

EMEYF All Age Gathering July 30 – August 6, 2016, Bonn-Venusberg/Germany Meeting for Worship for Business – Minutes

Present:

Annette Lutz, Annie Womack, David Mangels, Devi Cardero, Emmie Touwen, Esther Köhring, Georg Adelman, George Thurley, Hanan Odeh, Jenny McCarthy, Kirsten Ackermann, Liam Brighton, Marius Kneip, Mieke van Opheusden, Miriam Harrold, Myron Guachalla, Naomi Haigh Paul Schock, Paul Sladen, Peter Doubtfire, Renke Meuwese, Rachael Booth, Robert Pim, Rose Oliver, Silja Pfeiffer, Tamara Gorbenko, Wanda Dahme.

EMEYF SG 2016/1 Opening minute

We are gathered for our Meeting for Worship for Business, amidst the age diverse community of Friends that joined us for celebrating EMEYFs 30ish-st birthday here in Bonn, Germany. Surrounded by the presence and the stories of other EMEYF generations, we come together to discern the near future of EMEYF.

EMEYF SG 2016/2 Appointing of Nominations Committee

We appoint Robert Pim, Liam Brighton, Myron Guachalla and Annette Lutz as nominations committee for this gathering, and Rose Oliver to serve as elder on the nominations committee. We ask them to bring forward nominations for a Spring Gathering Planning Committee and for a QCEA representative, and for other roles that may come up during this week.

EMEYF SG 2016/3 Spring Gathering 2017

In discerning where a SG 2017 should happen, we asked ourselves: What would be the characteristics and aims of a good Spring Gathering. In the past, Spring Gatherings have been able to help us make new connections and strengthen local meetings as well as getting supported and welcomed by them.

We feel a need for communitybuilding in Europe at this point in time, and are asking the Planning Committee for the Spring Gathering 2017 to explore the option of a Spring Gathering in Poland.

EMEYF SG 2016/4 EMEYF to QCEA Rep Report

Renke Meuwese reported on the transition process of QCEA over the last year, which now has resulted in decisions by the Council (now General Assembly).

At the moment, QCEA is only staffed with the Representative and an Office manager, which means that there are no PAs in Brussels at the moment. Hiring of new staff is under way and goes along with a restructure of the program areas, both in their content and in the way they are managed.

Throughout the process and all the changes related to it, EMEYF and QCEA consistently reassured each other of their wish to continue to work together and deepen their relationship.

EMEYF SG 2016/5 Role of the EMEYF Secretary

According to a service agreement, QCEA allows a Programm Assistant (PA) to work as EMEYF secretary as part of their paid role for QCEA. But the current secretary, George Thurley's contract with QCEA ended in May 2016. As the transition process of QCEA is ongoing, there will not be a PA who can take over until at the earliest January or February of 2017. With the AAG and the LAP, there is a big need to have this role filled over this summer. George has offerered to, as a volunteer, continue to serve as secretary until a QCEA PA can take over the role.

Following CC minute 2016/17, we gladly accept George's offer to serve as voluntary secretary until either QCEA is staffed with PAs again or this arrangement is no longer possible for those involved.

EMEYF SG 2016/6 EMEYF Website

Seven months ago, EMEYF switched to a new website. There is a need of more people to work on the new site, both related to technics (admin) and to content (editors).

We therefore ask the Nominations Committee to consider these roles as far as possible, and will return to this topic in the next session.

EMEYF SG 2016/7 World Committee of Young Friends

At the FWCC World Plenary Meeting in Peru earlier this year, the World Committee of Young Friends formed. This had not been anticipated and planned ahead. As Renke Meuwese, one of the co-clerks of EMEYF, was at this meeting, he has been appointed in PERU to represent EMEYF Friends. Young Friends of other sections each appointed several members to the committee.

During the AAG, we held an All Age Consultation on this committee and its aims.

A minute of record was brought back to EMEYF, and is asked to be shared with the committee. It is attached to these minutes.

