

# Annual Meeting 2018 EMEYF Meeting for Worship for Business

## Documents in Advance

Welcome! Less than a week to go and the **2018 EMEYF Annual Meeting** will take place! Next to having time for retreat and discussion in Germany, we will use the opportunity to have meeting for worship for business together.

### This document includes:

a) some background information about EMEYF	Page 1
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\*Including some references to relevant minutes which can be found online at [www.emeyf.org/documents\\_new.html](http://www.emeyf.org/documents_new.html)

**NB:** Please look at the nominations required during the gathering before the gathering, and send any suggestions you have for names to our elders, Lisa Specht and or Rose Oliver, [lisa@jlohmeier.de](mailto:lisa@jlohmeier.de) [rose.happybunny@gmail.com](mailto:rose.happybunny@gmail.com)

## Introduction to EMEYF

### What is EMEYF?

So what is EMEYF? Well, we don't know exactly. What we do know is that it stands for European and Middle Eastern Young Friends. For the rest - it is what we make of it. We think of ourselves as a spiritual community, that draws its inspiration from the Quaker tradition and fills it with our actual experience and life. Within that framework virtually anything is possible. We like to meet, in various places within our section, and to explore what community means to us, or what it means to be a (young) person in this world, or to nurture each other in our spiritual and personal travel. We try create space to follow our passion and the spirit and to maintain openness to whatever that leads us to. EMEYF is what we make of it!

And by being here, reading this, you are already part of that, forming EMEYF in its current shape.

### What does EMEYF do?

EMEYF crosses geographical boundaries, discovering both unity and diversity in our Quaker community.

A key event in the EMEYF calendar is Spring Gathering, which is hosted by a different country each year, exploring a theme through worship and discussion. It is an opportunity to develop personal friendships and deepen our spirituality.

In 2019 our spring gathering will be taking place in Russia. The 2018 edition was held at the Moyallon Quaker Centre, Portadown.

Annual Meeting is our meeting for worship for business held each autumn. We share our activities of the past year, both as EMEYF and regional groups, test and pursue concerns, build relationships,

support each other and practise the business method of the Religious Society of Friends.

#### What is Communications Committee?

Communications Committee is the group of people within EMEYF who take the responsibility of making decisions and working for EMEYF between events. It is currently made up of the Clerks, UK Treasurer, Gatherings Coordinator, Elders and Secretary. Communications Committee meet throughout the year in person and electronically to make sure that the organisational side of EMEYF is looked after. All decisions that Communications Committee make are accountable to the Annual Meeting/Meeting for Worship for Business at Spring Gathering.

#### **Current people on the Communications Committee are:**

Kirsten Stuhr (Germany)	Clerk, <a href="mailto:kirstenla2000@yahoo.com">kirstenla2000@yahoo.com</a>
George Thurley (UK/Netherlands)	Clerk, <a href="mailto:george.thurley@gmail.com">george.thurley@gmail.com</a>
Rose Oliver (UK)	Elder, <a href="mailto:rose.happybunny@gmail.com">rose.happybunny@gmail.com</a>
Lisa Specht (Germany)	Elder, <a href="mailto:lisa@jlohmeyer.de">lisa@jlohmeyer.de</a>
Rose Almond (UK)	UK Treasurer, <a href="mailto:rose0almond@gmail.com">rose0almond@gmail.com</a>
Lisette Nijboer (Netherlands)	Fundraising Treasurer, <a href="mailto:lissettenijboer@gmail.com">lissettenijboer@gmail.com</a>
Silja Pfeiffer (Germany)	Gatherings Coordinator, <a href="mailto:silja.p@posteo.de">silja.p@posteo.de</a>

Our secretary is Dilia Zwart (Netherlands/US/Belgium), the peace Programme Officer at the Quaker Council for European Affairs. She can be contacted at [emeyf@qcea.org](mailto:emeyf@qcea.org)

#### **Other role holders** include:

- the fabulous members of our Spring Gathering Planning Committee: David Mangels, Eduard Shiukashvili, Aleksandr Lipatov Yulia Dvoretzkaya and Lucas Braun
- our wonderful trustees Rose Almond, Silja Pfeiffer, Lisette Nijboer and Esther Köhring
- our superb Representatives to QCEA, Wanda Dahme and EMES, Saskia Kuhlmann
- our indefatigable Living Archives Project Coordinator, Esther Köhring.

