

EMEYF Clerk

The clerk facilitates the meetings for worship for business at EMEYF gatherings and EMEYF Communications Committee meetings and writes the minutes. Usually, EMEYF does business at Annual Meeting in the Autumn October and at Spring Gathering around Easter. Communications Committee aims to have at least one face to face meeting, usually in springtime, in the run up to Spring Gathering. For decisions that need to be taken in between these meetings, CC convenes through Skype.

Depending on the situation, EMEYF may appoint one or two clerks. When there are two clerks, they can divide the work according to need. They may choose to adopt the working titles clerk + assistant clerk, clerk + recording clerk or simply two (co-)clerks. Clerks are usually appointed for three years.

Personal requirements and benefits, support

On the whole, the amount of the work done by the clerk depends upon their personal circumstances and the time they have available. Remember, it's only a voluntary position and the clerk is not expected to take the world on their shoulders! For a lot of tasks, it is the clerk's job to bring the relevant task up at the appropriate time, and make sure someone is doing it, rather than necessarily to do it themselves. Therefore, the clerk needs to be a confident leader at times, but always a good delegator, facilitator/ coordinator and strong team-player.

While some qualities like being a good communicator and organiser are required for serving as EMEYF clerk in between our gatherings, we believe clerking business sessions in person is a task every Friend can fulfil: the clerk is serving, listening, and typing.

As an international and multilingual community, we especially encourage those who are not native speakers of English not to shy away from serving as clerk. The meeting is responsible for supporting the clerk(s), including helping them to simply and accurately express the will of the meeting through the minutes. EMEYF is very keen on exploring the Quaker business method and helping participants to experience discernment. Therefore, clerking EMEYF provides loads of opportunities to learn about the Quaker Way (and the "Young Friend's way").

Being a clerk of EMEYF can be quite an intense job, as it means serving a community that takes "living adventurously" seriously. But if you are open to it, you will find the intersections of your own and EMEYF's journey rewarding. Support is always available, especially from the elders. It is possible to take a workshop on clerking at Woodbrooke or use other resources, and funding is available for this purpose

Typical tasks of the clerks are ...

... before Annual Meeting (AM) and Spring Gathering (SG):

- Draft an agenda for business meeting sessions, based on items that have been raised by Communications Committee and in minutes from previous SGs and AMs.
- Develop "documents in advance" to send to participants and the whole community before gatherings (around two weeks in advance), including general information on EMEYF, the business agenda, previous relevant minutes and information on the positions for which nominations committee will be seeking names. This is to help participants in their preparation for the business sessions.
- Contact those speaking in business sessions before AM and SG to ensure you and the speaker are aware of the nature of the item (e.g. try to estimate how long it

will take, and determine whether a decision has to be reached).

...during meeting for worship for business at Annual Meeting and Spring Gathering

- Clerk the meetings e.g. guide the business and introduce items, draft and test minutes, watch the time. The Clerk is the 'servant of the meeting', but should be prepared to exercise authority if necessary.
- Help to formulate the 'sense of the meeting'. Be aware that to in order to do this, you may wish to refrain from participating in another way.
- When there are two clerks, facilitation and minuting can be split up between the two. It is a good idea to plan this beforehand.
- Finalise the minutes and share them with the community as soon as possible.
- Make sure the minutes and reports are sent out to those whom it may concern and are properly archived on the website and on the QCEA server.
- Write to any business session speakers afterwards to thank them on EMEYF's behalf.

... with Communications Committee (CC)

- Arrange dates (and place when applicable) for meetings with CC.
- Draft agendas for the business meetings (paying special attention to anything passed on from AM or SG).
- Make sure everyone with an item of business is prepared beforehand.
- Clerk the meetings and take the minutes.
- Finalise the minutes and circulate around CC with a list of tasks they agreed to undertake at the meeting, and then to the community as a whole.

... between business meetings

Generally, the clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with anything concerning EMEYF, whether this is from the secretary, members of communications committee or other roleholders. The clerk keeps an overview of the organization and its relations to other relevant organisations (especially EMES and QCEA) and supports/encourages other EMEYF roleholders in their service to the community. The clerk should also feel able to ask for support from others if needed.

Some specific tasks include:

- Being the contact person of our secretary (shared responsibility with the elders).
- If needed, signing papers for EMEYF
- Maintaining and building relationships with other (related) organizations and people, particularly EMES and QCEA, via regular correspondence and contact with EMEYF reps to those organisations.
- Keeping an eye out for the representation of EMEYF at external meetings and gatherings. (EMEYF will at times receive an invitation to send a delegate to certain events.)

A note on the secretariat

- In recent years (since 2017), the secretary has not contributed to the preparation of business agendas and documents in advance, though they still help with dissemination and archiving. This may vary between secretaries, and over time.

Last updated 04/2019 by George Thurley and Kirsten Stuhr