We see that at the moment, EMEYF is linked to this committee through only one representative. We hope to be able to broaden this engagement now, and encourage EMEYFers to take up on the ideas voiced here.

Ideas of how to support Renke in his task have been brought forward. These include flexible forms like having ad-hoc-consultations with interested Friends via skype, but also more static and long-term solutions like appointing additional committee members at AM. We ask ourselves whether there are strcutres, that can make sure the „space is kept open“, without making things overly complicated. We are struggling, as decisions like this one should be about communication and content, not about structures. We need to find ways to allow what was lived and felt in Peru to be felt in our community – there are stories to be shared and told.

Our priority lies in finding creative and flexible short term solutions for supporting Renke, and to open up ways for engagement, like consultations. In addition, we need to open the discussion within the section, which is wider than EMEYF, inlcuding other YF groups and consists of individuals – keeping spaces open and open new spaces. We will return to this at AM 2016, and reflect on the solutions and ways that were tested in the meantime.

EMEYF SG 2016/8 EMEYF Living Archives Project (LAP)

We heard the minute of record from the LAP consultation, which is also attached to this minute. We are joyful about the way the archive has been embraced by the wider community. We feel that the project has been met with a great deal of understanding

and that we were able to share our experiences of it with the wider community. The experience with the LAP at this Gathering gives us confidence that there is plenty of talent and enthusiasm to continue the work. It starts to feel like a living archive already. CC will meanwhile have to consider how to synchronize this work more effectively.

EMEYF SG 2016/9 Sustainability Minute

We heard from George Thurley, who participated in the Sustainability consultation at the World Plenary Meeting in Peru. He told us about the Sustainability Minute (attached in the documents in advance), building on the Kabarak Call, which was adopted by the plenary meeting. It asks Yearly Meetings around the world to initiate two concrete action points on sustainability and to pass feedback on this issue back to the worldwide Quaker community. Young Friends are encouraged to play a key role in this.

EMEYF would like to support Young Friends in the section who share this concern and are working within their meetings on this issue. We invite them to contact CC to link them up with each other and to resources in the wider Quaker community.

For EMEYF activities, we see that the most direct impact EMEYF has is the way we travel to gatherings, and we agree to take more effort to make this more sustainable:

We want to use practical means of informing Friends how to travel to gatherings without air travel. One way may be to travel together, another to inform each other on cheap train tickets. We could also provide (partial) bursaries for Friends specifically to cover the additional cost of travelling over land.

EMEYF SG 2016/10 EMEYF to EMES EC Rep Report

The EMEYF representative to EMES Executive Committee, Paul Sladen, reported on the role and activities of EMES. We are glad to hear that changes in the relationship between EMEYF and EMES, and the way EMES welcomes the engagement of Young Friends, continue, and result in new ways Young Friends are active within EMES, stronger and more grounded.


The topics discerned within EMES at the moment include the future of the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. We have heard that EMEYF will be officially asked for input on this in the near future.

Paul experienced that it takes some time to understand the workings of EMES and settle into the role, and therefore suggests to look into nominations of the next EMEYF to EMES rep already before the end of his term at SG 2017.

EMEYF SG 2016/10 Nominations returns

Nominations committee has brought forward names for the roles of QCEA representative, SG 2017 Planning Group, and website related roles. We thank them for their work, care and love.

After discerning these names and appreciating the gifts in our Friends willing to serve, we appoint the following EMEYFers to EMEYF roles:

- We appoint Wanda Dahme to serve as EMEYF to QCEA representative until SG 2019.
- We appoint Jenny Baines, Marius Kneip, Liam Brighton, Miriam Harrold and Maria Garcia to serve as a Planning Committee to organise EMEYF SG 2017, which is going to take place in Poland. We note that both Elzbieta Kazmierczak and x.  from Poland have offered to serve as local supporters to the Planning Committee and welcome their contribution.
- We appoint Liam Brighton as Website Admin until SG 2019, to serve at the

Website Team along Georg Adelman (Admin), Renke Meuwese and Laurina Pfeiffer (Editors from within CC). We will continue to look for Website Editors at AM 2016.

