

**EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF NCCYM-C  
BUSINESS ITEMS**

*Please note: The page numbers referenced in these extracts are based on the hard copy minute books.*

ADMINISTRATIVE

CLERKS

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

INTERIM BODY

MEMBERSHIP/AFFILIATION

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS**

**Extracts**

2017-04 (to be printed in the 2017 Minute Book) Nancy Craft provided information from her consultation with a sound system expert. He recommended that the yearly meeting rent and consider short term options rather than investing in a sound system at this time.

2016-10 (to be printed in the 2017 Minute Book) Lloyd Lee . . . reported on the **sound system** that he witnessed being successfully used during Iowa's yearly meeting sessions. Friends approve pursuing acquisition of a similar sound system for our yearly meeting. The clerk will follow up on details in consultation with a sound professional who is already assisting Virginia Beach Meeting with their new sound system. Further consideration will be given to this matter at Fourth Month interim body so that a sound solution may be available in time for our yearly meeting sessions.

2017-04 (to be printed in the 2017 Minute Book) In response to the request in Tenth Month for meetings to consider the minute on racial justice drafted by Bruce Arnold, Barbara Gosney read a minute from Rich Square Monthly Meeting.

Though no other meetings presented minutes, several reported that consideration has been given and that racial justice is a continuing concern held both by individuals and by the meeting body through committee work. In addition to the racial justice concerns raised by the minute, several meetings are also engaging with justice concerns facing our immigrant communities and support for refugees. Local meetings are addressing racial justice concern at local levels in a variety of ways determined by the opportunities and conditions within their communities. Monthly meetings are encouraged to share any minutes or statements made with the yearly meeting for sharing through the yearly meeting's online presence. Meetings are encouraged to share their work with one another to assist in bringing us together and to facilitate work towards discerning a yearly meeting statement on racial justice.

2016-10 (to be included in the 2017 Minute Book) **Racial Justice** . . . Several monthly meetings considered the minute and members shared the outcomes of those conversations. There was appreciation for the passion of the statement. Friends see a need for us a body to engage in

deeper consideration and actively work within ourselves and our meetings on the issue of racial justice in our present time . . . . Friends are asked to further consider the statement by Bruce Arnold and the questions it raises in their monthly meetings. This is not necessarily a document for us to approve, but is a catalyst for our engaging in a deeper consideration of racial justice in our time and grappling with it as individuals, in our meetings and as a body. Query: What inward spiritual work and outward witness is necessary for us to do to remove the seeds of injustice from ourselves and our meetings?

2016-07 p.114. **Racial Justice Concern** Bruce Arnold of Greenville Monthly Meeting shared a draft statement on racial justice with the clerks this week but there was not time in the sessions to address as fully as needed. Therefore, interested Friends are encouraged to be in contact with Bruce and for Bruce to share the statement with his meeting for further seasoning prior to Tenth Month. It is suggested that this be an item for discussion at Interim Body.

2016-04 p. 10 The question was raised about how best to handle **issues arising between our scheduled meetings**. It was recognized that it works best to have all business conducted during our face-to-face meetings but this is not always possible. Friends are advised to consider what choices might be acceptable. Are we able to practice discernment via e-mail or other tools to connect virtually? What guidance do we have for our clerk and for one another to be present if needed between our sessions?

2010-07 p. 94 Friends approved of the recommendation that the **yearly meeting not incorporate.**

2009-10 p. 15 (2010 Minute Book) The sense of the meeting [Representative Body] was that we would **give the Disciplines away and ask for a three dollar (\$3.00) contribution** from those receiving them, including the Friends General Conference bookstore.

2007-07 p. 32 As this year's sessions draw to a close, we are aware that several of our visitors (David Eley, William Geary, Bruce Pearson, and Julie Pearson) have so often in recent years been present with us, been so like-minded with us, and have shared such gifts with us that we feel it is only geography that hinders them from being counted as members of this body. Seeing that way has not yet opened for actual membership, we recognize their special relationship to us by calling them **friends of the yearly meeting.**

2006-07 p. 79 Friends approved that we **arrange our site schedule three years out,** ... . At next year's session we will extend our schedule out another year so that our site institutions will be given adequate time to prepare.

2006-07 p. 44 The clerk brought up the issue of the yearly meeting **post office box and time sensitive mail.** Friends approved that the address for the yearly meeting be changed to facilitate and speed the clerk's response to written correspondence.

