

Newtown Monthly Meeting Annual Report - November 2024

Newtown Monthly Meeting had a busy year, with a strong, engaged community of talented and skilled members and attenders actively contributing to the life of our Meeting.

Membership Statistics (2022 vs 2023)

- Total Members: 339 → 343
- Full Members: 331 → 337 (Adults: 303 → 315, Minors: 28 → 22)
- Associate Members: 8 → 6

Additional information about 2023 included within the above numbers:

New members: 6 adults, 2 minors

Transfers in: 2 adults

Transfers out: 2 adults

Deaths: 1 adult

Releases: 3 adults

However, it may be more accurate to say we have 150 active members, 50 attenders and a small number of wonderful children in our Meetinghouse who may attend worship with us and engage in a range of activities in addition to committee work.

We have a joyful and busy Inreach/Outreach committee. They have a greeter at the door to welcome all who come for Sunday worship and organize hosts for the social hour after worship. It arranges for name tags, thanks to the good work of one of our members. It sponsors six Friendly 8 groups which meet in each other's homes for potluck meals to get better acquainted. And it sponsors a picnic at Core Creek Park each summer.

Each month, we have a shared potluck after worship on the days that we have Meeting for Business hosted by committees that take turns to do so. Many hands make light work, and it helps encourage attendance at our business meetings.

Adult Religious Education (ARE) draws upon our own members as well as outside speakers who provide quality programs 3 times a month featuring diverse topics, from service work in Ukraine and Kosovo to crossword puzzle creation, accessible both in person and via Zoom.

Our Children's programs have teachers, babysitters, and leadership centered on keeping lessons and activities flowing. There is a monthly service project that keeps hands big and small engaged and lessons and Friendly crafts on the other days. The children host a Simple Supper and Lasagna Dinner while learning the process of discernment and philanthropy by choosing the charity and serving the dinner.

Communication is essential for people to know about these activities. Internally, we have a visually appealing newsletter, *This Week* that captures it all. Announcements are made after

worship. We have a skilled writer who makes sure we are in local news via The Advance, Herald and the Patch to reach out externally and has led many a visitor to our Meetinghouse.

Our use of technology has grown and become more developed since the Covid days. Generous donor members provided the necessary hardware and tech volunteers handle its operations for hybrid worship and programs. This expertise and material support has been extended to BQM to enable our quarterly meetings to be hybrid whether the host Meeting has the equipment or not.

Worship & Ministry has fostered our spiritual growth with several ARE programs. We have mid-week spiritual explorations discussion groups; outdoor worship and are hosting PYM's Spiritual Formation this year.

Our Peace & Justice Committee has guided us to undertake sponsoring a Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) group of women in India. We were able to pick a group in a village that two of our members were able to visit in person. This year, the children of the Meeting are also engaged in fundraising for the project. They also labored over a statement on the situation in the Middle East for the FCNL which posted Minutes from Meetings on their website.

NMM hosted a Newtown-Yardley Ministerium worship service of Thanksgiving last November of all faiths. It ultimately turned out to be a lovely event but was also fraught with challenges in preparing and planning for it when even the word, "ceasefire" proved quite contentious. For several months, we also hosted a Friday noon time Meeting for Worship related to the situation in Gaza and Israel for anyone who cared to come and speak from the heart.

Building and Grounds is ever busy taking care of projects big and small. Our parking lot has been completed including improved lighting. Presently, we are working on a land use plan for the rest of our grounds to be completed in different stages.

Our finances are strong, we can handle our responsibilities to the Meetinghouse and membership but are able to be generous to various charities and local agencies.

Care and Counsel continues their work by staying in touch with and supporting members near and far. This may entail visits, delivering healing quilts, membership issues and sending personalized notes for various occurrences. C & C also hosts fellowship after Christmas Eve candlelight services and the distribution of Hicks prints of the Peaceable Kingdom to those turning 21 years of age.

After all, we are the Society of Friends. We have many external focuses while we are walking cheerfully along our paths. We also strive to make sure we are inclusive and tenderly care for our members and attenders. In 2024, we are doing well and doing "good" on many levels.

Janet Braker, Clerk