

Meeting Enrichment Services

(formerly Center for Deepening & Strengthening Our Meetings)

*Dedicated to helping Meetings deepen their spiritual grounding
and strengthen their Quaker processes and practices*

A Program of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

1515 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102

(215) 241-7018

March 4, 2013

TO: Monthly Meeting Contact Persons
for the 2013 PYM Census of Attendance

FROM: PYM Meeting Enrichment Services,

Thank you! As the Contact Person for your Monthly Meeting, you have volunteered to perform a vital service for your meeting and for all of the other monthly meetings in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and beyond.

In April, all Monthly Meetings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting will be participating in PYM's census of attendance at Meeting for Worship and First Day School. As in previous census efforts in 2004, 2007 and 2010, this important project is under the care of Meeting Enrichment Services (*formerly the Center for Deepening and Strengthening Our Meetings*).

The Census of Attendance provides a count of the number of persons at Meeting for Worship in all monthly meetings across our Yearly Meeting, as well as the ability to look at trends in attendance over time (2004 - 2013). This is important information that is necessary to understand trends in attendance, activity and vitality of Monthly Meetings. This information is used to research the reasons behind these trends and use what we learn to help Meetings become stronger, more vibrant faith communities.

Enclosed is the Census Worksheet for recording the information for your meeting and a return envelope. This year we are encouraging online entry of Worksheet data using Survey Monkey. You can access the survey using this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PYM-Census>. If you require any assistance with the online survey, please give one of us a call.

We ask that all survey data be submitted
no later than May 4th.

Attached are answers to a few frequently asked questions you may receive about the Census of Attendance. Please feel free to call us with any additional questions or concerns.

In Faith & Friendship,

John Shuford, Census Coordinator
302-222-1996, John@TeamCRS.org

Therese Miller, Program Coordinator
570-523-0878, therese@dancingbearfarm.org

PYM CENSUS OF ATTENDANCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1) *Under whose auspices is this Survey being conducted?*
Meeting Enrichment Services (MES) is a program of PYM under the care of Worship and Care Standing Committee. MES works intensively with monthly meetings, to develop programs *responsive to* the needs of the meetings. Census results are offered in order to stimulate reflection on the subject of meeting vitality and meeting growth/decrease in size.
- 2) *Since we submit membership statistics annually, why is this additional survey being done?*
Membership statistics are helpful for knowing how many Friends are on the rolls of monthly meetings, and further are helpful for indicating the pattern of members coming into and leaving the meeting. However, because those statistics reflect a count of inactive as well as active members, and because those statistics do not capture a count of attenders, they are not necessarily a reflection of the numbers of persons *active in the life of the meeting* at the present time. The results of this Census of Attendance give us a much clearer sense of that for each monthly meeting. This will be the fourth time that Monthly Meetings have participated in this Census of Attendance. Previously, this census has been conducted in 2004, 2007 and 2010.
- 3) *How will this information be helpful?*
PYM has 103 monthly meetings, yet there is a wide range of size and characteristics among the meetings. If we are truly to be supportive of our monthly meetings in their efforts to be vital and sustainable faith communities, it is essential that we develop a more differentiated understanding of their various needs. Previous information collected in this census was recently used to conduct a study of initiatives and activities undertaken by Meetings that have grown (in attendance and/or membership) in recent years. The results of this study, presented in "The Growing Meetings Report," are available for you review on the PYM website.
- 4) *Will I hear back regarding the results?*
A full copy of the Census results will be sent to each meeting which submits this information.

2013 Census of Attendance at Worship

Name of Meeting: _____

Name of Person Completing Worksheet: _____

Phone No. (___) _____ E- Mail Address _____

How many regular meetings for worship, per week, does your meeting hold? _____

At what day/time(s) is worship held? _____

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Please count all people (children & adults) present in Worship or in First Day School, or otherwise occupied on the meetinghouse grounds.

For those meetings which have more than one regular weekly meeting for worship, we have provided a second set of columns for recording that attendance, as well.

	<u>Primary (larger) Meeting for Worship</u>		<u>Second Meeting for Worship (if any)</u>
	No. of Post High School Age Persons in attendance	No. of High School Age and Younger in attendance	No. of Post High School Age Persons in attendance
		No. of High School Age and Younger in attendance	
April 7th	_____	_____	_____
April 14 th	_____	_____	_____
April 21 st	_____	_____	_____
April 28 th	_____	_____	_____

Were there any circumstances which caused the attendance at a given worship to be unusually high or low?
_____ No _____ Yes

If so, please indicate which worship was affected, estimated impact (number of people) and comment.

Are there any other observations important for us to know? (use back if necessary)

Please return ASAP to: **Therese Miller**
by email:
therese@dancingbearfarm.org
by postal mail:
P.O. Box 186
Lewisburg, PA 17837

QUESTIONS? Call 215-241-7018

Report of Attendance at Worship

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
 prepared by the
 Center for Deepening and Strengthening Our Meetings
 October 2010

In April of 2004, 2007 and 2010, a census of attendance was performed in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting [PYM]. All PYM monthly meetings were contacted and asked to count the number of adults and children who attended meeting for worship and first day school on every First Day in April. There were 99 meetings who responded in 2004, 87 in 2007 and 103 in 2010. This represents 100% of the meetings reporting in the current census. This report tabulates and interprets those responses. Attenders, as used in this report, includes both members and non-members of a meeting.

