

**Piedmont Friends Fellowship  
Yearly Meeting Formation Committee  
Minutes  
20 July, 2014 at New Garden Meeting**

In attendance:

Marian Beane*	Charlotte Friends
Julie Stafford**	Charlotte Friends
John Hunter	Durham Friends
Christina Connell	Salem Creek Friends
Gary Hornsby	Salem Creek Friends
Dorothy Mason	New Garden Friends
Debbie Parvin	New Garden Friends

\*Clerk

\*\* acting Recording Clerk

The meeting began with a period of silent worship. We then shared news of some committee members not able to meet with us today, and checked in briefly.

**Committee minutes** The minutes of 18 May 2014 were approved as earlier distributed by email.

**Quaker Practice section of the Core Values document revision consideration**

After review and discussion, the committee approved the following addition (in bold) to the last sentence of the Quaker Practice explanatory paragraph: "Our decision-making practice is characterized by discernment through listening, waiting for way to open, openness to multiple solutions, and fearless attention to truth as revealed in the present **in order to arrive at a sense of the meeting.**"

It was noted that this is not the time to make substantive changes to the Core Values document, although acknowledging that additional working detail will be needed in the future. Also noted was our sense that it is good order that the Quaker Practice section applies to both general practice and business practice.

**Communication with monthly meetings and worship groups**

Without reading the actual messages to us, clerk characterized the communications from monthly meetings and worship groups in response to the invitation to affiliate with Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting as follows:

1. Salem Creek Monthly Meeting endorsed affiliating thoughtfully and joyfully. Salem Creek also sent names of their representatives: Christina Connell, Dee Edelman, and Gary Hornsby
2. Charlotte Friends sent an approved minute with intention to affiliate

3. Fancy Gap Worship Group approved affiliation with hope and excitement (it is noted that Fancy Gap is discerning the way forward in requesting monthly meeting status). Upstate Worship Group, under the care of Charlotte Friends, approved intention to affiliate
4. Raleigh Friends approved intention to affiliate with excitement and joy, and are discerning selection of representatives
5. Davidson Friends labored with the consideration of PFYM affiliation and minuted their intention to continue their affiliation with Piedmont Friends Fellowship while remaining open to see where they are led regarding the new yearly meeting.
6. Wilkes County Meeting has indicated that their Piedmont Friends Fellowship affiliation is sufficient for them for now.

Reports and communications from other meetings:

7. New Garden Friends (reported by Dot Mason) have had regular reports on the process of the Formation Committee and held a forum to discuss the invitation to affiliate with the new yearly meeting. Further discernment is in process in their Ministry and Counsel Committee, considering the possibility of joining PFYM while maintaining membership in NC Yearly Meeting.
8. Chapel Hill Friends have a working group to labor with discernment around the invitation to affiliate, and may not have a final decision before September. Marian and John have communications with the clerk with some clarification around organizational relationships, and apprised Chapel Hill that if they are not yet clear they may find it helpful to still participate in the first meeting of the PFYM representative body.
9. Formal minutes have not been received from Durham, Fayetteville, Friendship, or Spring meetings. Informally, Fayetteville has indicated they do not feel they are of adequate size to support a dual affiliation.

Marian noted that at the June PFF Representative Body meeting those from North Carolina Conservative meeting spoke about some confusion within their meetings' understanding around the invitation to affiliate with PFYM. Marian and John have communicated with the clerks of those meetings - Durham, Fayetteville, Friendship and Davidson - indicating affiliation with PFF continues regardless of the meetings discernment regarding PFYM affiliation. Also, a question has arisen regarding the anticipated askings from the new yearly meeting. John has responded that the yearly meeting expenses are expected to be minimal, as PFF will continue to cover programming expenses.

It was agreed that it is timely and appropriate for the clerk to communicate with all PFF meetings and worship groups. For groups from whom we have no final response from the invitation, clerk might ask for information on where they are in their discernment. For meetings from whom we have positive response for affiliation, it can be confirmed that we heard from them around their intention and ask whether they yet have representatives named. We discussed the benefit of sharing the monthly meetings communications (decisions) that we have received and agreed to leave that to the discernment of the clerk.

## **Tasks for Formation Committee and/or Yearly Meeting representative body**

### **- Research on descriptions of yearly meeting roles and usual core committees for FGC yearly meetings.**

Christina provided us with a report on role description elements, and Julie distributed a spreadsheet with core committees and other positions, both culled from a survey of FGC yearly meetings. We agreed these would be useful information for PFYM representatives in the future.

### **-Guidance**

We did, however, consider the question of the responsibilities of a meeting representative to the PFYM representative body. The Formation Committee offers these points of guidance, understanding that the PFYM representative body will discern these responsibilities in more detail:

- Ability to serve for a three-year term. It may be decided that terms should be staggered.
- Availability to meeting every two months from September 2014 through March 2015
- Readiness to discern the work of building the framework of the new yearly meeting, as this will likely be the primary early work of this representative body
- Readiness for carrying the responsibility for acting as a communication channel in both directions between the yearly meeting and the monthly meeting, e.g., reporting regularly to the monthly meeting on yearly meeting progress and conveying monthly meeting/worship group concerns at representative body meetings.

The committee discussed other points of guidance as well.

1. It was suggested the new yearly meeting move in the direction of approving minutes in the face of the meeting, with support and training for the recording clerk for this skill.
2. We agreed the first roles to consider would be Presiding Clerk, Recording Clerk and Treasurer.
3. We noted that best practice would be an annual outside audit of funds.
4. We felt that guidance concerning the role of the representative body versus that of the yearly meeting would be helpful, e.g., which body makes which decisions?
5. It might be good sense to consider a different name for representative body such as "interim meeting" to minimize confusion with the PFF Representative Body.

## **Preparation for the first meeting of the PFYM representatives/Formation Committee**

1. Agenda – Marian will send a draft for our response
  - a. Agreed it is appropriate for our committee clerk to clerk this meeting
  - b. Worship
  - c. Sharing, e.g., What led you to be a representative?
  - d. Review of work to date
  - e. Set meeting dates October through March
  - f. Consider what tasks need to occur in this time
  - g. Adopt the Vision and Core Elements statements pending confirmation in Annual Meeting and consider what is our behavior vis `a vis these statements
  
2. Date, place and time
  - a. Saturday 4 October, 10:30 – 3:00 at New Garden Meeting house (Dot will check room)
  - b. Coffee 10:00 – 10:30; bring a bag lunch and something to share
  - c. This schedule incorporates time to share and get acquainted and time for business

Friends expressed deep appreciation for our clerk Marian Beane. She has been thoughtful and efficient throughout the term of our work together.

Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.