

Report on responses to the Queries on PFF becoming a yearly meeting affiliated with FGC

Prepared for PFF Annual meeting, Third Month, 2010

In September 2009 a communication from PFF representative body under the signature of Wendy Michener clerk was sent to all affiliated meetings and worship groups asking each to consider and respond to queries related to the central question of: whether PFF should take up the question of becoming a yearly meeting affiliated with Friends General Conference. The letter setting forth the historical and current day framework for the queries is included with this report.

A report on responses to the queries was considered at the February PFF representatives meeting and Friends were clear to forward the report, with some editing, to the Annual Meeting as information and for response. What follows is the summary of responses and some recommendations on how to go forward regarding the question before us.

1. *Responses were received from* Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Davidson, Durham (one member), Fayetteville, New Garden, Raleigh, Rockingham, Salem. Wilkes Co. indicated ease with however the body decided to proceed. The format and process used by meetings/worship groups included: preparing a meeting minute, holding a forum with a report to meeting but no minute, considerations by a small group of concerned Friends within the Meeting, individual member providing a response that may reflect some sense of the Meeting. In all instances it was felt that the responses were prepared in a thoughtful and prayerful manner.
2. *Meetings and worship groups are at different places in their respective YM affiliation or status* and this seemed to add particular perspectives on how the meeting/worship groups considered and responded to the questions. Meeting/worships groups include those that are: 1. YM affiliated with long-time affiliation/new affiliation/thinking to disaffiliate, a worship group considering monthly meeting status; 2. Unaffiliated including: long-time unaffiliated, newly unaffiliated and, considering affiliation.
3. On the question of 'interest in PFF considering the question of becoming a yearly meeting'
 - Meetings that are *currently affiliated* with a yearly meeting are in general not or less interested in PFF considering the question and it is not thought to be an important question.
 - Meetings that are *currently unaffiliated* with a yearly meeting are in general more interested in the YM question and to a greater or lesser degree find it to be an important question
4. Thoughts on the value of yearly meeting affiliation from both affiliated and unaffiliated meetings/worship groups included:
 - A Faith & Practice with related queries, advices for individuals and the corporate body
 - Answering queries and developing an annual State of the Meeting
 - Participating in corporate discernment in response to social and other issues
 - Having a broader sense of the body of Friends
 - Being nurtured and grounded by the Yearly Meeting
 - Program and service activity for adults, youth and children

- More work perhaps but more opportunities for enrichment and growth
5. On the benefits and value of PFF as a body both historically and today
 - Its affiliation with Friends General conference and the opportunities that this provides for broader connection with Friends and deepening the life of the spirit
 - Opportunity for different communities of Friends to come together outside of their respective YM structures and affiliations.
 - It serves as a conduit for expansion of meetings
 6. Concerns and cautions offered with regard to PFF considering/becoming a yearly meeting:
 - The current state of level of vibrancy PFF, real or perceived from previous years. Does it have enough resources to give this question consideration?
 - The dual affiliation dilemma for Meetings that are currently affiliated with a YM
 - The need to be tender toward MM's that are currently YM affiliated
 - Potential reduction in availability of financial and human resources
 - As a YM could PFF continue to be a place for diverse meetings to come together?
 - Need to address the matter of recording of ministers
 7. Additional benefits and questions of this query/response exercise
 - Appreciation for the opportunity to sit with and response to the queries.
 - A useful exercise regardless of where the Meeting/Worship group is in its experience and/or affiliation.
 - Increased interest in considering the question of monthly/yearly meeting affiliation
 8. Some recommendations of the ad hoc committee on way forward
 1. Continue to be open to ways of reinvigorating PFF as a body
 2. Explore opportunities to bring Friends in NC (PFF, NCYM©, NCYM(F) together for worship and shared experiences including youth and teens
 3. Consider how PFF can support and encourage Meetings & Worship groups that are considering YM/MM affiliation
 4. Continue to be open to individual and corporate leadings on the question of yearly meeting
 5. Ask the PFF representative body to name an ad hoc committee to give further study to the responses, to this report and its recommendations; to explore possibilities, support initiatives to increase the sense of community among PFF & Friends of North Carolina as we discern what we are called to do and have energy for at this time.

Report prepared by the ad hoc committee of PFF YM Queries: David Bailey (Friendship), Jan Blodgett (Davidson), Karen McKinnon (Durham), Marian Beane (Charlotte)