IYM(C) Website Committee 2021 Report to Interim Meeting

The IYM(C) website is designed to be an easy-to-navigate site with access to our minutes, faith and practice, epistles, helpful links, and the “find a meeting” app. Equally important, it is also designed to be an introduction to seekers or those who are curious about who we are. With input from Ministry and Counsel we developed a home page with an introduction to who we are as part of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) and our core beliefs. The website is designed to not require constant monitoring and updating.

**Purpose:** Our purpose is to build websites that can be maintained and used by Friends who are comfortable with technology, but may or may not have programming skills. We build websites that can be maintained easily and in a timely manner using a content management system called WordPress.

**Our Functions:**
1. Manage the Bluehost account for hosting websites and email accounts.
2. Build, update, backup and maintain the function of the website; upload relevant documents, event materials, minutes and information that is of direct concern to our yearly meeting; adjust documents as needed, use keywords and meta-data to help search engines bring visitors to our site.
3. Maintain a private google docs site for webminder@iymc.org to archive backups; maintain records of username and passwords; archive registration forms and spreadsheets; and create a private working site for IYM(C) Clerk to organize yearly meeting reports in preparation for annual session.
4. Host monthly meeting websites as a subdomain of iymc.org, using WordPress, that can then be updated by a member of the local meeting. We can assist the local web-minder to learn and use the WordPress technology.

**Content:** The committee continues to work hard to make the site easy to navigate. Website content is almost entirely from Yearly Meeting business – reports; epistles; faith and practice; and minutes. Some documents are offered in multiple formats – for instance, a downloadable bookmarked PDF of the Minute Book. We also post information relating to Midyear Meeting and Annual Sessions, and other information as needed.

It has been suggested that we post documents or policies under consideration. It is our understanding from past meeting for worship business meeting sessions that only reports/minutes/epistles/etc. that have been approved by the Yearly Meeting are published.

**Projects:**
- The committee is having ongoing discussions with Yearly Meeting clerks as to how best to share announcements and other time-sensitive information of interest to members, with possibilities including a dedicated “announcements” email, a listserv, and/or a page on the website.
• We are expanding the links page to include organizations IYM(C) actively supports. We have Yearly Meeting representatives for some of these organizations and will seek their input regarding the link listing.

• We are assisting meetings in setting up their own website as a subdomain of the IYM(C) website. We assist with set up and provide hosting, but each meeting is responsible for the layout and content of their website. An existing site can be migrated to a subdomain. We encourage any meeting that is interested to talk to us further.

• We can assist committees in setting up a webpage to share their work in more detail. That said, at this time we do not recommend having a password protected section on the page to conduct committee work or to seek feedback on proposals. We feel there are better options for collaborative work separate from the website. As always, we are open to suggestions and feedback.

**Going Forward:** When the pandemic hit in early 2020 and it became clear that we could not hold interim meeting in person, the website committee was called upon to set up a virtual meeting via Zoom. There was quite a learning curve, but it went well. As it became clear that we would not be able to gather in person for our annual sessions we again facilitated a virtual meeting. That too went well.

We are all hopeful that we will again be able to gather together at Bear Creek Meetinghouse and at Scattergood School and Farm. We are also aware that many meetings have discovered some positives of virtual meetings, such as intervisitation between meetings, or far-flung members being able to join in worship. We know that meetings are considering hybrid models to allow members and visitors to join in-person meetings virtually. We also have a concern that the importance of meeting in person, of discerning the best way forward in worship, and growing and sharing our beloved community can be changed through remote interactions. We feel that how to best use technology should be an ongoing conversation among Friends.

**Scope of the Website Committee:** The extraordinary events beginning in 2020 have been challenging to us all. As a committee, we were happy to help facilitate our gatherings. That said, we feel that providing this kind of ongoing technological support is beyond the purvey of the Website Committee.

We propose that a technology committee be formed, which broadly would:

• Facilitate virtual meetings as needed and be a resource for monthly meetings in their virtual meeting needs.

• Assist committees with long distance collaborations using platforms such as Slack or Google Docs, and to be a resource for monthly meetings regarding the same.

• To provide or advise on other technical support as needed.

As always, we welcome suggestions and comments.

Katie Jacoby, clerk