2004-07 P. 64 The question came forward as to whether **non-printed recordings of talks and workshops given by ministers traveling with a yearly meeting endorsed certificate** need to be approved by the yearly meeting before getting distributed. Friends remain comfortable with

the currently existing checks that exist in our process with having someone travel with the minister, of having the certificate of travel endorsed by the hosting body, and through reports by the minister. The traveling minister is to use his/her own usual discernment process when making decisions about publications by other organizations. The minister traveling with a certificate of travel from the yearly meeting is not required to seek approval of the yearly meeting for publications by other organizations of written or other recordings of his/her ministry.

2000-07 p. 8 Friends approved asking visitors to serve as led on yearly meeting committees that will conduct their business during yearly meeting sessions.

1998-07 pp. 14-15 Friends approved laying down the yearly meeting peace and social concerns committee. So that Friends in the yearly meeting will not lose sight of what we are doing at the monthly meeting level, Friends were asked to see that future State of Society reports mention what actions are being taken by our monthly meetings.

1990-04 p. 9 The clerk presented a concern about the writing of the summary of the exercises of the yearly meeting session, particularly the burden this task places on one or two persons who are present at the sessions on Fifth day morning. The following solutions were discussed and approved: (a) one of the Representatives to the yearly meeting from each monthly meeting should be designated before yearly meeting begins to help write the summary of the exercises, (b) the summary should be shorter and not duplicate the minutes, and (c) the responsibility of writing the summary should be spread out, so that each day's activities would be written by different persons. We agreed that a clear statement of the task would be helpful and suggested the following three guidelines:

- to tell how the yearly meeting and monthly meetings are progressing,
- to discuss the concerns raised, and
- to put into words as much as possible the deep spiritual feelings which often permeate the yearly meeting sessions.

1984-04, p. 8 It was agreed to permit Friends World Committee, Section of the Americas, to use the yearly meeting membership list for Friends mailings.

### Travel Minutes and Letters of Introduction

Early in their history, Friends recognized the advisability of having some sort of accountability between those people who felt led to travel "in the service of the Lord" and their home meetings. By the early 1700s the system of issuing certificates for travel in the ministry was fully developed. It is still in use today, though sometimes called a travel minute.

Certificates for travel in the ministry are issued by the monthly meeting and endorsed by the quarterly or yearly meeting for travel outside their respective boundaries. Certificates should identify the Friend in question as a member in good standing of the meeting issuing the certificate, state the leading of the Friend as shared with the meeting, and state the meeting's unity with the proposed journey.

A Friend traveling under a certificate has historically had the authority to call special meetings for worship among the Friends she is visiting, and to expect the cooperation of local Friends in publicizing and attending these meetings. Local Friends have also been expected to provide hospitality as needed. In return, the traveling Friend is supposed to give the certificate to the

local clerk for endorsement. In his endorsement, the clerk should indicate when the traveler visited this meeting, and give some indication of the nature of the ministry offered, as well as how it was received.

Upon returning home, the traveling Friend is expected to surrender the certificate, with all endorsements, to the clerk of the issuing meeting(s), where it is typically read during meeting for business. The traveling Friend may then be asked follow-up questions about the journey or particular endorsements. This process allows the issuing meeting to gain some insight into whether or not the journey was accomplished in good order, and whether, if asked, it should issue a certificate to this Friend again.

A meeting may also issue a minute for travel under a concern, expressing its unity with the concern of a Friend for a particular issue. These minutes do not necessarily place the visited meeting(s) under the obligation for providing hospitality or calling special meetings for worship, and endorsement is optional.

Finally, a meeting may issue a letter of introduction, documenting that a Friend is a member in good standing, and perhaps expressing greetings to the meeting(s) being visited. This sort of letter has become a requirement for Friends using the FGC Traveling Directory, for example. A letter of introduction may also be written by a clerk without the approval of the meeting for business, if the press of time makes this necessary. Endorsements of a letter of introduction are not expected, though the visited meeting may send a message in response to the visit.

**Memorials** From time to time it may seem in right order, as a tribute to the workings of the Holy Spirit and for the encouragement of others, to give a brief written account of the life of a beloved Friend who has passed from works to rewards. This work is initiated by the monthly meeting to which the Friend belonged; and unless the Friend was active beyond the boundaries of her monthly meeting, would go no farther.