The average adult attendance in the yearly meeting dropped from 2954 in 2004 to 2824 in 2007 [4.4% decrease], but rose to 2847 in 2010 [.8% increase]. That is an average per meeting drop from 28.7 adult attenders in 2004 to 27.6 in 2010. A similar pattern occurred with children. In 2004, there were 648 children in attendance, in 2007 there were 612 and in 2010 there were 624. The average number of children per meeting dropped from 6.29 in 2004 to 5.94 in 2007 and rose to 6.06 in 2010.

Chart #1**Yearly Meeting Attenders, adults and children**

	2004		2007		2010	
	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>
Attenders	2954	648	2824	612	2847	624
Average per Meeting	28.7	6.29	27.4	5.94	27.6	6.06

For purposes of comparison, all 103 Monthly Meetings are included for 2004, 2007 and 2010. Twenty meetings did not report data in one of the three census years. For those meetings, missing data was estimated using numbers reported in the other years. This method provides a picture of trends that is better than if only the actual reported data were used.

From 2004 to 2007, 24 meetings increased in adult attendance, 61 meetings decreased and 18 meetings remained unchanged. This downward trend was lessened from 2007 to 2010. During that period, 46 meetings increased in adult attendance while only 50 meetings decreased and 7 meetings remained unchanged. The overall trend from 2004 to 2010 was an increase in 36 meetings, a decrease in 60 and no change in 7 meetings. Between 2004 and 2007, over 2 % times more meetings decreased in attendance than increased. That improved between 2007 and 2010 to almost an equal number of meetings decreased in attendance, as increased.

Chart #2Change in adult attendance between census years

	# of Meetings		% of		# of Meetings		% of	
	Increase	Meetings	Decrease	Meetings	No Change	Meetings		
2004- 2007	24	23%	61	59%	18	17%		
2007- 2010	46	45%	50	48%	7	7%		
2004- 2010	36	35%	60	58%	7	7%		

Another way to view this data is by size of meeting attendance; categorizing them as small [0-30 attenders], medium [31-60] and large [61-100]. The number of small meetings increased by only 2% [62% to 64%] over the six years [2004 - 2010], medium meetings decreased by 2% [28% to 26%] and large meetings stayed the same at 10%. This shows a fair degree of consistency in the three groups, although there is a notable amount of shifting within the groups. The number of meetings with 10 or fewer attenders increased by 7% while those with 11 -20 attenders decreased by 7%. So it seems our smaller meetings are getting smaller. Another significant shift is in the medium sized group for meetings with 41-50 attenders, which decreased by 5% and the meetings with 31 -40 attenders, which increased by 4%. This also shows a shift downward in census.

Chart #3Number of Meetings by Size of Meeting Attendance Category

	2004			2007		2010	
	# of Attenders	# of Meetings	% of Total Meetings	# of Meetings	% of Total Meetings	# of Meetings	% of Total Meetings
< or= 10	19	18%	31	30%	26	25%	
11-20	28	27%	19	18%	21	20%	
21 -30	18	17%	16	15%	20	19%	
31 -40	8	8%	11	11%	12	12%	
41 -50	13	13%	13	13%	8	8%	
51 -60	7	7%	4	4%	6	6%	
61 -70	7	7%	4	4%	4	4%	
71 -80	1	1%	3	3%	3	3%	
81 -90	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	
<u>91 -100</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2%</u>	
Totals	103	100%	103	100%	103	100%	

The data presented above is of concern, showing that our meetings tend to be shrinking in attendance.

Another way to view this data is by the total number of attenders in each size of meeting and how that changed relative to the total number of attenders. The number of attenders in small meetings [0-30 attenders] stayed the same, at 34% of the total population of attenders. The medium sized meetings [31-60] decreased by 2% to 39% and the large meetings [61-100] increased 3% to 27%. Again, there was significant variation within each group, as can be seen in Chart #4 below. Within small meetings, there was a shift upward from 11 -20 size to 21-30 [see red arrow in chart]. Within medium meetings, there was a shift downward from 41-50 to 31-40 and in large meetings there was a significant shift upward from 61-70 to 71-80 and 91-100.

Chart #4

Number of Attenders by Size of Meeting Attendance Category

2004		2007		2010		2004-2010	
#of Attenders	#of Attenders	% of All Attenders	#of Attenders	% of All Attenders	#of Attenders	% of All Attenders	% Change
<or= 10	133	5%	239	8%	171	6%	+1
11 -20	421	14%	290	10%	306	11%	-3 ↓
21 -30	453	15%	412	15%	493	17%	+2 ↓
31 -40	276	9%	393	14%	406	14%	+5 ↑
41 -50	571	19%	592	21%	363	13%	-6 ↓
51 -60	388	13%	226	8%	342	12%	-1 ↓
61 -70	448	15%	257	9%	269	9%	-6 ↓
1 -80	80	3%	229	8%	223	8%	+5 ↓
-90	87	3%	90	3%	85	3%	0 ↓
91 -100	97	3%	96	3%	189	7%	+4 ↓
Totals	2954	99%	2824	99%	2847	100%	

A comparison of charts 3 and 4 reveals an interesting characteristic of the yearly meeting. Although nearly two-thirds [64%] of our meetings have 30 or less attenders, they make up only one-third [34%] of all those who attend meeting for worship on any given first day. That means two-thirds [66%] of those who attend meeting for worship do so in medium and large meetings.

Looking within each category, there was a shift up in small meetings, from 11 -20 to 21-30. In the medium category, there was a shift down from 41-50 to 31-40, and in the large category there was a general shift up with large meetings growing in attenders.