

Hospitality Committee Annual Report 2021

Chapel Hill Friends Meeting

The Hospitality Committee strives to make visitors feel welcomed and to foster community within the meeting. Specifically, and in normal times, the committee serves to:

- greet attenders and welcome visitors to meeting
- manage monthly potluck
- assist CYRE with the mid-December Christmas party
- Help plan memorial services at the Meeting

The past year has not been a normal one. The committee has not been able to perform some actions, has modified others, and assumed a new responsibility, namely:

- serve as first responder for emails to friends@chapelhillfriends.org

Members of the committee: Annette Broadwell, Ben Ray, Betsy Fenhagen, Buzz Borchardt (clerk), Evelyn Fendler-Lee, Gordon Davies, Hart Pillow, Jennifer Leeman, and Quaker Harmon. In June of this year, Hart will cycle off of the committee at the end of 3 years of service. We are particularly grateful to her for having assumed responsibility for sending welcome notes to, and contacting, visitors to meeting. She has fulfilled this responsibility for 2 full years with diligence and great warmth, not only mailing welcome notes (now, welcome emails) but phoning and talking to visitors. At the end of June, Annette will also cycle off the committee after her 3 years of service. I particularly wish to express my gratitude to Annette for her advice and guidance when, being a first-time clerk, I assumed the role with great trepidation in 2018. The extent to which I have managed to be successful is due, in large part, to Annette. Because we will be losing two people next year, and because another member, Nancy Dosset, withdrew some time ago, the committee has asked the Nominations Committee for two more members for next year. The committee welcomes volunteers. It is an ideal committee for making connections not only with other members but with visitors to meeting as well.

Greet attenders and welcome visitors to meeting:

This past year we have not been able to greet visitors to the Meetinghouse or host fellowship in the library. And, although we have had visitors to Zoom meeting, few of them have left their email address for us to send them a welcome note. By contrast, last year (2019-2020), Hart mailed or emailed over 50 welcome notes and spoke with I don't know how many people. This year since we began meeting via Zoom, only 8 or so visitors have left their email address. The committee is exploring ways to encourage visitors to do so. We have asked Ministry and Worship to add such an invitation to the closer announcements and we are exploring the possibility of a virtual guest book on our website.

Manage monthly potluck: In normal times, the committee purchases supplies, sets up and cleans up, and generally oversees potluck. Because of COVID, I believe that our last potluck was in March of 2020. We will resume managing potluck once it begins again.

Assist CYRE with the mid-December Christmas party: Normally, committee members help with set-up and clean-up, and the committee provides paper plates, napkins, beverages, and table decorations for the Christmas potluck. This past December, the Christmas party was cancelled, and Christmas Eve candlelight service was celebrated via Zoom. Both Quaker and Buzz, moonlighting from their Hospitality roles, helped the Zoom Committee, on which they both serve, plan for the Candlelight Service.

Help plan memorial services at the Meeting: A representative from Hospitality participates with Care and Counsel in working with the family to plan any reception following a memorial service that is held on the grounds of the meeting. We thank Jennifer Leeman for volunteering to be our representative from Hospitality. Because of COVID, no memorial services were held at the meeting this past year, and so Hospitality had no role in this regard.

Serve as first responder for emails to friends@chapelhillfriends.org: In August of this past year, Chris Stanley asked the Hospitality Committee to assume the role of responding to emails to friends@chapelhillfriends.org. Those emails go to: Clerk of Meeting and clerks of Care and Counsel, Ministry and Worship, and Hospitality. The intention was to ensure that the response represents the point of view of the meeting at large rather than that of an arbitrary individual (i.e., whoever steps up to assume the responsibility). It was intended that the Hospitality Committee as a whole be involved in responding and serve as a conduit to other members of the meeting outside of Hospitality. It was also intended that more members be aware of emails that come to our meeting than just the individual who happens to respond.

After considerable discernment, the committee adopted the following guidelines for responding to such emails:

If the email to friends@chapelhillfriends.org is:

1. **a question like one we used to get while greeting** (e.g., can children be at meeting), responder forwards to Hart to handle.
2. **a question that responder knows how to respond**, responder replies, cc'ing friends@chapelhillfriends.org and anyone else appropriate.
3. **a question that responder doesn't know how to respond**, responder sends it to members of Hospitality Committee, or anyone else who responder thinks might know, asking for feedback within 24 hours. Then:
 - o If feedback makes it clear how to respond, responder does one of the following:
 1. replies as in #2 above, or
 2. passes responsibility to someone else to respond. If that person doesn't copy the committee on their response, then contact the person to make sure loop was closed.
 - o If responder still doesn't know how to respond, responder sends a generic email saying we received your query and someone will get back to you within 48 hours, cc'ing friends@chapelhillfriends.org. If we're not copied on their response, then email friends@chapelhillfriends.org to make sure loop was closed.

Since August 18, 2020 when the committee began responding to such emails, 72 emails have been received for an average of 2.6 emails per week. Following is a breakdown of how these emails were handled:

Total eMails	eMails per week (since 08/18/20)	Ignored	Handled within Hospitality	Delegated out of Hospitality
76	2.5	68 (89%)	3 (4%)	5 (7%)

Of the 72 emails the largest majority, 90%, could be (and were) ignored. They ranged from unsolicited newsletters from various organizations, ads for services such as janitorial and web creation, and one memorable ad for a drone featuring 30-minute fly time and 360 degree camera. Only 3 emails were handled

within the Hospitality Committee, and 4 were passed along to other committees to handle. Because of the large number of ignorable emails, the task of first responder has not been a particularly burdensome one.

As to whether the goals are being met for having Hospitality respond, it is true that ultimately it is one individual who responds. However, in the case of emails handled within the Hospitality Committee, because members of the committee are copied on the response and sometimes consulted on it, and because the clerks on the distribution list for friends@chapelhillfriends.org are also copied on the response, they all have the chance to weigh in. Similarly, when the response is delegated to another committee, it can be expected that their response represents the point of view of that committee as a whole. So, I think we can say that there is a procedure in place that ensures that emails to Meeting are reviewed by a representative number of individuals and, therefore, represent the viewpoint of the Meeting as a whole. And, many more individuals are aware of emails to our Meeting than before.

Other news: Having less Hospitality business to discuss during COVID than before, the Hospitality committee has occasionally met simply for the purpose of connecting and enjoying each other's company. Instead of fellowship in the library, we have had fellowship among ourselves on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted: Annette Broadwell, Ben Ray, Betsy Fenhagen, Buzz Borchardt (clerk), Evelyn Fendler-Lee, Gordon Davies, Hart Pillow, Jennifer Leeman, Quaker Harmon