

**Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting and PFF Formation Committee Minutes  
04 October 2014 at New Garden Meeting parlor**

PFYM Monthly meeting and worship group representatives and meeting clerks in attendance:

Marian Beane*	Charlotte Friends
Julie Stafford**	Charlotte Friends
Ken Bradstock	Fancy Gap Friends
Tony Lowe	Fancy Gap Friends
Dorothy Mason	New Garden Friends
Debbie Parvin	New Garden Friends
Bill Hamilton	New Garden Friends
Mary Louise Smith	New Garden Friends
Martin King	Raleigh Friends
Carol Morris	Raleigh Friends
John Cardarelli	Salem Creek Friends
Christina Connell	Salem Creek Friends
Gary Hornsby	Salem Creek Friends
Doris Wilson	Upstate Friends Worship Group

\*Clerk           \*\* acting interim Recording Clerk

Others in attendance:

Jeffrey Brown	Chapel Hill Friends
Naveed Moeed	Chapel Hill Friends
Martin Dougherty	Charlotte Friends
John Hunter	Durham Friends
Scott Taylor	Fancy Gap Friends

Clerk Marian Beane welcomed Friends gathered to move into the work we are called to do as representatives forming Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. Friends noted the historic gravity of this meeting as we began a period of silent worship.

**Review of the agenda and documents**

The clerk briefly reviewed the documents sent with the advance agenda and framed our work as moving toward naming the tasks in preparation for the March Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting (PFYM) Annual Session.

**Reading of the Minutes on Affiliation**

Minutes of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Affiliation received from monthly meetings were read from a document prepared by the clerk and attached as part of these minutes. The minute from Upstate Friends Worship Group will be sent to the clerk and added to this document.

Jeffery Brown and Naveed Moeed reported that Chapel Hill has appointed a working group to help with its discernment regarding affiliation. Letters of intention are also pending from Spring Meeting, Friendship Meeting and Durham Friends.

### **Introductions and sharing our visions for the yearly meeting**

The following words and phrases were used, among others, as we introduced ourselves and shared our visions for the yearly meeting:

- A yearly meeting that is organic and dynamic
- A yearly meeting with Quaker values expressed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- A yearly meeting born from a positive desire for unity and inclusiveness among NC Friends
- A house within which all the family sleeps despite our differences
- A powerful political, religious, and social force in North Carolina
- A yearly meeting which embodies a sense of change and evolving

Friends also shared feeling hope, excitement, fear, a sense of adventure, and thankfulness as we embark on this journey together.

### **Brief history and current state of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting and Friends in North Carolina**

John Hunter described the history of Friends in NC as long and rich, dating back to the late 1600's. In unity before 1904, a schism was formed that year as NC Yearly Meeting –Conservative separated from NC Yearly Meeting over disagreement with the growing employment of pastors in Friends meetings. Conservative Friends, consisting of only three meetings for their first 50 years, saw themselves as taking an orthodox position in favor of unprogrammed meetings.

Piedmont Friends Fellowship began with a meeting in December 1968 of Friends from Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, and Friendship Meetings with a desire for a Quaker forum to discuss the Vietnam War. Friends from other meetings joined the following spring, creating a Quaker fellowship that could bridge all NC Friends.

Piedmont Friends Fellowship took up the question of forming a yearly meeting twice before the 2012-14 consideration: once in the 1970's and again in the 1990's. A report from an ad hoc committee regarding yearly meeting formation was made at the PFF Annual meeting in March 2013. John Hunter, clerk of PFF and Marian Beane, clerk of the Ad hoc Committee on Yearly Meeting Formation, sent a joint letter to all PFF meetings and worship groups, inviting them to prepare a minute of intention and name individuals to the Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting representative body, beginning the process which led to our meeting today.

### **Review of vision and core values statements**

Christina Connell described the beginning of the process of the Yearly Meeting Formation Committee in developing the vision and core statements: At our May 2013 meeting at Raleigh Friends Meeting we began with deliberations around the query, "What are we called to be as a 21<sup>st</sup> century yearly meeting?" We filled a white board over and over again with notes, phrases, and graphs, all carefully transcribed and photographed. Christina and Dee Edelman took on the task of a first draft—the first of many. Christina offered the following "quiz" as a structure to review the vision and core values documents.

