

**Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting Minutes
Sixth month second day 2018 at New Garden Friends Meeting**

PFYM clerks, monthly meeting and worship group representatives, and others in attendance:

Emilie Condon	Chapel Hill	Marshal Eddelman	Fancy Gap
Naveed Moeed	Chapel Hill	Bob Mers	New Garden
Marian Beane	Charlotte	Martin King	Raleigh
Julie Stafford	Charlotte	Gary Hornsby	Salem Creek
Kathy Metzo	Charlotte	Christina Connell	Salem Creek

Presiding clerk Gary Hornsby invited Friends to settle into worship. We then introduced ourselves and briefly described our positive responses to the unusually heavy rain we have had recently.

Regrets. Gary reported receiving regrets from Dot Mason (New Garden), Ida Trisolini (Durham, PFYM Representative to FGC), Jan Schmidt (Raleigh), John Shuford (Raleigh), Alice Carlton (Chapel Hill), Larry Barker (Eno), Sally Barker (Eno), Mary Luckhaus (New Garden), Sally Freeman (Eno), Paul Klever (Eno), Bill Moore (Raleigh), Kathy Walker (Abingdon) and Terry Walker (Abingdon).

After review and acceptance of the proposed **agenda**, Friends considered and approved Interim Meeting **meeting dates**:

August 25	Joint meeting with Piedmont Friends Fellowship Representative Body at Seven Springs, Mocksville NC
November 10	Meeting at New Garden Friends
February 9, 2019	Tentative date at New Garden. Friends will review this date in August.

Minutes from the February 3, 2018 Interim Meeting were corrected and **approved as corrected**.

Minutes from PFYM Annual Sessions 2018 were corrected and **approved as corrected**. Friends expressed gratitude to the recording clerk for this work.

Consideration of PFYM Annual Sessions Epistle

The draft from the Epistle Committee of Paul Klever (Eno), Dorothy Mason (New Garden) and Julie Stafford (reviewing as recording clerk) was considered. A couple of corrections were made for accuracy, and Friends wanted more expression of the depth of loving warmth among those gathered. Work drafting additional wording was done during lunch, and the final draft was approved in the afternoon session. The 2018 PFYM Epistle in its final form is attached to these minutes.

Reflections on the March 2018 PFF/YM Retreat and Annual Sessions Weekend

Friends responded to the clerk's query, How did the retreat weekend work for the yearly meeting?

- 1) Having the retreat scheduled on Easter weekend was difficult for some; it was also acknowledged that this scheduling allowed us to have space at the school for extended time on Friday afternoon, as students were on break that day.
- 2) Opinion was expressed that if Carolina Friends School is the retreat location, Easter weekend is preferable and gives PFF the opportunity to use Friday time for additional programming.

- 3) The Friday programming was really successful. Friends felt there were more people able to be involved than on Friday evenings in previous years, and that the sessions presented were great.
- 4) Having the extended Friday time for interest group meetings made the whole weekend run more smoothly.
- 5) Having the retreat scheduled during the final March Madness games was a conflict for some.
- 6) Sunday attendance was perceived to be much better this year than in the past
- 7) Friends appreciated the work of PFF to improve both the food and the hotel accommodations. Both were much improved.
- 8) A suggestion was made that a map of the buildings used be provided, with notation on the agenda of the building location of each activity.
- 9) We noted that FGC, AFSC, and FCNL prepared reports to be given at yearly meeting annual sessions. Friends expressed valuing both those reports and receiving reports from our representatives about their work during the year.

Clerk's report

Gary Hornsby gave highlights of his report, which is attached to these minutes. Gary has had contact with Marijke van Roojen about the FGC Institutional Assessment on Racism. It was noted that people both inside and outside the Religious Society of Friends are watching to see what actions Friends take on this issue. Gary has already participated in conference calls (1) for FGC yearly meeting clerks and (2) a quarterly call for yearly meeting clerks including and beyond FGC.

PFYM's 2018-19 Priority Work Discernment for report to PFF

1. Work on discerning whether and how PFYM might partner with other organizations on shared advocacy concerns.
2. Keep ourselves informed on the FGC Assessment on Institutional Racism and prepare to consider actions in response to the study findings.
3. Consider and act on our role in advancing the PFYM Climate Change Minute.
4. Launch and evaluate the use of Google groups to help us work on concerns together across the yearly meeting.
5. Explore workshops on recording clerks – to encourage more Friends to enter this service.
6. Re-visit Statistics and Status reports. Are we asking the right questions? Are our report formats useful to meetings and worship groups?
7. Work on the PFF/YM website.
8. Bring Friends together for face-to-face conversation around common concerns within the life of the meeting (e.g., First Day School, deepening the spiritual life of the meeting). These conversations could be arranged concurrent with IM meetings and/or during the annual retreat.
9. Consider the leading for conscientious objector youth training.

