

## **New England Yearly Meeting Young Adult Friends**

**YAF Minute 05-13.** A group of YAFs who met under a concern for FUM's personnel policy brought forward the following minute, addressed to the wider yearly meeting:

### **Minute of Exercise**

As young Adult Friends, we are united as allies and members of the Quaker gay and lesbian community and support loving couples who choose not to or cannot enter into the institution of marriage. As such, we find FUM's personnel policy to be discriminatory and hypocritical. We are concerned that the conflict brought up by this policy hints at a larger issue that needs to be dealt with as a Yearly Meeting.

There is a hesitancy in our community to speak openly about any kind of sexuality. This lack of dialogue keeps us from clarifying our views on positive sexual relationships and hinders our ability to confront real issues such as homophobia and hetero-sexism that continue to cause great pain within our Monthly and Yearly meetings.

These realizations have only come after open and honest discussion. We as a body need to deal with questions such as:

- What defines a positive and spiritual sexual relationship?
- How do we deal with homophobia and hetero-sexism in our community?

We believe that if these questions were brought to Monthly Meetings, Yearly meeting, and intervisitation with other FUM meetings, it would create a positive relationship that would foster understanding, laying the path for not only changing the words of FUM's personnel policy, but the condemnation behind it.

We hope that working through the difficulty and pain of this confrontation will ultimately strengthen relationships with other meetings within FUM from whom we have benefited in the past and hope to grow and learn with in the future.

Some Friends expressed concern regarding the lack of a clear spiritual call expressed in the message, though some felt the call was present in the minute's overall concern for the love and dignity of human beings. Another said that he felt the minute needs to distinguish between discrimination against same-sex couples in a covenant relationship, and other sexual relationships.

YAFs are committed to labor with each other, the wider yearly meeting, and Friends everywhere on this issue, though we have not yet found unity in this minute. Friends approved sharing this minute with the wider YM as a minute of exercise, to offer a sense of our own concern and struggles.