and promote programs to the Meeting community in support of Committee responsibilities. Such programs may be presented after a fourth First Day (in the month) Meeting for Worship, in coordination with the Peace, Social, and Earthcare Concerns Committee.

Accept Other Responsibilities –

The Committee may accept responsibility for other activities as requested by the Meeting for Business. The Committee may look to New England Yearly Meeting's [*Faith and Practice*](#) for guidance in carrying out Committee responsibilities.

Monthly Timeline:

| i. | ii. | iii. | iv. | v. | vi. | vii. | viii. | ix. | x. | xi. | xii. |
|--------------------------|---|---|-----|---|-----|------|---------------|-----|----|-----|---------------------------------|
| All NH Friends Gathering | Forward 'State of Society' report to Meeting for Business | Forward 'State of Society' report to Dover Quarter & NEYM | | Forward memorial minutes, if any, to NEYM | | | NEYM Sessions | | | | Begin 'State of Society' report |

Weekly Timeline:

| 1 st First Day | 2 nd First Day | 3 rd First Day | 4 th First Day | 5 th First Day |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| | 11:30 am-12:30 pm – Potluck lunch 12:30~2:00 pm – Meeting for Business | 8:45 for 9:00-10:00 am - Ministry & Counsel Committee Meeting | 12:30 pm – possible Meeting for Learning | 1:00 pm - Dover Quarterly Meeting |