

Dear Friends,

I am currently serving as Clerk of the Burial Grounds Committee for Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting.

For many years now, our Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting has taken on the role of overseeing the maintenance and upkeep of the Ann Street and Quaker Alley burial grounds. However, we are currently discussing the need for major capital improvements to preserve these sacred spaces in a manner that honors their historical and spiritual importance. The brick wall surrounding the grounds has suffered severe damage, which contractors are unwilling to repair due to the roots of a 100 to 200-year-old healthy tree that are the cause of the damage. We are faced with two options: either remove all or part of the brick wall and replace it with wrought iron fencing, or remove the tree itself. We have explored various thoughts and ideas, but we require your assistance in making this decision.

To ensure a comprehensive decision-making process that accounts for all stakeholders, we would like to request representatives from Richland Monthly Meeting and Abington Quarterly Meeting to join our Friends Burial Grounds Committee. As the deed holders of the Friends Burial Grounds on Quaker Alley, the perspectives and experiences of volunteers from Richland Friends Meeting would be invaluable. Additionally, including representatives from Abington Quarterly Meeting would allow for a broader range of input and streamline the decision-making process across our community.

This request for participation is unique, but it seems appropriate given your stake in the burial grounds' well-being. We want to ensure that all concerned parties are involved in shaping the future care of these hallowed grounds.

We are kindly requesting that you share this opportunity with members of Abington Quarterly Meeting and Richland Monthly Meeting and encourage interested individuals to volunteer for our committee by contacting me at adamreale@live.com by June 1st. Our Burial Grounds Committee meets once a month at 7 PM via Zoom, and our meetings typically last one hour.

Your presence, cooperation, and service would be warmly welcomed and deeply appreciated as we navigate this important endeavor to ensure the respectful upkeep of our burial grounds for generations to come. We look forward to your engagement in this collaborative process.

In Faith and Friendship,

Michael Adam Reale

Clerk, Burial Grounds Committee Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting