

FIRST ANNUAL SESSION
PIEDMONT FRIENDS YEARLY MEETING
New Garden Friends Meeting, Greensboro, North Carolina
during Piedmont Friends Fellowship Annual Spring Retreat
Seventh Day, 14th of Third Month, 2015

The 2015 Annual Session of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting convened Saturday afternoon, March 14, 2015 at 3:15 in the meeting room of New Garden Friends Meeting, Greensboro, NC.

Those present and their Monthly Meeting/Worship Group affiliation: Dorothy Mason (New Garden), Carolyn Stuart (Chapel Hill), Maria Darlington (Chapel Hill), Eric Evans (Central Philadelphia), Shirin Scotten (Croatan), Emilie Condon (Chapel Hill), Dick Spruyt (Chapel Hill), Perry Martin (Chapel Hill), Peter Malone (Chapel Hill), Hedwig Weiler (Charlotte), Lynn Newsom (Fayetteville), Laura Lawson (Charlotte), John Cardarelli (Salem Creek), Virginia M. Driscoll (New Garden), A. Douglas Jennette (Raleigh), Ted H. Emigh (Raleigh), Virginia (Gini) Emigh (Raleigh), Susan Gates Davis (Raleigh), Ann Kessemerier (Chapel Hill), Dottie Heninger (Chapel Hill), Robert Cooper (Fayetteville), Linda Hunter (Durham), Alice Carlton (Chapel Hill), David Curtin (Chapel Hill), Julie Tuggle (Charlotte), Katherine Metzso (Charlotte), Cindy Nelson (Charlotte), Leslie Rountree (Chapel Hill), Marshall D. Eddleman (Fancy Gap), Gary Hornsby (Salem Creek), Deborah L. Bromiley (Raleigh), John A. Shuford (Raleigh), Dee Edelman (Salem Creek), Sam Dempsey (Salem Creek), Meg Zulick (Salem Creek), Lyle Adley-Warrick (Raleigh), Doris Wilson (Upstate Worship Group), Susan J. Ikenberry (New Garden), Carol Cothorn (New Garden), Susan Adley-Warrick (Raleigh), Joe Graedon (Durham), Terry Graedon (Durham), Melrose Buchanan (Salem Creek), Claire Koster (Friendship), David Bills (New Garden), Sean Chen (Chapel Hill), Lori Fernald Khamala (Friendship), Martin W. Doherty, Jr. (Charlotte), Claire Williams (Durham), Mary Kay Glazer (Middlebury VT), Chuck Fager (Spring), Thomas Kagan (R). John Geary (Boone), Judy Geary (Boone), Naveed Moeed (Chapel Hill), Bill Jenkins (Chapel Hill), Wendy Michener (Chapel Hill), Anthony Lowe (Fancy Gap), Scott D. Taylor (Fancy Gap), Crystal Taylor (Fancy Gap), Debbie W. Parvin (Fancy Gap), Kathy Kamphoefner (Raleigh), Jeffrey Brown (Chapel Hill), Michael R. Johnson (Upstate Worship Group), John Hunter (Durham), Helene Hilger (Charlotte), Dorothy Cole (Charlotte), Joyce Mers (New Garden), Robert Mers (New Garden), Lisa Lofland Gould (Salem Creek), Stephen M. Newsom (Fayetteville), Dick Connell (Salem Creek), Christina Connell (Salem Creek), Joan Tillotson (Friendship), Marian Beane (Charlotte), Julie Stafford (Charlotte).

Worship and reading of Monthly Meeting/Worship Group minutes on Yearly Meeting Affiliation

At the appointed hour we settled into a period of worship. We were then greeted by Interim Clerk Marian Beane (Charlotte MM), who called for the reading of monthly meeting and worship group minutes on yearly meeting affiliation. Out of the ensuing silent worship, Friends stood one by one and read their meeting's minute: Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Fancy Gap, New Garden, Raleigh, and Salem Creek monthly meetings, and Upstate Friends Worship Group (affiliating minutes attached).

Welcome, introductions and review of the agenda

Clerk welcomed us to the first annual session of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting with thanks to the affiliating meetings and welcome to all present regardless of affiliation. At the clerk's request to help build community among us, each person present rose and introduced herself or himself with the name of their meeting. Friends from other Yearly Meetings included Eric Evans, representing Friends General Conference, from Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. Clerk welcomed everyone as we come together in a slightly new way, a loving way and one in which we seek to be in service to others and the world.

Clerk told the story of coming to this day. The question of whether to move to become a yearly meeting had been considered among Piedmont Friends Fellowship several times over the last five years. When consideration was taken up again in 2012, it seemed in right order to pursue, and a Yearly Meeting Formation Committee was named. One year ago PFF considered the Vision and Core Elements statements proposed by the Formation Committee to guide the yearly meeting, and the Formation Committee was sent forward to invite PFF meetings to affiliate with the new yearly meeting as led. During the last year, the Formation Committee and the Representatives to the Interim Yearly Meeting Representative Body have met and worked together to develop recommendations brought forward to this Annual Session today. Members of the PFF Formation Committee and Interim Yearly Meeting Representatives were recognized (list attached).

Reports and recommendations forwarded from Interim Yearly Meeting Representative Body

Yearly Meeting Vision Statement and Core Elements

Christina Connell (Salem Creek MM) came to us as a member of the Piedmont Friends Fellowship Yearly Meeting Formation Committee and the Interim Yearly Meeting Representative Body to present the Yearly Meeting Vision Statement and Core Elements document (attached). This document was a result of laboring to envision a yearly meeting of the 21st century, and with questions that would have been familiar to George Fox and early Friends. It is a work in progress. The Interim Representative Body recommends this document for adoption and approval by the Yearly Meeting.