If the Friend in question had been active in the yearly meeting or beyond, the local meeting may forward its memorial to the yearly meeting for consideration. If the yearly meeting unites both with the memorial itself and the sense of the wider scope of the Friend's work and influence, it may undertake to publish a limited number of copies of the memorial at yearly meeting expense, in keeping with previously published memorials. (A typical publishing run has been 250 copies.)

1981-07 p. 19 and 1981-10 p. 4 (1982 Minute Book) **David T. Smith**

1984-07 p. 43 **Susan Gower Smith**

### **Archived Extracts**

2003-07 p. 110 Wilmington Friends have arranged for a post office box, which is **Post Office Box 3266, Wilmington, NC 28406-3266**. The commitment involves an annual cost of \$68, which Friends approved. Wilmington Friends have also agreed to assume the long-term responsibilities of regularly checking the box for mail, and then forwarding the mail to the clerk when the yearly meeting is not a member of their meeting.

### **CLERKS**

2017-04 (to be printed in the 2017 Minute Book) Friends on the Planning Committee wish to follow up with the Clerk of Yearly Meeting about whether it would be possible

to publish a tentative agenda for each session of business. This would make it easier for Friends to have a better sense of which sessions they should attend, if they are not able to be at all of them. This is especially important to people who are involved in the programming for youth and young adults.

2013-10 (2014 Minute Book) It was recommended that the extracts of minutes initially developed in 2002 continue to be updated and posted for public access via the yearly meeting web site. Nancy Craft noted that earlier references to the extracts placed sole responsibility for updating with the recording clerk. The body approves this responsibility be shared by the yearly meeting clerks as a group.

2005-07, p. 58 Friends approved establishing an ad hoc committee to compile a document to outline work of the various committees. The nominating committee will name this committee. Recently compiled extracts of yearly meeting minutes will be incorporated in addition to wisdom gleaned from yearly meeting members who have experience in various committees and roles of responsibility.

2002-07 p. 15-16 The meeting [Representative Body] approved Jeanne Rose (Wilmington) convener, Carole Treadway (Friendship), Lloyd Lee Wilson (Rich Square) and Michael Arnold (West Grove) to serve on a committee to bring work on a proposed handbook of extracts from our previous minutes to guide us in our Yearly Meeting procedures and practices. We hope that the handbook will reflect the guidance based on the action of our previous meetings.

2002-07 p. 23 Friends agreed that copies of our Disciplines may be given out to groups and individual inquirers free of charge as seems appropriate, as a means of outreach. The treasurer will continue to record the income from sales of Disciplines as a means of tracking how many are sold and how many are given away, but will not adopt merchandising methods of tracking sales and inventory. Those Friends who are responsible for filling orders for Disciplines were authorized to determine the best way to do so, i.e. by means of discounting or adding shipping charges, so as to encourage book stores and other distributors to buy in bulk.

2002-04, p. 20-21 (2002-2003 Minute Book) Jeanne Rose reported on behalf of the Extract Committee, which also included Lloyd Lee Wilson, Michael Arnold, and Carole Treadway. The committee read back through twenty years of our minutes and extracted actions that the yearly meeting has taken, and prepared a document of these extracts so that Friends could be better informed in our yearly meeting's transactions. Friends accepted the report of the committee, with a great sense of appreciation. Friends approved publishing this report as two documents (Extracts and Committee Descriptions and Appointments) on its website in a to-be-established working document with a notation that these document[s] are for internal use of the yearly meeting in clarifying its practices. Friends approved having the recording clerk handle updates to the extracts document and the nominating committee updating the committee and appointments document on a continuing basis.

1995-10 p. 28 (1996 Minute Book) Friends were united in declining to direct visitors not to speak, but granted that the clerk has the discretion to limit those whom she judges may be violating the spirit of the meeting in their expressions.

1995-07 p. 53 Friends named a **Clerk's cleanness Committee**, which includes David Brown, Ray Treadway, Louise Wilson, George Parker, and George Stabler.

1993-10 pp. 15-17 Note: Minute describing the standards for behavior of clerks

1994-07 p, 22 Friends agreed that the yearly meeting clerk send information of possible interest to the members of monthly meetings to the clerks.

## REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

### **Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting**

2016-07 p. 74 Durham Monthly Meeting Report on Affiliations . . . . Durham Monthly Meeting went through regarding possible affiliation with Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. The process evolved to consider what affiliations mean in the life of their meeting. The yearly meeting expressed appreciation to Durham Monthly Meeting for the process that they undertook. Friends are directed to a fuller report of the process, which is available through Durham Friends.

“After a period of deep discernment, we recognize that there is insufficient energy within Durham Friends Monthly Meeting to join a second yearly meeting. As such, we decline the invitation to join Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting at this time. We appreciate the understanding and support received from both Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting and North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) throughout this process.”

2015-10 p. 6 (2016 Minute Book) Kent Wicker provided an informal update from Durham Meeting on the discernment process relating to their relationship with the newly established Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. The meeting's Ad Hoc Committee on Affiliations is considering all affiliations, both Quaker and non-Quaker, to gain understanding and a larger context.

2015-10 p. 6 (2016 Minute Book) an informal update from Durham Meeting on the discernment process relating to their relationship with the newly established Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. The meeting's Ad Hoc Committee on Affiliations is considering all affiliations, both Quaker and non-Quaker, to gain understanding and a larger context.

2015-07 p. 71-73 Durham Friend Meeting has been asked by Piedmont Friends Yearly meeting (PFYM) if we would like to *become members of the new **Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting***. We have enjoyed a deep relationship with Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF) since its inception decades ago. . . . “David and I, co-clerks of Durham Friends Meeting, would like to express our meeting's interest in engaging with NC Yearly Meeting-Conservative in this discernment journey through communicating along the way and sharing wisdoms between each other. Our intention is to deepen our relationship with NC Yearly Meeting-conservative and other affiliations and to eventually discern what would a membership in the PFYM mean”. . . . Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight was asked to be mindful of the process Durham Monthly Meeting is undertaking

and hold them in prayer. Bruce Arnold, Barbara Gosney, and David Perry agreed to serve as yearly meeting liaisons to Durham to support continuing conversation and relationship during this discernment process, The yearly meeting clerk will write a letter to Durham expressing appreciation for their invitation to maintain and grow their relationship with our yearly meeting and report the yearly meetings actions as described.

2013-07 p. 80 There was a special interest group held at yearly meeting sessions in 2014 to discuss the **needs of our smaller isolated meetings**, most of which are located in the eastern part of the state. Friends gathered twice in Woodland hosted by Rich Square Monthly Meeting and in February and May in New Bern. Fayetteville and Greenville Monthly Meetings have minuted their desire to establish a quarter to provide a recognized structure to continue these gatherings so that they may support and know one another more fully. There is a call to take care to insure that creation of something new not create a burden for already small groups. Friends spoke of rewarding experiences they enjoyed in these gatherings that focus on fellowship rather than business. The yearly meeting endorses these gatherings as they have been held in practice. However, it suggests that name other than “quarterly meeting” might be selected so gatherings are not confused with an established term for an additional administrative level with the yearly meeting’s organizational structure historically more focused on decision-making. Our monthly meetings can be of greater support and in closer fellowship with one another. There is a need for Friends to gather together though the exact form may not be known at this time. Fayetteville and Greenville are asked to further clarify what they are requesting and invited to bring a proposal back to the yearly meeting as way opens.

2013-07 pp. 44-45 Cheryl Fetterman brought a request for the yearly meeting to consider the statement Wilmington Monthly Meeting recently approved in support for the joint statement by Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and United Methodist leaders in North Carolina in response to the current actions by the North Carolina General Assembly and the issues addressed by the **Moral Mondays protests**. The body unites with Wilmington’s concern and advises the other monthly meetings to consider the statement and ways each meeting might respond. Friends approved the clerk writing a letter on behalf of the yearly meeting uniting with this concern and sending the letter to appropriate government officials. (Note; Minute and letter is on page 112.)

2006-07, p. 64 Durham Friends Meeting forwarded to yearly meeting a letter from Quentin D. Read regarding his spiritual leading of **conscientious objection** to engaging in violence or killing of other human being. . . . Friends approved that the clerk note on the statement that it was read and received with joy and that we affirm his position. Friends also approved that the clerk will write a letter to Quentin of affirmation and support for his position. it will also reflect that acknowledge that Durham Friends Meeting is a member of our body and is in unity with our historic peace witness.