Attachments:

Minutes of Record:

All Age Consultation on the World Committee of Young Friends;

All Age Consultation about the EMEYF Living Archive Project.

Minute of Record, All Age Consultation on the World Committee of Young Friends

About 20 Friends of All Ages came together to hear about the discernment of Young Friends at the IPM in Peru, January 2016 as well as about the process since then, and to thresh on the questions posed by EMEYF:

- Should there be another World Gathering of Young Friends?
- How can we create networks between YF in different sections, especially those in isolated communities?
- How can we share EMEYF's experience with Young Friends in other sections?

The Friends attending, among them several YF who attended the session, Friends involved with the work of FWCC, and Friends who attended earlier World Gatherings of Young Friends, considered these questions.

Even though the idea of a World Gathering of Young Friends sounded interesting, it was said that if there is no clear calling for it at this point, it should not be attempted. The role of the committee was instead described as „holding the space for YF until this calling comes“.

To overcome the challenges of communication, it was recommended to start from small scale and let things grow in a natural way, following the needs: For example, building links between YF groups within the sections before building intersectional networks. On the way, we should think creatively about using existing structures and asking other organisations and meetings for support, holding them responsible as this work benefits not only YF. Local meetings could support YF who are travelling in the ministry, twinning mechanisms could be strengthened, the section secretaries might be able to help linking and harnessing existing structures.

While the wish for section networks of YF in the other sections exists, it is clear that it is not possible to transplant the EMEYF model into other contexts. How can the differences between the sections be acknowledged, so that they do not block our work as we ignored them too long?

YF should explore how they can be more in contact and holding each other, even without attempting in person visits. There is still a lot to do, starting from letting each other know about gatherings, to sharing minutes and concerns, to feel connected and support each other, learn from each other.

Minute of Record, All Age Consultation about the EMEYF Living Archive Project

Friends from different EMEYF generations and a different level of former involvement with EMEYF met to learn about the background and current state of the EMEYF LAP, to spend some time rummaging through the archives themselves, and to thresh the following questions:

1. How can the Archive be brought to live? (Practical suggestions and ideas about next steps. Subprojects/research questions and structures)
2. How can the EMEYF LAP benefit the wider Quaker community?

There is a need for priorities, as our resources are limited. It became very clear that the strength of the project does not lie in history, but in stories, that it is not for the sake of historians, but for the sake of communitybuilding.

How can we facilitate, encourage and structure storytelling and conversation, sparked by the engagement with the archives?

Three points have been identified as most interesting, and the LAP should try to keep focused on them:

- stories and biographies (rather than „the history of“) and how they speak to us
- returning queries and topics over the generations
- moments when EMEYF history reflects wider history

While engaging with the archives, we should not forget to think about how we add our present experience. Ideally, the project provides us with structures that make the old material accessible and allow on-the-go-archiving of the present and future.

While achieving such a structure within the 3 years has been described as an ambitious, but possible goal, we have been reminded that the project should not be about the preparation of future engagement with the archives, but about engaging with them now. The archives come alive when we engage with it in the stories it contains. It is important to share these stories and conversations on the way, not only with EMEYF; but with the wider Quaker Community, as this is how the project can gain momentum. The LAP could also be a way to strengthen the identity of Young Quaker (groups) worldwide, if we do not only share constitutions and minutes, but stories of discernment, commitment and engagement.

Practical questions considered included privacy issues, the question of decentralizing work (esp. Translating and transcribing) and useful links like other archives (at Woodbrooke, Friends House, The Friend).

In detail, the need for a photo-hub and the requirements for a CMS to work with have been discussed. For both areas of jobs, Friends volunteered themselves. This needs to be coordinated with other parts of the project.