Report to BYM Annual Session 2024

BYM Advancement and Outreach Committee

Members: Levi Goren, Jim Citro, Steve Morse (co-clerk), Maggie Detar-Lavallee (co-clerk)

This report covers the period from July 2023 through June 2024.

*Introduction:* The work of the committee over the past year falls into three major areas: (1) *Jesus’ Friends* ; (2) a focus on the role of vocal ministry to support A&O objectives; and (3) the activities of the new working group on how to be welcoming to persons in the trans and non-binary communities.

1. This August marks the second full year for *Jesus' Friends*. Our goal is to provide opportunities for Friends to express their faith using Christian and Biblical language. A calendar of events is published each month, and includes dates and contact information for such activities as worship sharing, Bible Study, discussion groups, and meetings for worship. We plan to have a "birthday party" at Annual Session to look back over the past year, and forward to the year to come; all are welcome. As of June 2024, there are about 45 people on the *JF* mailing list.

2. We continue to look for effective ways to present to monthly meetings the wealth of material gathered and organized by Victor Thuronyi. Beginning at the October meeting of A&O, a major focus has been on how best to strengthen vocal ministry to support A&O. Efforts in this direction include: attending a workshop at PYM; meeting with leadership from M&PC for co-ordination and new ideas; scheduling and planning a two-hour workshop at Annual Session (led by Jim Citro). A dry-run of the workshop was held on May 12 and was very well attended and well received.

3. Our committee has held the new BYM working group on welcoming trans and nonbinary friends under its care. That working group will be submitting its own report. We plan to continue this fruitful relationship.

*Conclusion.* Our committee has a small but consistent attendance of four people. We would benefit from additional perspectives and experiences. We thank the Nominating Committee for its work to address this ongoing problem. Not mentioned in the above discussion is: work on the budget; attending a five-week FGC workshop; and planning for a face-to-face retreat in the early fall to welcome new members, worship together, and fellowship.

Respectfully submitted: Maggie Detar-Lavallee and Steve Morse, co-clerks

July, 2024