

FRESH POND MONTHLY MEETING
Cambridge, Massachusetts
New England Yearly Meeting

December 2019

Dear Friends,

As part of Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting's support of the ministries that are undertaken by several of our members, the Ministry & Worship Committee (M&W) is inviting reports from the Care & Accountability Committees (CACs) appointed for these Friends.

Beginning with the January 16, 2020 M&W meeting, and continuing until we have heard from all the committees over the next several months, we will welcome reports. While some focus persons of CACs and some CACs have prepared reports in the past, what is new here is the request for regular reports. On page 3, below, are the highlighted, relevant notes from the description of the practices of CACs, approved in October 2018.

To be helpful in your preparation and reflections, the Ministry & Worship Committee offers some suggested queries below; we anticipate that other queries will rise up during your own discernment and consideration. Our hope is that these queries will prove helpful to your reflections. We do not expect that you will cover them all in your report.

To assist the committees in gaining further understanding the role of CACs, we encourage the members and focus persons to read a pamphlet on the work of spiritual care committees. This can be accessed through *The School of the Spirit* at this [link](#). We also have hard copies available and will distribute them until they are gone.

What is the purpose of these reports?

- To provide an opportunity to regularly reflect on what the CAC has been doing and serving within the context of a Quaker spiritual community.
- To consider together the CAC's shared understanding of ministry. Are all clear about the original sense of call or a leading of the focus person/s? Has this shifted or been transformed in some way? Is the ministry still active?
- To respectfully explore together what it means to be faithful to a call or leading. This is for the focus person and for the committee that contributes to support and care of the minister and the ministry.
- What does care and accountability mean? Accountable to whom? For what purpose?
- What can be said about the relationship that has formed in serving together? Has trust and understanding grown among you?
- What have you learned and what would you like to share with Fresh Pond Meeting about your experience? Is there anything your CAC needs to be more effective?
- The preparation of the report provides an opportunity to ask if the members of the committee still feel called to serve on it. It is helpful to ask this question annually.

How to prepare a report together

- Schedule a meeting of the committee dedicated to reflection on the experience of the members and the focus person.
- Prepare for the meeting by reviewing the queries provided, reading the pamphlet composed by *The School of the Spirit*, and coming with other queries that occur to you.
- The CAC provides a place where a focus person/s will be vulnerable, what is appropriate to share with FPMM?
- Appoint a recorder to take notes; then appoint someone to make a draft that will distill your responses and reflections.
- Meet again to make revisions and to approve the report.
- We urge brevity, one page or less.

Queries for Care & Accountability Committees

- How does your committee support the focus person's experiences or assumptions about their life in the Spirit?
- How do you foster and help grow this Friend's trust in God?
- Have there been times when the life of the Spirit has been blocked in this Friend and what support was your committee able to provide at such times?
- In what way is the Friend growing now and how is that growth being manifested?
- How do you foster this Friend's relationship with the meeting?
- Are this Friend's (and the committee's) expectations of our faith community being met?
- Are this Friend's (and the committee's) meeting the expectations of the meeting?

Queries for the focus person/s

- Have you been clear with your committee about the continuing nature of your leading or call? Have you clarified any shifts in the call/leading?
- Are you willing and able to surrender your will to the corporate discernment of your committee? Do you make decisions independently of your committee's discernment?
- Do you feel supported and cared for by your committee?
- Are you forthcoming about your spiritual needs and struggles to be faithful?
- Is there something more that you would like from your committee and Fresh Pond Meeting that you are not receiving now?

If you have questions about this process and our expectations, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would like to be of assistance.

We look forward to hearing these reports and we are grateful for the ways your service enriches our meeting.

With gratitude,

Melody Brazo and Beckey Phipps, co-clerks
on behalf of the Ministry & Worship Committee

October 2018

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Clearness, Support, and Care & Accountability Committees

Care & Accountability Committees

Purpose

Care & Accountability Committees are appointed for members of the Meeting who have been found clear to offer a ministry or service that grows out of their faith. These committees provide accompaniment, nurture, and accountability for the focus person(s). They also serve as a liaison between the focus person(s) and the meeting as a whole. Members carrying ongoing travel minutes from Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting are expected to have a Care & Accountability Committee. Care & Accountability Committees are under the care of, and report to, the Ministry & Worship Committee.

Practices

1. When a Friend has been found clear to offer a ministry or service by a Clearness Committee appointed by Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, the Clearness Committee should request that the Gifts & Leadings Committee name Friends to serve on a Care & Accountability Committee. The clerk/s of Ministry & Worship will be notified when Care & Accountability committees are both requested and named.
2. When a Care & Accountability Committee is requested, Gifts & Leadings is charged to bring the names of members and a convener to the Ministry & Worship Committee for approval.
3. Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting encourages Friends who are the focus person of a Care & Accountability Committee to discern if they are willing to share a committee with another focus person. It has been the Meeting's experience that the mutuality enjoyed in a shared committee has proven to be illuminating and beneficial for both focus persons.
4. **The focus person(s) of a Care & Accountability Committee are encouraged to make regular reports to the Ministry & Worship Committee (a suggested frequency of one to three years).** At the discretion of Ministry & Worship, these reports may be forwarded to Fresh Pond's Meeting for Business and published in the newsletter.
5. **Care & Accountability Committees are also charged with bringing periodic reports about their experience of the accompaniment they provide to the focus person(s) to Ministry & Worship Committee.** At the discretion of Ministry & Worship, these reports may be forwarded to the Meeting for Business and published in the newsletter.