Committee and Working Group Reports

Working Group on Advocacy (Gary on behalf of Jan Schmidt, clerk)

The primary task charged to this working group is to undertake the exploration of interest and feasibility for a state-based advocacy effort to strengthen Friends' voice on legislation impacting North Carolinians. It was reported that the Advocacy Working Group have not completed their task of surveying PFF/YM Friends to find out whether there is support for developing an FNCL-like state organization. They have

started developing a sense of what such an organization would look like, and to test this idea with PFF/YM meetings. **Interim Meeting asked that this working group report to us at our August meeting.**

Working Group on Peace and Social Concerns (Naveed Moeed)

Naveed reports that everything is set up to trigger the start of the google groups, but the starting email has not been sent due to working group members being personally busy. They hope to make progress on this within the next two weeks. A notice letting people know they have been put on a google group has been sent out.

Question was raised about whether using a default of no further emails to members of google groups is going to work well in our community. Naveed clarified that people can opt into receiving emails, and the “trigger” email will have clear instruction on how to opt in to receiving future emails. It was also noted that it will be important to include in that email a history of the actions involved to date in this process, i.e., first you completed the survey, then this step happened, and now we are doing this. Friends spoke to wanting a more generous default (rather than this is your last email unless you do this to opt in).

Gary Hornsby reported that he and Jan Schmidt have discussed the idea of creating a moderating group for the google groups. That is, to put everyone in a group that allows the moderators to send information to members of several or all groups, such as alerts about actions happening. **Interim Meeting expressed support for this concept.**

Statistics Working Group Report (Kathy Metz)

- 1) Kathy reports that updates to the **PFYM Directory** have been delayed to accommodate monthly meetings that have a new slate of leadership positions on a July 1 – June 30 program year. The working group recommends that meeting clerks be asked for Directory updates in time for the August Interim Meeting. The message to meeting clerks would include a copy of the current directory and ask for changes to be reported by the deadline. Friends approved this recommendation.
- 2) The working group asks if it is valuable to prepare the state of the meetings report to the yearly meeting as a collective reflection, as was done for 2017? What do we want the format to look like?
- 3) Statistical Report. The working group has realized that, while we ask for reports on membership transfers, we do not ask meetings to report on the number of new members they have had during the previous year. **Friends approved** correcting this oversight by adding the number of new members to the items we request of monthly meetings in the statistical report.

Nominating Committee Report (Gary reporting for Sally Freeman, clerk)

Nominating Committee is currently working on three positions:

- 1) **Recording Clerk.** The committee has a possible nominee considering this position, which will be vacant when the current term ends at rise of 2019 Annual Sessions. The idea of having the person who accepts this nomination serve as an assistant recording clerk has been raised, although we do not have such a position in our Handbook. It was agreed that we will invite a nominee to our IM meetings and ascertain whether service as an assistant recording clerk prior to the recording clerk term would be helpful to the nominee.

Question was raised whether the current three-year term for the recording clerk meets our intention to have the recording clerk term span the presiding clerk transitions, lending consistency and smoothing the transition for new presiding clerks. Christina Connell, as clerk of the now-inactive Handbook working group, was asked to consider this question and, if possible, to bring a recommendation to our August meeting.

- 2) **PFYM Representative to Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC) Section of the Americas.** Nominating Committee continues to seek a person to serve in this position.
- 3) **Nominating Committee Member.** The naming committee is seeking a Friend from a monthly meeting not already represented on the Nominating Committee to fill this vacancy.
- 4) **Friends General Conference Representative.** Karen McKinnon's term in this position will be ending in October. Interim Meeting Nominating Committee is working with the PFF Representative Body Nominating Committee to bring a nominee for this position to the August joint meeting.
- 5) **Question was raised** whether the position of Assisting Clerk changes name to Assistant depending on whether the term served is before or after service as Presiding Clerk. It was noted that only the term Assisting Clerk appears in the Handbook. Christina Connell was asked to consider whether an additional title is needed to indicate a difference in role between the two terms of service.

PFYM Minute on Climate Change

In addressing the yearly meeting climate change minute, Friends posited that our role is to encourage monthly meetings in taking action on this minute. The importance of involving people with expertise was stressed. Suggestions were made about how best to provide that support and encouragement:

- 1) Monthly meetings could bring to yearly meeting action ideas that other meetings could partner on, rather than actions initiating from yearly meeting.
- 2) We could ask a query in the status report, "How has your meeting acted on the PFYM minute on climate change?" This would require notifying meetings in advance that this will be asked.
- 3) We could prioritize the climate change google group and specifically work to enable the work of this group.

