**BYM Friends Supporting Friends in Conflict Working Group**

**Under the BYM Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee**

**Annual Report 2023-24**

The mission of the Friends Supporting Friends Working Group is to provide helpful services to Meetings, individuals, and entities within Baltimore Yearly Meeting who are experiencing communication problems, disagreements, and conflicts. The Friends Supporting Friends Working Group continues to meet regularly and to reach out to Meetings in BYM to let them know of our availability.

The Working Group has provided assistance to several Meetings of BYM this year. We have found often that deep listening can be very helpful to Meetings. In addition to the Working Group, there is a Directory of individuals in the Yearly Meeting who have skills in communication, mediation, facilitation, deep listening and other areas which can be helpful for specific situations. When a situation is presented to the Working Group, we ask appropriate people on the Directory to respond.

A number of us in the working group and on the directory participated in a training session on the Circle Process given by Leaf Seligman in February by Zoom. This was a great introduction to the Circle Process which can be very useful to Meetings, we think. We are continuing to expand our knowledge of this and related circle/group processes.

Several of us are in the process of visiting individual Meetings to get the insights of Friends on how our group could be most helpful to them, and what processes they have found to be helpful to them in the past when conflicts/issues arise. We are finding this interaction meaningful.

We have just recently designed a new announcement for the BYM announcement send-outs and sent it for the first time this month. We were pleased for this announcement to be able to partner with Clinton and Kathryn Pettus to include information about their organization, Friends for the Future, Inc. which helps individuals and groups, including Meetings and school committees, find ways to build, repair and strengthen relationships through active listening, interpersonal mindfulness and other strategies.

A session will be offered by our group again at Annual Session and we are happy to talk to anyone who is interested in finding out more or in asking our group for consultation.

Bob Rhudy and Ramona Buck, Co-Clerks