

Piedmont Friends Fellowship  
**Yearly Meeting Formation Committee**

16 March, 2013  
Carolina Friends School

In Attendance:

Carol Morris	Raleigh Friends Meeting
Dan Perry	Spring Friends Meeting
Julie Stafford	Charlotte Friend Meeting
John Cardarelli	Salem Creek Friends Meeting
Christina Connell	Salem Creek Friends Meeting
Dee Edelman	Salem Creek Friends Meeting
Doris Wilson	Upstate Friends (c/o Charlotte Friends Meeting)
Sandy Kohn	Charlotte Friends Meeting
Barbara Gardiner	Davidson Friends Meeting
Debbie Parvin	New Garden Friends Meeting
John Hunter	Durham Friends Meeting
Marian Beane*	Charlotte Friends Meeting
Virginia Driscoll	New Garden Friends Meeting
Dorothy Mason	new Garden Friends Meeting
Jennifer Lilly**	Raleigh Friends Meeting

\*Convenor

\*\*Recorder

Agenda

1. Gathering & Worship
2. Introductions
3. Review charge to the committee, and tasks today
4. Framework for considering a yearly meeting - Historic/present
5. Naming important elements in a yearly meeting (from our meetings' perspective)
6. Consider how we do our work (face-to-face, electronic)
7. Naming presiding clerk and recording clerk
8. Next tasks
9. Next meeting
10. Closing worship

The meeting began with a moment of silence.

Introductions

Committee members represent meetings that have expressed interest in becoming members of a yearly meeting, meetings that would prefer to remain associated only, and meetings that are in transition.

Our Charge and Tasks Today

Friends were welcomed to stay open to Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF) being an inclusive body to provide guidance, while reassuring meetings that may feel "traumatized by diversity". Committee members were encouraged to imagine PFF as a 21st Century yearly meeting, so we can begin our yearly meeting in a manner that feels right moving forward, and can be attractive to a larger portion of monthly meetings. This could be seen as an opportunity to practice an Authentic Quakerism.

Tasks for today:

- 1) Review our charge and where our support comes from.
- 2) Name our clerks
- 3) Begin the process of getting acquainted and sharing what is important to our meetings.

This was a continuation from the meeting in September 2012 where people shared their visions of a yearly meeting. The committee has been given a year and a half to complete the framework, however this timeline is flexible. Our charge is currently defined as such: To discern a comprehensive plan for the formation of a PFF-related yearly meeting and recommend its relationship to PFF with a projected reporting date of March, 2014.

### History

Friends were led in a discussion of PFF history. The leading to explore the idea of a yearly meeting has developed strongly over the past four years and has moved into a period of careful discernment. Monthly meetings (both associated with PFF and not) were asked to respond to queries, and the committee was once again encouraged to consider PFF an inclusive group with room for different levels of involvement.

(Please see handout provided by John Hunter, Some Thoughts on Forming a Yearly Meeting)

Key Points:

- There is currently no set authoritative expectation for forming a yearly meeting, and as such, this leaves a lot of room for the committee to brainstorm.
- We are encouraged to consider that the yearly meeting does not need to start big (ie. A Faith & Practice is not a requirement).
  - North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative (NCYMC) also had small beginnings and stayed at 3 meetings for nearly 50 years. Their growth has been helped by PFF, as meetings that desired more structure than PFF was providing moved on to join NCYMC.
- We can allow ourselves to break free of previous yearly meeting experiences and discover what will work for PFF.
- Lake Erie Yearly Meeting (LEYM) is seen as a good example of yearly meeting formation

TO DO: Committee members are encouraged to read more on the history of LEYM

Key takeaway - LEYM provides an example of how to have both a yearly meeting and an association, to remain inclusive. Our committee can define what this means for PFF.

### Brainstorm: Considered Elements of a Yearly Meeting

Key point - Transitioning PFF to a yearly meeting will strengthen and broaden our connections with member and associated meetings. The connection our meetings have as a fellowship can only be enhanced by moving forward.

- 1) Members vs. Attenders (Yearly Meeting vs. Fellowship)
  - a. Provides more structure and a discipline for monthly meetings to attend on a more regular basis
  - b. Provides a more direct connection to Quaker organizations
  - c. Provides framework
    - c.i. Recording minutes (if this is desired)
    - c.ii. Assistance with clerking or membership issues

- c.iii. Joint philosophy
  - d. Provides more support for First Day Schools
- 2) Yearly meetings carry more weight than fellowships
- a. Important to other groups both Quaker and non-Quaker (FCNL, FWCC, etc.)
  - b. Provides younger people a connection with other Quakers in our state (via social media as well?)
  - c. Supports Quaker witness to a larger world
  - d. Holds PFF accountable to larger organizations (and holds them more accountable to us)
- 3) Inclusivity
- a. Provides support to a theologically diverse group (Universalist and Christocentric)
  - b. Provides opportunities for spiritual growth and worship
  - c. Provides support for smaller or newly developing meetings

### Committee Communications

The committee recognizes that not every member is comfortable with constant electronic communication, and therefore it is recommended that the bulk of our communication happen in person. This will also provide an opportunity to get to know each other better face to face. It was suggested that we meet on days where we can also visit our associated meetings and attend meeting for worship.

The next committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for **12:00pm, May 19th at Raleigh Friends Meeting**. Carol Morris and Jennifer Lilly will confirm, and look into lunch options.

Tasks given to the committee to complete before our next meeting:

- 1) Read LEYM Policies and review the information provided by John Hunter
- 2) Send "Brainstorm: Considered Elements of a Yearly Meeting" to our respective meetings and seek feedback
- 3) Begin development of a one to two paragraph mission statement

### Clerk and Recording Clerk

Marian Beane was asked to serve as Clerk and she accepted.

Jennifer Lilly agreed to consider serving as recording clerk. Further discernment on this will take place at the May meeting.

### **Minute**

The committee expressed appreciation to members of the ad hoc committee on yearly meeting concerns and Marian Beane who served as its convener for their faithfulness in carrying this work forward on behalf of the PFF body.

The committee meeting closed with a moment of silence.