# Introduction to Quaker Business Method

## Quaker Methods for Decision Making

The Quaker method of conducting meetings for business and arriving at decisions is quite different from the way most businesses handle their decision-making process.

First of all, our business meetings carry the expectation that divine guidance can be discerned if we are truly listening together. (UK Quaker Faith & Practice 3.02) The primary objective is to seek unity in decisions: to find a way forward that is acceptable to all present. This is not so easy to do, especially when the issue is a controversial one, or when there are strongly held opposing views. The outcome is not necessarily one that everyone agrees with, but one that all present can accept in the knowledge that their views have been heard and considered. We must recognise that a minority view may continue to exist. (UK Quaker Faith & Practice 3.06)

## The use of silence

Silence itself has no magic. It may be just sheer emptiness or absence of sound. However, the effective use of silence in business meetings can create a powerful atmosphere for the reception of inspiration and guidance. (UK Quaker Faith & Practice 2.16)

Quaker meetings for business always begin and end with silent worship. At the beginning the silence makes a break with what has gone before. It also gives time to focus on the task at hand and to concentrate on playing your part in discerning the way forward. Silence at the end helps to provide a peaceful closure.

When discussions become heated or difficult, the call for a few minutes silence to reflect on the matter under consideration can often help.

## Conduct of Business Meetings

Every meeting for business is chaired by an appointed clerk. The clerk's job is not just to keep the meeting going according to the agenda, but also to record the proceedings in minutes that will be disseminated. The clerk's primary role is to be able to gauge the sense of the meeting, and to bring minds together so that an acceptable way forward can be agreed. When the way forward has been found, the clerk drafts a minute recording the decision, which is agreed by those present.

At EMEYF Spring Gathering 2014, we had meeting for worship for business without a clerk appointed beforehand. By sharing the responsibility of clerking, we explored our business method together. While we do have appointed clerks again, we hope to be able to carry on these adventurous and trustful ways.

The Quaker Business Method takes patience and insight, but it has advantages. It enables all opinions to be heard so that everyone should be comfortable with the outcome. It creates clarity because the minute of record has been agreed at the time, whilst the issues are fresh in people's minds. This reduces subsequent differences of opinion and revisions to minutes.

# AGENDA MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS AT ANNUAL MEETING 2018

## Session I

1. Introduction to Quaker Business Method
2. Opening minute
3. Review of the Agenda

4. Gathering Appointments, Introduction to Nominations required

*We will appoint elders for the gathering, along with a nominations committee. All these Friends will be asked to serve for the duration of the Annual Meeting. Nominations Committee will be asked to bring back names to serve on our Spring Gathering Planning Committee to the last session. See page 5 of this document for an introduction to the way nominations work and role descriptions of the nominations required.*

## Session II

5. Trustees Report

*We will hear a report from our treasurer and trustees, covering our 2017 accounts, 2019 budget and sustainable travel bursary fund.*

*See minute AM 2017/12 and CC 2018/20 for background on discussion on sustainable travel*

6. Written report from representative to QCEA

*We will hear a report from our representative to the Quaker Council for European Affairs.*

## Session III

7. CC update

*We will hear an update on a number of issues from Communications Committee including a new data policy, updated bursary policy, safeguarding policy, objective advisors, and EMEYF's relationship to EMES.*

*See minutes SG 2018/05 & SG 2018/06 for detail on objective advisors, bursary policy update, data and safeguarding policies.*

## Session IV

8. Recording minutes / Issues arising

*We will record a number of announcements and workshops held during our gathering, so that EMEYFers not present can read them in the minutes. As led, we will allow time for discernment on issues arising during the Annual meeting*

9. Nominations return

*We will hear the nominations prepared by our nominations committee and discern the appointment of those names, which have been brought forward.*

## Annual Meeting Nominations 2018

During business at Annual Meeting, amongst other things, we will be looking for new people to fill some roles, which are needed to keep EMEYF going as an organisation.

