

EMEYF Summer Gathering 2022 Minutes

Wednesday 8th June - Wednesday June 15th 2022

Present: Daniel Perett, Pete Doubtfire, Dani Schock, Yury Kazaryan, Marcie Winstanley, Lena Hofmaier, David Mangels, Paul Schock, Dani Schock, Noah Schock, Ronja Schock, Frieda Schock, Leyna Kreutner, Julia Dorner, Tamara Gorbenco, Lisa Gorbenco, Julia Oepen, Kirsten Stuhr, Emmie Touwen, Liam Brighton, Susie Harty, Lisette Nijboer, Melanie Hurropp, Anna Hielscher, Paula Christopherson, Lynda Berry, Saskia Zijerveld.

SG 2022:01 Opening Minute

We gather as a dispersed community and welcome everyone attending our Summer Gathering 2022, with 8 Friends joining in-person in Bad Pyrmont, Germany, as well as 4 Friends online on Jitsi. Our gathering's theme this year is "longing for community in time of trouble" and we hope that we will grow together as a community this week as we share in-person and hybrid time together. We have received loving greetings from Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) World Office, and from the Europe and the Middle East Section (EMES), Rosie Underwood, Lee Taylor, Andrew Lane, Dan Flynn, Kate McNally, Sean Carroll, Silja Hampel, Saskia Kuhlmann, Annie & Hannah Brock Womack and Rose Oliver.

SG 2022:02 Nominations of in gathering role holders

We have heard the roles to be filled by Friends for the duration of the gathering. Following discernment, we appoint Yuri Kazaryan, Daniel Perett who are present, Saskia Zijerveld, Tamara Gorbenco and Rose Almond to form a Nominations Committee. We appoint Lynda Berry as gathering elder who will be joined by our standing elders Lena Hofmaier (digitally) and Liam Brighton (in-person). For epistle committee we appoint the Friends Paul Schock, Noah Schock, who are present as well as Emmie Touwen (subject to consent).

We thank Paul, Noah and Emmie for forming the epistle committee. We thank Yury, Daniel, Saskia, Rose and Tamara for forming the Nominations Committee. And as our standing elder Liam will be unable to join the gathering in person, we thank Julia Dorner and Dani Schock for joining Lynda as gathering elders.

SG2022:03 Finance Report

Our treasurer Pete Doubtfire used pitchers of water to give a beautiful visual explanation of EMEYFs income and expenditure. He effectively relayed to us the current financial state of EMEYF. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, EMEYF financially currently has some reserves, from generous donations and low expenditure. We are thankful for the sustaining contributions from Friends of EMEYF and Yearly Meetings. We seek to discern meaningful ways to use our funds to strengthen our community and will add a session for this discernment to the agenda our gathering. We thank Pete for his work throughout the year and managing our accounts.

SG2022:04 Considering Spring Gathering 2023

We have heard an introduction to the practice of spring gatherings in EMEYF, as well as the adaptation to summer or special gatherings in the past. Our clerks have reminded us of previous locations and themes of gatherings held in the past. We opened the session for considering possible locations and points of consideration for the gathering in 2023. We have heard suggestions to revisit the past plan of taking SG to Finland, as well as considering other Scandinavian or central European countries, in which there is a new growing community of young Friends or Friends that are less connected with/ isolated from EMEYF currently. Further we recognise, that while the pandemic and the shift to online gatherings has opened up EMEYFs accessibility to some Friends, it has also distanced other Friends from the sense of community. The importance of focusing on our capacity to organize an in-person gathering has been brought to the forefront of considerations. Questions we have sat with and have begun discerning include thoughts around the timing of the gathering, the size of the local Quaker community, Visa challenges as well as considerations around the development of the Covid-pandemic and effects all these might have on reserving venues and the planning of a gathering. We look forward to further informal conversations and exchanges of thoughts on this topic and include further discernment in the 10:00 CET business session on Sunday June 12th as well as the 10:00 CET business session on Tuesday June 14th.

SG2022:05 Representatives Reports

We have heard introductions to QCEA (Quaker Council for European Affairs) and EMES (European and Middle East Section) of FWCC (Friends' World Committee for Consultation). Our representatives (Marcie Winstanley, Paula Christopherson, Susie Harty and Melanie Huopp) provided insights and shared experiences gained by being present in person or digitally at gatherings of these larger Quaker bodies. They shared with us that Friends in these Organizations have also experienced change due to Covid. They have experienced emotional and powerful business sessions that inspire a deeper sense of peace, empowerment and action. Melanie also shared with us, that in the discernment of the new Elder role at EMES, the committee found inspiration from EMEYF. We thank our representatives for these insights into our international sister Quaker organisations.

SG2022:06 Moving forward with SG2023

We have revisited the task at hand to discern a location for our SG 2023 returning to a time in spring (around Easter, as we have heard from the community that this time has been suitable for taking leave and traveling in the past). We have heard considerations and concerns on the topics of finding a suitable location as well as offering a space for Friends to join or rejoin the EMEYF community. We heard a deep need for stability and re-connection to the sense of community following the uncertainty of the Covid pandemic. We have raised repeatedly the sense that the choice of venue, with an existing relationship to or use by local Quakers, will be essential in the uncertain times of the Covid pandemic.

The other strong sense that has arisen is the need for finding Friends passionate about organising SG to form the core of PC. We ask Friends present and from the wider community to bring forward names to Nominations Committee if they themselves feel called to fill this role or if they have others' names to bring forward. We move forward with a guideline for Nominations Committee to find 2-3 Friends willing and able to discern the location for SG and begin preparations. We ask them

to announce the decision by AM and to then call for Friends to join the PC for additional support at that time in order to ensure there is a local Friend on PC moving forward.