It was agreed that the Minute would be sent to meeting clerks and committee clerks of related committees with the query, "How is our meeting going to live into the Climate Change Minute?"

Update on exploration of Quaker Cloud website for PFYM/PFF (Gary reporting on behalf of Bill Moore)

Bill reported to clerk Gary Hornsby that Jeff Brown, presiding clerk of PFF, is assembling an ad hoc committee to work on the new website set-up beginning in June. Bill Moore is serving on this ad hoc committee, which will be verifying the accurate cost estimate for our getting Quaker Cloud service. We understand that PFF Representative Body will make the decision to switch to the Quaker Cloud platform based on that cost information.

As we entered a period of closing worship, we were mindful of **Abingdon Friends**. We know they would like to be with us today, but the resources of their small meeting are currently tapped by caregiving

responsibilities. Friends expressed understanding that smaller meetings cannot always send representatives to our meetings, and that we do not hold them to that expectation.

Meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

Julie Stafford
Recording clerk

2018 Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Epistle
From the Third Annual Sessions Third Month, Thirty-First Day 2018

Twenty-second day of sixth month 2018

Greetings to Friends Everywhere,

Piedmont Friends Fellowship and Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting gathered March 30 - April 1, 2018, for the spring retreat and annual sessions at Carolina Friends School in Durham, NC. Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting annual sessions were held on Saturday afternoon March 31, 2018, in the Meeting House of Carolina Friends School.

This gathering brought together Friends from member monthly meetings and worship groups in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Visitors were welcomed and traveling minutes were received from Friends General Conference, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting in South Carolina. Piedmont Friends welcomed the long tradition of traveling minutes and traveling Friends to the weekend gathering.

Other visitors included representatives from William Penn House and Quaker House, and Friends recently from New York Yearly Meeting. The retreat registration totaled one hundred adult and youth participants.

This year's gathering felt deeper and larger -- our yearly meeting had grown both in spirit and in numbers. In the light pouring through the windows of the Carolina Friends School meeting house, we rejoiced in our inward light, sharing in loving fellowship the joys and concerns brought together across the hundreds of miles' breadth of our yearly meeting.

The Yearly Meeting expressed gratitude toward its continuing development as a new yearly meeting of Friends and began the annual sessions with the Yearly Meeting's Vision Statement:

As a yearly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, we seek to foster a loving community of affiliated monthly meetings and worship groups by increasing and strengthening connections among members, attenders, and seekers and with other Friends' organizations. Our primary goals are to nurture monthly meetings and worship groups by supporting spiritual growth and to witness to our collective truth in the wider world.

Friends of the Yearly Meeting expressed deep appreciation for the leadership of presiding clerk Marian Beane, assisting clerk Gary Hornsby, and recording clerk Julie Stafford through the inaugural years of the yearly meeting. Friends are additionally grateful to Gary Hornsby as he assumed the presiding clerk position at the rise of annual sessions.

Friends accepted representative reports from Quaker House, Friends General Conference, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and American Friends Service Committee. Internal reports included a summary of the member meeting spiritual condition reports, with a theme that Friends find deep worship grounding for their lives in the world.

Charlotte Friends Meeting had presented a Minute on Climate Change to member meetings for consideration by the Yearly Meeting. Through collective discernment and thoughtful consideration, the annual session approved a PFYM Minute on Climate Change (appended to this epistle). Reflective of the considerations, the Minute expresses not only urgency in concern for the environment, but also concern for the consciousness that has created the issues of climate change.

Friends relished the Saturday lunch provided by Second Helping, a catering venture of Urban Ministries of Durham and the Coalition for a Nonviolent Durham to provide work opportunities for returning citizens finding their way after prison.

During the retreat, Friends learned about the work of Alternatives to Violence Program, transforming minds and life among inmates and staff of prisons. The transformative power of the Light was also demonstrated in the young Friends who shared their journey of discernment and letters declaring themselves as Conscientious Objectors to war and violence.

Reflecting on the strength of Quaker witness and the courage of young Friends, gathered Friends resounded optimism for the future of the Religious Society of Friends. Heartened in the spiritual connections nurtured among Friends, Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting extends its warmest regards to Friends everywhere.

In Love, Light, and Hope,

Marian Beane, past Presiding Clerk
Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting

Gary Hornsby, Presiding Clerk
Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting

Attached here: Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Minute on Climate Change 3-31-2018
Photograph of Attendees, PFYM Third Annual Sessions 3-31-2018

Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Minute on Climate Change

We acknowledge the grave and worsening crisis of all the interacting variables included in the phrase “climate change.” Another part of our concern is awareness of the consciousness that has created the problem. We recognize the urgency of a response from our Friends’ community.

