

Piedmont Friends Fellowship
Meeting of the Representative Body
May 10, 2009
Camp New Hope

Wendy Michener	Fayetteville
Marian Beane	Charlotte
Terry Mehlman	Chapel Hill
Tom Kagan	Raleigh
Jan Blodgett	Davidson
Kristen Olsen	Davidson
Meg Zulick	Salem Worship Group
John Hunter	Durham
Karen McKinnon	Durham

Clerk Wendy Michener opened the meeting after a period of silent worship.

An Excel sheet was passed around with information on PFF member meetings (names and email contacts, etc.) We need names for Ashe County preparative meeting. Wendy asked that we update the excel sheet as much of the information about our member meetings is out of date.

Support for Attending FGC Gathering:

Some friends who want to go to FGC need support. Question is to ask if the clerk and treasurer to accept a request for a meeting representative. It was agreed that requests should come through the PFF meeting rep to Tom and Wendy and they would act to appropriate funds. \$720 has been designated. We have a 500 dollar a cap for additional monies beyond the regular scholarship. “If you are still wanting to go to FGC know that additional money may be available, come talk to us.”

Winston-Salem Meeting request for membership:

In response to the verbal request for PFF membership, we decide to ask for a formal letter from the clerk of Winston Salem Friends Meeting to present to the PFF representatives' quarterly meeting in August for consideration of affiliation.

North Carolina Council of Churches:

Some present felt that this request had not yet been seasoned. We will ask Hank Elkins to obtain the information about NC Council of Churches – information about affiliation – the vision statement, mission statement. So PFF requests from Chapel Hill Meeting additional details for our consideration including their thoughts around it. We would like the request resubmitted with the following details: what does memberships entail in time, money, energy, and responsibility and mission and does this fit with the mission of PFF? We are willing to consider this request pending the details.

This year's gathering of PFF:

Workshops were excellent. Camp New Hope OK facility. Ability to stay in hotels, trek in with friends, close by. Date was not easy. Convenience. Options. Mother's Day bad choice. Weekend went well but participation is still down. Need more broadly based commitment. We need to feel stronger – need longevity. The issue is whether we can say that we will be here for a longer time.

Yearly Meeting Discussion:

The above review of the weekend led into consideration of the question of a yearly meeting. There was a long discussion as to the nature of yearly meetings and to whether a model could apply to PFF's members' needs. Some Quaker history was reviewed with respect to yearly meetings. If there indeed was a need, how would we go about developing a process to evaluate the need and to produce a realistic solution?

There were many questions:

How to engage Meetings (and within Meetings) in this discussion?

What does it mean to be a Friends Meeting? - a Yearly Meeting?

What is the (Quaker) environment in which we are living?

What else would be helpful in thinking about this?

What about the diversity of meetings within PFF and a yearly meeting?

Should we be reading Faith and Practice documents?

Should we reach out for expertise if we decide to pursue this question?

Who could we bring in to help with this? Some newer yearly meetings? (SAYMA)

Could such experts help us think about the next steps in the process?

What is the process that will move us carefully forward?

Is there a useful query for the body to deliver to the monthly meetings from this?

Should we have a conversation about PFF become a Yearly Meeting?

What would stand in the way of PFF becoming a yearly meeting?

What would be the benefits?

Above all we need to be good stewards on behalf of our member meetings with this question and move slowly and deliberately utilizing good Quaker process.

It was proposed to craft an introductory message to PFF member meetings: "At the annual meeting of Piedmont Friends Fellowship, the Rep Body thought that it would be useful to solicit help from our meetings..."

Possible Questions to the Meetings:

Should PFF begin a discussion about becoming a Yearly Meeting?

What do you want from a yearly meeting? How much and what? Should PFF consider becoming a yearly meeting? What would it mean to (your) Monthly Meeting? What would (your) Monthly Meeting gain?

An Ad-Hoc committee was appointed to move forward with drafting the initial queries to our member meetings and worship groups. Named were David Bailey (Friendship), Jan Blodgett (Davidson), Karen McKinnon (Durham), Marian Beane (Charlotte).

Fall Retreat:

There was considerable interest expressed in holding a fall PFF retreat, regarding the Quaker Quest program. Wendy will survey meetings to get a sense of what date works.

Karen McKinnon, Recording Clerk