SG2022:07 Passing on the EMEYF Quilt

We heard an introduction to the origin and the significance of the EMEYF Quilt. In our discernment we heard of Friends' who might benefit from the comfort of the physical warmth of our community in difficult times. Our discernment has brought forward, that the Quilt will be sent to our Friend Anna Hielscher. We thank Rose Almond for conveying the Quilt to our Friend Anna.

SG2022:08 Jitsi Tuesdays

We have considered a number of questions and suggestions regarding how to move forward with our Jitsi Tuesday sessions, and whether there is still a need for them, as attendance has been decreasing recently with the loosening of Covid restrictions. We considered what needs to change for Friends to feel that Jitsi Tuesday sessions meet their needs and those of the community. We heard that a more formal structure may be beneficial to sustain space the Jitsi Tuesday has offered for the community and we have nominated an ad hoc Committee with the authority to test ways to move forward with this, such as altering the day of the week or the time. We ask our clerks to invite Friends to join the Jitsi session on June 28th to discern adjustments that the Jitsi sessions might benefit from. This topic will be brought to Business at Annual Meeting 2022. We thank Julia Dorner for stepping forward to be involved with the ad hoc Committee, and appoint Paula Christophersen, Lynda Berry and Daniel Perett, subject to their consent at the June 28th session and with support from Elders to communicate changes to CC and the wider community.

SG2022:09 Moving forward with the Podcast Project

We have heard the development of the Podcast Project and that producing content has been trialled in a session at this gathering. We considered ways to move forward with the podcast project, looking to our experiences with the online magazine Willy&Penn for inspiration. For this gathering we wish to collect as much interview material as possible to then use the content gathered to move forward with the editing process between gatherings. We have heard the possibility of recording content remotely, such as via video call, telephone or self-recording to include in the episodes in this series. We thank Leyna Kreutner for taking the editing of the content forward with Hugh O'Farrell-Walsh and reporting back to the community at AM2022. At AM 2022 the community will review the content that has been produced and discern further steps on creating a podcast ready to publish.

SG 2022:10 Nominations Return

Nominations Committee has brought forward names to serve in the roles to fill at this gathering.

Following discernment, we appoint Lisette Nijboer to serve in the role of co-clerk until SG2025.

We appoint Robert Rayner to serve in the role of fundraising treasurer until SG 2025 (subject to consent).

We appoint George Thurley to the role of QCEA Representative until SG2025, to serve alongside Paula Christophersen and Marcie Winstanley (both to be released at AM 2024), previously appointed to these roles.

We ask CC to appoint an additional Trustee from their midst at their first meeting after this gathering to serve as CC Trustee alongside Paul Schock to replace Leyna Kreutner who will be released as a CC Trustee by Charitable Committee. We appoint Leyna Kreutner (Maria Lena Garrettson Kreutner) to continue as a non-CC trustee member until SG 2023.

To the Willy and Penn editorial team, we appoint Julia Oepen until SG2025, to serve alongside Lena Hofmaier (to be released at AM2022) and Ella Otomewo (to be released at AM 2023), previously appointed to these roles.

As Spring Gathering Planning Committee, we appoint Emmie Touwen, Saskia Anna Zijerveld and Vitek Springorum (subject to consent) to serve until SG 2023.

We release from service the following Friends, thanking them for their service: Leyna Kreutner (as co-clerk and as CC Trustee), Rose Almond (as non-CC Trustee), Anna Hielscher (as spring gathering planning committee member).

Prior to this gathering, the following Friends had already been released from service, leaving roles vacant: Thea Torek (as fundraising treasurer, see SG2021:05) and Susie Harty (as QCEA representative, see CC2022:05). We thank Nominations Committee for their work at this gathering. We ask our standing elders to prepare communication to the Friends appointed who were not present at this meeting.

SG 2022:11 Epistle Return

Our epistle committee has brought forward the epistle that they have produced during this gathering. We thank them for their work and for documenting our fun, interesting and spiritual experiences as a community in the form of a photo collage and accompanying text. We ask our clerks to distribute the epistle among relevant Quaker bodies such as EMES.

SG2022:12 Closing Minute

We reflect on our time spent together, for the first time in-person since the Covid pandemic, and we are grateful for the chance to reconnect and feel present once again. We have spent time in nature, on guided walks, a spa garden visit, tasted medicinal spring water and added herbs to our dinners that we picked on a foraging walk.

we shared worship, tea and food with local Friends, and shared games and song with each other in evening epilogues. Our gathering was accompanied by daily reflections in the signal group and exchanges with Friends joining us online. In a session on the structure of EMEYF we upheld the roles each of us have - even without being specific role holders - as vital parts of the spirit of community, especially through taking turns cooking for each other and cleaning our communal spaces.

We thank our Secretary Saskia Basa for her insightful presentation and workshop on pacifism, which gave us much food for thought, contemplation and conversation.

Throughout the week we often met at the crafting tables for creative fundraising, writing cozy glows for each other and also for adding content to the Living Archives in a W&P session prompted by our LAP Coordinator Lisette and Lena Hofmaier digitally, from afar.

We thank our co-clerks for clerking EMEYF's first hybrid gathering. We would also like to thank Anna Hielscher, Paul Schock and Noah Schock, whose hard work in

planning our gathering and making practical arrangements has deepened our sense of connection and made many activities possible. We thank Leonie Glahn for being so accommodating of our needs at Quaker House, and local Friends for their inclusivity and warmth.