

Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Annual Status Report 2016

Prepared for 2017 Annual Sessions by Katherine Metzger and Carol Morris for the working group on status and statistics, which also included Brianna Higgins and Deb Parvin (clerk). Besides this summary report, individual reports received from each meeting will be included in the PFYM archive.

Spiritual Condition

Meetings were asked to submit their Annual Spiritual Condition Report and were provided with six questions to guide their discernment. This report reflects some of the common themes found across the meetings in Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting (with four meetings reporting: Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Fancy Gap, and Raleigh).

How have you experienced the working of the spirit this year?

Meeting for worship is central to the experience of spirit. It is a “centering foundation,” a “common root;” it is what grounds us as we seek to be guided by spirit in our lives.

Friends also noted that spirit is present in the “ordinary striving of daily life” and that through our service to our meeting and our communities, we are called back to spirit and seek to find that of God in others.

A reflection of the work of the spirit is our collective efforts to be welcoming to all and to provide support for families and individuals within our meetings.

How does your Monthly Meeting/Worship Group (MM/WG) reach out to others?

Outreach takes on many forms, from newsletters and websites to the range of outreach to our communities as Friends serve refugees, the homeless, the incarcerated, the environment, and our youth.

Friends noted the diversity of interests within their meetings and talked about the way in which the grounding practice of Meeting for Worship and the support of meeting for its members/attenders increases our reach through individual leadings.

Several meetings noted, with gratitude, the opportunities for young Friends to participate with the wider body of Friends through Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting Young Friends.

What challenges has your MM/WG faced in 2016?

Meetinghouse repairs posed financial and tactical challenges and meetings noted that stewardship for the space where we worship is another opportunity for experiencing the work of spirit.

Given the range of interests among members and attenders, meetings struggle to fill leadership roles and attend to the work of Meeting. For Charlotte Friends, a Way Forward Committee proposed a simplified structure of meeting committees with shared leadership, which the meeting is now testing.

The varied challenges point to a query that each Meeting continues to grapple with: How do we rightly allocate our finite resources of time, energy, and funds?

What “leadings” is your MM/WG excited or ambivalent about?

Friends have initiated or re-affirmed collective leadings ranging from deepening ties to correctional facilities and sponsoring refugee families to enhancing the welcoming process for newcomers and crafting a vision statement for the meeting. What stands out across these leadings is that Friends have a concern over the stretched resources and how to move forward. How much can our meetings embrace?

Chapel Hill Friends Meeting reminds us that the spirit is present also in the decision not to act.

With an image of how they seek to embody Quaker testimonies, Fancy Gap Friends Meeting encourages us “be like water that is soft to the touch but with a constant flow, wearing away even the hardest of rock.”

How does your MM/WG reflect the diversity it seeks?

Several meetings noted challenges with attracting younger Friends and families, while others pointed out the “whiteness” of their meetings. Friends are actively seeking out worship and fellowship opportunities with other groups in the community and find that sharing worship leads to deeper listening.

This outreach to the broader community, while not necessarily leading to new attenders or members, has helped meetings to open up to the diversity within their meetings. Chapel Hill notes a historical tension between more Christ-centric and more agnostic Friends. Visitors who speak from a more Christ-centric place have “been met with genuine openness,” a sign of growth in recognizing the diversity within our meetings that may not be reflected in our demographics.

What support does your MM/WG need from PFYM?

Meetings noted several tangible ways that PFYM can offer support to its meetings:

- Connect Friends across the Monthly Meetings around common concerns for social witness and advocacy
- Develop its own youth programming
- Develop a book of disciplines or queries that will enrich us, reflecting the core values of our individual meetings.
- Act as a resource for the monthly meetings around a variety of issues ranging from capital campaign fundraising, ways to support demanding roles within the meeting (e.g. treasurer, clerks, FDS coordinator), best practices for maintaining our historical records, and ways to both attract enough families to have a vibrant FDS program and provide satisfactory religious education to their children.

Directories Information

The **PFYM *Directory of Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups*** will be made available after final editing. The **PFYM *Directory of Meeting Clerks and Meeting Committee Clerks*** is available from Interim Meeting representatives. Interim Meeting will be seeking permission from meetings to make their clerks’ information available in hard copy or email circulation among our meetings.

Membership Demographics

Average attendance	Avg MfW	Avg MfW	Avg Adult Ed	Avg FDS
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
Abingdon	9	0		
Chapel Hill	78	8	24	14
Charlotte	30	5	20	4
Fancy Gap	9	1		
Raleigh	23	1	12	0
Salem Creek	7			
TOTAL	156	15	56	18
<i>Average</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>11.20</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Range</i>	<i>7 to 78</i>	<i>0 to 8</i>	<i>0 to 24</i>	<i>0 to 14</i>

Membership	Members	Txfrs In	Txfrs Out
Abingdon	9	0	0
Chapel Hill	127	1	0
Charlotte	69	0	2
Fancy Gap	14		
Raleigh	53	2	0
Salem Creek	7	2	0
TOTAL	279	5	2
<i>Average</i>	<i>46.5</i>	<i>0.83</i>	<i>0.33</i>
<i>Range</i>	<i>7 to 127</i>	<i>0 to 2</i>	<i>0 to 2</i>

Total, Members and Attenders	Inf-Tod	Elem	Mid-High	18-34	35-65	65+
Abingdon	0	0	0	1	1	13
Chapel Hill	6	16	18	27	112	82
Charlotte	2	6	4	12	55	41
Fancy Gap	0	0	1	2	9	2
Raleigh	0	0	1	3	20	30
Salem Creek	1	1	0	4	8	8
TOTAL	9	23	24	49	205	176
<i>Average</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>3.833333</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>8.166667</i>	<i>34.16667</i>	<i>29.33333</i>
<i>Range</i>	<i>0 to 6</i>	<i>0 to 16</i>	<i>0 to 18</i>	<i>1 to 27</i>	<i>1 to 112</i>	<i>2 to 82</i>