We generally aim to appoint Young Friends (aged 18 to 35ish) from Europe or the Middle East to serve EMEYF for a period of 1 to 3 years (depending on the role and the individual). The following roles will be up for nomination at the SG 2018:

- 1) **One or two Friends to serve on the Planning committee for Spring Gathering Russia 2019**

Spring Gathering 2019 is being planned in Russia and the PC is looking for some reinforcements. A face-to-face meeting has already taken place

**Please feel free to contact us, if you want to learn more about the roles available** (see the role description below) We can give you more information as well as talk about your inspiration and doubts.

### **Can you think of any names for vacant (or soon-to-be vacant) roles?**

**At EMEYF, we encourage people to volunteer themselves.** So don't be shy if you want to learn more or bring your name forward to our nominations committee! Also, **if you know of a YF who might be the right person for the job, please bring their name to us!** Of course, we will deal with information in confidence, details will only be shared with the nominations committee and our elders. Your help will support our nominations committee during the week and will help us in connecting to those who are not present at the gathering in person.

**If you want to bring any names forward to our noms comm, be it your own or a F/friend's – please email our elders** ([lisa@jlohmeier.de](mailto:lisa@jlohmeier.de), [rose.happybunny@gmail.com](mailto:rose.happybunny@gmail.com)), who will collect them and hand them over to our nominations committee. Please include as many contact details for the person as possible – noms comm will only have limited time at SG to contact possible roleholders, so this will be very helpful. Email, mobile phone... (facebook, twitter, etc.)

Below you will find more information about EMEYF's structure, our nominations procedure and role descriptions for the above roles that we have to fill.

## **EMEYF's organisational structure**

In line with our Quaker principles, EMEYF has a horizontal structure: ultimately, the decision lies with the community as a whole, with those present at our meetings for worship for business. EMEYF usually has business twice a year, at Annual Meeting (AM) and at Spring Gathering (SG). For practical purposes we do also have a body to take decisions that need to be taken in between these events. This is the Communications Committee (CC). Members of CC are appointed by AM or SG (sorry, better get used to the acronyms). The CC is also responsible for practical organizational tasks such as preparing the business, maintaining external relationships, doing the financial accounting etc. CC is currently made up of two Clerks, a Treasurer, a Fundraising Treasurer, a Gatherings Coordinator and two Elders.

Communications Committee meet throughout the year in person and electronically to make sure that the organisational side of EMEYF is looked after. All decisions that Communications Committee make are accountable to the Annual Meeting/Meeting for Worship for Business at Spring Gathering.

Next to CC, EMEYF has its trustees, who are legally and financially responsible for the organisation, as a registered charity in England and Wales. We also have a few other roles. For the organization of our Spring Gathering there is the Spring Gathering planning committee, which usually consists of 3 to 5 people. We have several representatives to other Quaker organizations. From time to time, there are non-permanent roles.

## EMEYF's Quaker Nominations Process

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

(I Cor 12:4-7)

*It is a responsibility of a Christian community to enable its members to discover what their gifts are and to develop and exercise them to the glory of God. (Quaker Faith and Practice, 3.22)*

At EMEYF, we try to find the right people for the jobs – and the right jobs for the people! - by using the **Quaker Nominations Process and a Nominations Committee**. We believe that if our decisions about whom will serve us happen in a worshipful way, and if we follow this process and listen, we can be guided in the process. It is not "politics" or personal relationships which determine whom will serve EMEYF. Also, this process allows us to consider Friends, their enthusiasm, their abilities, their limitations, their gifts and their situation in a safe, trustful and held way.