1. Are you ready for the spiritual adventure? The word *adventure* comes from the Latin both for "arrive" and "about to happen," curiously appropriate.
2. Why does "Spirit" come first in the list of core elements?
3. An essay question: "Quaker Practice (the second element listed) comes before the remaining four elements: Discuss.

4. Identify threads or ideas in the Vision Statement and Core Elements that tie PFYM to Quaker history and tradition.

5. Identify threads in the Vision Statement and Core Elements that relate to 21st century ideas and concerns.

6. The core elements present a deeply spiritual and lofty vision. From their base, how can we generate "engagement with issues of concern" (from Community & Witness)? Your answer must include at least one specific idea and ways it could be implemented.

In conclusion Christina suggested that it is really about what we are led to do in faithfulness to those leadings, asking "What concrete steps will we take?" Friends suggested undertaking a pattern of inter-visitation, travelling ministry, among our meetings and worship groups.

The clerk noted that the Vision and Core Values documents will need to be on the agenda for the PFYM annual meeting in March 2015 for adoption by the yearly meeting.

#### **PFYM/PFF Organizational relationships document**

John Hunter reported that the organizational relationships among PFF, PFYM, and FGC have been heavily discussed for the past 17 months, and have included development of Venn diagrams and a two-page information sheet. (A document detailing milestones of these discussions and the two-page information sheet are attached and made part of these minutes.) Piedmont Friends Fellowship accepted the organizational relationship proposal and a name change to Piedmont Friends Fellowship and Yearly Meeting on March 16, 2014. Friends General Conference staff have been apprised of these proposals. John summarized the major points:

1. PFF will continue to provide the traditional yearly meeting function of annual programs and fellowship.
2. PFF does not change as a result of the formation of the yearly meeting.
3. It is proposed that PFF and PFYM share the FGC representatives until such time as PFYM chooses otherwise.

John emphasized that that guiding principle has been to minimize duplicating efforts between PFF and PFYM in order to allow the yearly meeting to focus on following its vision. He sees PFF and PFYM as under one organizational umbrella with full transparency and on-going communication between the two.

#### **Guidance on responsibilities for PFYM representatives**

The clerk reviewed this guidance document (attached) and there was comment on the possible efficiencies gained if PFYM representative meetings were co-scheduled with PFF representative meetings.

#### **Priority tasks for the near future**

Debbie Parvin introduced consideration of the document titled Proposed Listing of Tasks (attached) by explaining that the Formation Committee process has generally been to discuss a task, then ask two or three Friends to work on a draft for review at our next meeting. With this document, the Formation Committee brings to the yearly meeting a foundation and a starting point. Which of these tasks are immediate, that is, for preparation for the March annual meeting? Representative body will prepare work and take it as a recommendation to the yearly meeting annual session.

Friends suggested developing recommendations for the following as priorities:

- a structural framework for the yearly meeting, softly assembled (i.e., responsive to process and continuing revelation)
- the offices of the yearly meeting to be filled, and recommended persons for those offices
- the role of the yearly meeting representative body in relation to the yearly meeting, e.g., any decision-making authority
- the relationships among the yearly meeting, PFF and FGC
- how we will relate to other NC yearly meetings, and to other Friends' bodies
- regarding recording ministries, whether recording by the yearly meeting or allowing for accommodation by a monthly meeting
- process for monthly meeting membership in the yearly meeting, including consideration of the relationship of worship groups to yearly meeting
- assumptions about membership in the yearly meeting by monthly meeting or by individuals
- consideration of regular reports from monthly meetings to yearly meeting, e.g., statistical reports, spiritual condition reports
- consideration of young adult friends in leadership roles

### **Set future meeting dates and locations**

Clerk suggested and Friends were in general agreement that we would try to meet three times between now and March. Fancy Gap and Upstate representatives pointed out that they would be unable to worship in their home meetings and travel to a meeting at Greensboro or Winston-Salem on a first day, so it was agreed we would schedule meetings on Saturdays, 10 am – 2 pm, with plans for representatives to bring their lunch. Marian will send out a Doodle poll to ascertain the best dates.

### **Appreciation for New Garden Friends**

Friends are grateful to New Garden Friends for their warm hospitality today. We appreciated the morning snacks that helped us get acquainted, and the lunch and home-baked desserts.

Representatives were also grateful for being able to meet in the comfortable parlor, which we note has been the site of other important meetings among North Carolina Friends.

Friends closed our meeting with a period of worship. We then went right outside the parlor to take a group picture, also attached.