Friends commented on feeling positive about the openness expressed in the Vision statement, and that these documents speak to their spirit and faith. A question about why "spirit" is used in places instead of "faith" was explored.

PFF/PFYM Organization Relationship document

We then considered the Piedmont Friends Fellowship/Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Organization Relationship document (attached). John Hunter (Durham MM) presented the highlights of this document. He emphasized that in forming a yearly meeting, we seek to maintain the richness of our fellowship in PFF. As clerk of Piedmont Friends Fellowship, John Hunter has been an active member of the PFF Yearly Meeting Formation Committee. Interim Representative Body Meeting recommends the approval of this document as a guide to the relationship between PFF and PFYM.

A concern about privacy was raised around the following wording in this document:

FGC asks that its member yearly meetings, fellowships and monthly meetings make a good faith effort to provide financial support to FGC as they are able. FGC also asks to be provided with the individual names and addresses of Friends who are members and attenders of member meetings so that FGC can directly inform individual Friends and promote its various services and opportunities. FGC generally makes an annual appeal for support by mail to all members and will send emails out (perhaps averaging one per month) to those who choose to receive them. *PFF (including member meetings who are also members of PFYM) will make good faith efforts to provide such information.* [italics ours]

To resolve this concern, the final sentence was changed to read, "PFF meetings will make good faith efforts to provide such information after satisfying themselves as to any security, privacy, or other concerns."

Yearly Meeting Policy & Procedures Handbook

Gary Hornsby (Salem Creek MM) briefly reviewed the proposed PFYM Policy and Procedures Handbook (attached). He described how these policies and procedures were developed by a working group of the Interim Representative Body, and refined and recommended by the Interim Representative Body as a basic structure for the yearly meeting.

A Friend inquired whether the working group for this continued work would be open to others, and response was given that this work is open to those so led.

Clerk asked Friends if, having received and reviewed these three documents, both today and over time, they were clear to approve them. Friends approved.

Report from the ad hoc Nominating Committee

Dorothy Mason (New Garden MM), clerk of the ad hoc Nominating Committee acknowledged the other members of the committee, Carol Morris (Raleigh MM) and Tony Lowe (Fancy Gap MM). Dot presented the slate they are recommending to Annual Session:

Marian Beane (Charlotte MM) for Presiding Clerk for a two-year term, followed by one year as Assisting Clerk

John Cardarelli (Salem Creek MM) for Assisting Clerk for a one-year term

Julie Stafford (Charlotte MM) for Recording Clerk for a one-year term

Dot explained that the deviation from the usual terms for the Assisting Clerk and Recording Clerk positions are recommended to serve continuity from the interim Representative Body and to set up the intended staggered terms.

Friends approved the ad hoc Nominating Committee slate.

Representative Body recommended activity in initial year (referring items to Interim Meeting)

We considered the following list of recommendations from the interim Representative Body for work to be referred to Interim Meeting in the year ahead:

1. Establish a working group on monthly meeting statistical and status reports
2. Begin to establish relationships with and name representatives to Quaker organizations including AFSC, FCNL & FWCC
3. Continue development of the Policy & Procedures Handbook
4. Develop a Nominating Committee to do this work

Concern was raised about having Interim Meeting act for the yearly meeting in the case of item #2. It was felt to be preferable for formal connections with other bodies and representatives to those bodies to be named in annual session. This item was then changed to state that Interim Meeting would explore relationships and bring to annual session next year recommendations for these relationships and names of representatives. It was pointed out that FGC is not included, as that relationship is well-established. Friends asked that Quaker House, Quaker Earthcare Witness, and the North Carolina Council of Churches be added to the list of organizations for this exploration.

With this change to the second item, Friends approved the list of four activities recommended for Interim Meeting work in this initial year.

Hearing concerns, leadings and visions from monthly meetings

- How do you see the yearly meeting nurturing your meeting?
- What can your monthly meeting bring to the yearly meeting?
- What is your leading with regard to yearly meeting participation?

Our time being short, we were unable to consider and respond to these queries during this session. However, the following interest areas scheduled time during the balance of the weekend for this discernment. Members of Interim Meeting named will be responsible for hearing the responses and conveying this information for distribution across the yearly meeting and PFF, and for consideration by Interim Meeting:

- International and Local Peace & Social Concerns (Naveed Moeed and John Cardarelli)
- Visions for the yearly meeting – what do we want to accomplish together? (Tony Lowe)
- How do we want to interact with the larger body of Quakers? (Dot Mason)
- As our meeting closed, an interest group around First Day School concerns was also developing.

Yearly Meeting Epistle

Clerk said there are plans for the Assisting Clerk to gather a committee for the purpose of developing a yearly meeting epistle, after the manner of Friends. The Epistle will likely include the Vision Statement and Core Elements as approved today, and describe a sense of our work at this time. Asked if Friends were easy with these plans for developing and sharing an Epistle, Friends approved.

Interim Meeting set for Saturday May 2nd

Clerk will ask meetings for confirmation of their named representatives to PFYM and the representatives' terms. The first Interim Meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 2, 2015. Asked if Interim meetings are open, clerk replied that the official representatives will of course hold the work, and others may come and join in.

Closing reflections

Friends minuted formal appreciation and gratitude to clerk Marian Beane for the time, prayer, and care she has given in fledging this new yearly meeting, Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting.

Clerk asked that we continue to move forward in a loving manner with each other, and that we consider and encourage our own and others' leadings in offering service and ministry to the yearly meeting. Friends are asked to contact Marian Beane, the presiding clerk, with information about such leadings.

Settle out with worship

We entered a period of closing worship with gratitude for this day we have been given for launching Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. At the end of this worship we joined hands in a large circle around the room in happy celebration.

Friends adjourned outside for a group picture.

--Julie Stafford, recording clerk