Because we are a dispersed community, we have established the following process:

- at EMEYF events, the meeting (that means: those present at meeting for worship for business) appoint a **"Nominations Committee"** during its first business session; that means 3–5 Friends serving on the Nominations Committee for the duration of the event. We try to appoint a Nominations Committee that is diverse in age, nationality and level of experience. The Nominations committee acts on behalf of the meeting and is supported by it.
- The Nominations Committee meets (separately) in a worshipful manner. It considers names of Friends for the roles available/needed. Suggestions for their consideration put forward by other members of the meeting are helpful to them. We encourage EMEYFers to bring forward names of Young Friends they know (especially of those not involved in EMEYF yet), as well as to volunteer themselves. Nominations Committee contacts these Friends to get more information about them and asks them if they are "willing and able".
- During the last session for meeting for worship for business, the nominations are returned. That means, Nominations Committee reports to the meeting and puts forward the names they have discerned to the whole meeting. The meeting then discerns whether they agree or not, they are given the opportunity to express any doubts they might have. Sometimes it may turn out to be impossible to find someone to serve. Nominations committees should not hesitate to bring their problem back to the meeting to ask for both guidance and practical help. If nominated Friends are present in the room, they are asked to leave (someone will join them, and both will have some fresh tea or hot chocolate!) while the meeting is considering their names. In the end, the meeting appoints Friends to serve for EMEYF. We usually also minute the time period they are asked to serve for.

*Drafted by Communications Committee 2013/14*

## Role descriptions for open positions

### **A note on role descriptions:**

You can learn a little more about the roles from the following **role descriptions**. However, **role descriptions can only provide a general framework for the role, and we ask individuals to shape their role to become part of their spiritual journey**. Through this, each new role holder will enhance the life of our community in different ways, by bringing a part of themselves. We ask each roleholder to consider what their role requires of them - what can they offer, what talents and skills and interests will enhance the role?

### **EMEYF Spring Gathering Planning Committee member**

The annual Spring Gathering is the highlight of the spiritual life and the community of EMEYF each year. It is a week long event, happening somewhere in Europe around Easter time, nurturing Young Friends from the section both as individuals and as a community.

You can find a list of former locations and themes at the EMEYF website.

The location of EMEYF Spring Gathering is usually chosen by Annual Meeting or Spring Gathering, 1.5 or 1 year in advance. EMEYF then appoints around 4 members to serve on the planning committee for this event. The Planning Committee should consist both of experienced and new EMEYFers, and allows individuals to offer their skills and ideas to the community, as well as to acquire new ones. It is a great job for people who are new to EMEYF, but wish to get involved. EMEYF tries to appoint Young Friends from different countries to work together.

The job of the planning committee involves finding a venue, a date and a theme, invite speakers or workshop facilitators, organising sessions and other activities, fundraising and budgeting and advertising the gathering. They are encouraged to explore the possibilities of a Spring Gathering and fill it with their ideas, supported by EMEYFs Gatherings Coordinator as well as by other roleholders like elders or treasurer, as needed.

Former roleholders tell: *“Being a part of a SG Planning Committee is a kickstart into a community: I found out what EMEYF means to me by organising a Spring Gathering. I especially enjoyed being able to shape the gathering around our ideas, being adventurous, but always supported. Sometimes it was challenging, especially in the two months before the event, when things can get stressful – but the event itself was extremely rewarding. The work is organisational, but working on the theme and our idea of community is also spiritual and involves a lot of – sometimes hysterical – laughter.”*

*last updated 4/2014, Esther Köhring*

## Relevant minutes for Annual Meeting Business 2018

### Agenda point 5

#### **AM/2017/12 SG2018 – Successor Scheme for Trees for Africa:**

Until now, in an attempt to offset our carbon footprint from travelling to gatherings, EMEYF members and EMEYF's main fund have donated to a fund called Trees for Africa. The Dutch Quaker Aid Quaker Hulpfonds did the admin for this fund. Quaker Hulpfonds received very limited information on the impact of Trees for Africa, and has therefore decided to close the fund. As a result, EMEYF can no longer give to this project. EMEYF is discerning a way forward which would encourage both participating in events and travelling sustainably. By having the chance to donate to an environmental project, we are reminded of our values. Friends are encouraged to look at the whole of their lives, and the impact they are having. Our efforts to offset our carbon footprint also need to be viewed collectively. We are jointly responsible as a group or gathering. Our travel has a large environmental impact and we need to be mindful of this.

