

## MFM Care of the Future of the Meeting, Spring 2015

### CHALLENGES - Consolidated List

*The original list of challenges was generated at the April 19 forum. That list was consolidated into this shorter list by combining items that were very similar, then grouping them into categories. At the May 17 forum, participants chose items they considered to be most important. The numbers in the right column indicate how many people chose each item. The items with stars and yellow highlighting are the ones that received the most "votes."*

*"Generational Issues" is highlighted as a group because there was a strong feeling that these issues are important but not enough consensus on specific items to advance them individually.*

#### **Generational Issues \***

1. Aging membership - perception that we are for senior worshippers 2
2. Keeping elderly members connected
3. Generational divide (age gap between young adults and older adults) 1
4. Need more young adults 2
5. Need more children & youth 2
6. Lack of clearly defined youth program 1
7. Transitions in individual lives & families - aging, illness, deaths

#### **Quaker Process / Religious Views**

1. Range of views from traditional Christian to non-theist 3 \*
2. Differences in desires for Quaker practices / worship 1
3. Strong personalities, dogmatic diversity 3 \*
4. Limited understanding of Quaker principles, practices, texts, resources
5. Limited understanding of decision-making process
6. Living up to Divine guidance for decision-making 2
7. Taking a long time to make decisions

#### **New People / Engagement**

1. Need different understanding of proselytizing 1
2. Changing who we are to attract new members could cause us to lose integrity 1
3. Potentially interested people don't know we're here or when we meet 1
4. Making Meeting relevant to spiritual needs of potential members 1
5. Over-excitement at having new people who are different 1
6. How to invite people in 1
7. How to engage new people 3 \*
8. Care for those who do not see the Meeting as their end post but part of a longer journey
9. Perception of an inner circle of Friends who are "weightier" than other friends 2
10. Need to meld the two worship sessions into one community
11. Becoming a beloved community
12. Lack of online directory
13. People disappear and are not missed
14. Lack of economic / racial / educational diversity 5 \*
15. Lack of connection with other faith communities
16. Lack of involvement in local, neighborhood life
17. Lack of connection with one another between times when we are at meeting

### **Financial**

1. Fewer wealthy members than in the past 1
2. We have spent down savings - limited safety net 3 \*
3. Limited understanding of stewardship, bequests, opportunities financial resources can allow
4. Expenses for travel to Quaker events

### **Work of the Meeting**

1. Over-commitment / busy lives / more work to be done than people to do it 3 \*
2. People unclear about saying yes or no about committed work
3. Director of Ministry transition / retirement - loss of her memory of history of members 3 \*

### **Geographic / Practical Issues**

1. Transportation to meeting & parking, incl. road closures, winter parking restrictions 1
2. Geographic dispersal of members 1
3. Location of meetinghouse in a non-diverse neighborhood 1
4. Use meetinghouse more fully and effectively
5. Utilize website more fully

### **Response to World Conditions**

1. Hopelessness because of world conditions - apathy, fatigue, grief, emotional overload 3 \*
2. Complacency / blindness due to affluence & privilege
3. Desire for united community action vs. individual action 1
4. Living in a world where compromise is seen as weakness