We come to this moment grounded in the testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends. The testimonies of community, equality, stewardship and integrity call us forward in our work. We recognize that, both globally and locally, peace is increasingly linked to climate justice.

With deep concern for Earth and all the life it supports, we are motivated by our love of our children, recognizing that their futures are in our hands. We affirm the Native American advice: “In all our deliberations, let us consider to the seventh generation.”

We know that there is much about these times that can cause us to feel fearful, angry and helpless. We will be gentle with ourselves and take time for our feelings as we continue the work, knowing that we are a part of the rising tide of thousands around the world, who, in the words of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, “seek an earth restored.”

We, the Friends of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting, commit to the following:

1. We continue to seek the Light through worship and prayerful consideration. We shall be led by the Spirit in the face of climate change.
2. We seek to understand the role we play as humans, and the dangers unfolding through climate change. We continue to educate ourselves rigorously on these matters.
3. We commit to act on our responsibility, both in personal use of resources and in the management of our meetinghouse resources. We ask: How can we have greater integrity in these matters?
4. We commit to learning about and engaging in collective action and advocacy at the local, state, national and global levels.
5. We seek to be examples and patterns, carrying this message forward to other Friends communities and to others who carry a concern and love for Earth.

We are grateful for the many in this yearly meeting who carry our concern forward.
Thank you, Friends.

--Approved 31 March 2018 in Annual Sessions



**Attendees of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Third Annual Sessions 31 March 2018
photo by John A. Shuford**

Clerks Report to PFYM Interim Meeting
2nd Day of Sixth month, 2018
New Garden Friends Meeting

Friends, I am excited to share some of the ways I have been working to support PFYM and strengthen my understanding of my role as YM clerk.

1. Charlotte Visit – On April 29th I worshipped and visited with Charlotte Friends. The potluck and discussion of their experience this part year with Room In The Inn (RITI) was heartening. Room In The Inn is a Charlotte-based partnership with Urban Ministry Center to provide shelter and food for homeless people during the winter months. Having volunteered in overflow shelters in Winston Salem, I have a deep connection with this work, and I am always excited and grateful to learn how other communities are helping our homeless brothers and sisters. After the potluck Marian Beane and I met to discuss how best to support PFYM and change roles from Assisting Clerk to Presiding Clerk and vice versa.
2. Communication with smaller meetings – As friends are well aware, some of our smaller meetings struggle from time to time (more so than larger meetings) to keep up with all the demands and commitments that can arise in a monthly meeting. I continue to hold these Friends in the light and hope that we will spend some time discerning ways that we, as a Yearly Meeting, can best support them.
3. FGC – Clerk conference call and Institutional Assessment on Racism: On May 22nd, Frank Barch and Barry Crossno hosted a Zoom conference call to discuss the following topics: How to engage smaller Monthly Meetings in the work of the Yearly Meeting; How to work with limited volunteer time; Experiences of YM Restructuring, laying down committee, finding people willing to serve on committees; and FGC Restructuring. I had to take this call while driving; admittedly, silent corporate worship in a moving vehicle was a new experience for me. I did keep my eyes open.

Marijke van Roojen has been in contact with Marian and me about the FGC Institutional Assessment on Racism. My apologies for not distributing the link to the survey to our WG and MM clerks. As I get more information, I will be sure to distribute it.

4. Clerks Calls – On April 30th Yearly Meeting Clerks from across the US logged to Zoom for conference call to discuss a wide range of topics. Friends included: David Edinger – New Association of Friends, mostly in Indiana; Fritz Weiss – New England Yearly Meeting; Bill Carlie – Southeastern Yearly Meeting; Molly Wingate – Intermountain Yearly Meeting; Diego Navarro – Pacific Yearly Meeting, Betsy Neale, from Lexington, Kentucky – Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Conservative; Marcy Seitel, Ken Stockbridge – Baltimore yearly Meeting; and Liz Yeats – South Central Yearly Meeting. Some of the topics for this call were how to make business meeting more compelling, how best to consider the reports at YM, how much time to spend on discernment dimension of these reports, how to address racism and building a supportive environment within MMs. These calls are scheduled to continue on a quarterly basis.
5. Technology – Friends will have noticed that my emails are now being distributed to two main google groups. One for Monthly Meeting and Worship Group clerks and the other for Interim Meeting Reps. It is my hope to continue to help integrate some “easy to use” technology for communication within our PFF/YM group as well as with the wider world.

In closing, I am looking forward to serving our amazing group of PFF/YM Friends. Great work has already been done over the past few decades, and there is still much work to be done.

In peace,

Gary Hornsby, Clerk