We could for instance use a scheme to compensate financially, like an EMEYF fund, to support people so that they can choose train or other sustainable means of travel over flying. The time factor and sometimes lack of options are not reflected in this. By showing Friends travel options, encouraging them to plan their travel further ahead or ways they can split their journey, these aspects can somewhat be factored in. There are other worthwhile projects, which aim at sustainability and reducing our carbon impact, which we could otherwise support. Realistically our monetary contribution will only make a small impact, but keeping the carbon footprint of travel in our consciousness and trying to live sustainably is linked to this and of large importance. At this point in time we feel unable to decide on supporting a new project, but are convinced that a new sustainability effort related to our travel is necessary. There is currently the sum of money that was collected at the SG 2017 in the EMEYF accounts, which was intended for Trees for Africa and will be made available as bursary money for friends in need of monetary support in order to travel more sustainably.

We don't have a simple and elegant answer to this complex issue and living sustainability is a continuous and widespread effort. At the moment we will do our best to help friends to travel as sustainably as they can to our gatherings and will continue to pursue the topic while thinking about the various ways in which we can make our gatherings as sustainable as possible.

#### **CC 2018/20 - Sustainable travel bursaries**

2018 is a test year for seeing how to go forward with our communal commitment to sustainability, following discussion at AM 2017 (AM2017/12). The SG 2017 financial sustainability commitment (approx €150) was used to support EMEYFers to travel to SG 2018 more sustainably, but the requests we received for this purpose in fact exceeded the SG 2017 contribution. We recognise the lack of clarity around the use of this money, and wish to make it fully transparent. To that end, we ask the treasurer and trustees to propose a clearly defined funding pot for sustainable travel as part of the 2019 budget (bearing in mind that SG 2019 will take place in Russia, and therefore there may be even more demand for bursary support for sustainable travel). We also ask SG PC to facilitate and encourage Friends to travel to Russia sustainably as part of their planning.

### Agenda point 7

#### **SG 2018/05 Roleholders' expenses**

We have heard CC's proposal for dealing with bursaries for roleholders to attend gatherings for which their expenses are not paid according to role descriptions (CC 2018/14). We note that this minute only addresses Communications Committee, but that it should also apply for Planning

Committee members, trustees and EMEYF representatives to other organisations. The policy should also include clear encouragement to roleholders (especially those on multi-year terms) to apply for bursaries should they need them.

We note that the EMEYF bursary policy is an important document not just for those discerning bursary support, including any objective advisors, but also the whole community. As an extra reminder of this, we attach the existing bursary policy to these minutes.

We accept the proposal with these amendments and ask CC to implement this. We thank all current and former members of CC for their work on this.

### **SG 2018/06 Trustees report**

[...] We also heard about EMEYF's financial commitment to sustainability in 2017, both from participants and from EMEYF's funds, over 50% of which came from individuals.

Our fundraising treasurer explained about the new data regulation that is coming into force across the EU at the end of May this year, and how it could affect EMEYF. In order to be compliant with the new regulation, and to clarify EMEYF's policy on the data it handles, she is drafting a data policy. Input from members of the community to the development of the policy would be very welcome. This process could also provide the opportunity to review the membership of EMEYF's two main mailing lists.

We heard about EMEYF's existing safeguarding policy for under 18s. EMEYF gatherings include children, as families sometimes attend with children, and some participants attend on their own while still being under 18. We looked at the policy, which poses a number of queries for the community. We wish to highlight this document to the whole community, and especially make sure that it is available to gathering planning committees. As an extra reminder, the policy is attached to these minutes. However, more legal issues around safeguarding (e.g. designated safeguarding officers and first aiders) are not covered by the policy. As EMEYF spans many countries, it is necessary to consider the issue of multiple jurisdictions and attitudes, along with different legal requirements for the safeguarding of children. The intention is to include advice around these issues in the documents for planning gatherings. We also recognise that it is not only children who require safeguarding, and therefore it would be important to also address procedures for adults, including for disclosure. Trustees would equally welcome input from the community for this process. We thank the trustees for all their work.