2005-07 p. 83 Recognizing that the decision to stand as a **conscientious objector** is one of personal discernment between an individual and God, Friends [Representative Body] are in unity with supporting individuals in that discernment process with their monthly meetings. The yearly meeting will receive reports from individuals through the monthly meeting reflecting personal and corporate discernment of conscientious objector status and these reports will

become so minuted at the yearly meeting level. Friends were made aware of the opportunity here for the yearly meeting to both establish a record and build the individual in the faith.

1999-07, p. 15 Friends approved the establishment of a **young adult Friends organization**. Each monthly meeting was asked to identify a contact person for the group.

2012-10 p. 8, (2013 Minute Book) Andrew Wright and Wendy Michener both agreed to be the clerk's designees to correspond with the Bolivian student that the yearly meeting is sponsoring this year through the **Bolivian Quaker Education Fund**.

1990-07 p. 42 The meeting united with a proposal that the custom of writing a special epistle to North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM) be resumed.

### **ARCHIVED EXTRACTS**

2015-07 p. 73 Kristin Olson Kennedy updated the yearly meeting that there is no report on the concern raised at last yearly meeting's sessions regarding the university's policy on **transgendered students** and that further response is not being undertaken at this time.

2014-07 p. 84 Kristin Olson Kennedy and Rachel Miller expressed that there are several in the yearly meeting interested in exploring how we might respond to George Fox University's recent decision not to house a **transgendered student**. The Yearly Meeting supported them bringing a report back in Tenth Month. Others sharing the concern were invited to contact Kristin and Rachel.

### **INTERIM BODY, REPRESENTATIVE BODY, AND QUARTERLY MEETINGS**

2013-04, p. 46 The clerk provided information regarding the distinct role of those appointed to the Representative Body and clarified that this is not the same as to named representatives to yearly meeting sessions. Monthly meetings are asked to review the list to insure that it is accurate.

2006-04, p. 16. Changes in the Representative Body - additions or deletions - are to come through each meeting's Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee member to be addressed by the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee.

2003, p. 117 Friends approved adopting the practice of scheduling Representative Body for the fourth seventh day of both Tenth month and Fourth month.

1995-07 P. 62-63 Friends agreed that **representatives to yearly meeting** are serving as representatives from the monthly meetings to yearly meeting sessions. The purpose of the representatives is to convey concerns and information from the monthly meeting to the yearly meeting, and back to the monthly meetings from the yearly meeting. Representatives may also address other needs as they arise.



The role of the **Representative Body**: Book of Discipline of NCYM(C), p. 21 The Yearly Meeting shall appoint a group known as the Representative Body, which shall be empowered to carry on Yearly Meeting business during the time when Yearly Meeting is not in session. It shall convene at least twice annually to consider any business which may arise. If felt necessary, a called meeting may be held at any time.

### **ARCHIVED EXTRACTS**

2000-10 p. 7 (2001 Minute Book) The Representative Body approved the above minute's [from Southern Quarter] recommendation to discontinue **Southern Quarter**, and additionally acted to discontinue **Eastern Quarter** as well to cease the quarterly meeting structure for business. The yearly meeting seeks to re-invent ways to meet the needs for spiritual nurturing and fellowship.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### AFFILIATION AND MEMBERSHIP

2013-04, p. 9 (2013 Minute Book).

#### INTEREST IN OUR MEETING FROM OUTSIDE OUR YM

Caroline Whitbeck, a member of Northampton Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting, brought a letter of introduction which was read. She spoke of her meeting and the worship group she began in her home. The clerk will endorse Caroline Whitbeck's letter of introduction. A report from an email correspondence between Charles Ansell, Clerk of West Grove Monthly Meeting and Paul Kysel-Steeple, an elder in Berlin Monthly Meeting of Germany Yearly Meeting, expressed a need thirsting for fellowship with conservative Quakers. In response to a concern brought by West Grove Monthly Meeting, we are open to considering additional options for relationship with NCYM-C besides individual membership through a monthly meeting or group affiliation through the yearly meeting. This body asks that Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight consider how we may respond to inquiries from distant Friends and to bring back to yearly meeting some guidance on this issue.

#### M&O REPORT ON OTHERS OUTSIDE OUR YM INTEREST IN MEMBERSHIP

Each year the yearly meeting receives requests from individuals wishing to join the yearly meeting directly as individuals. Ministry and Oversight was asked to consider and appointed a committee to explore the issue. Ministry and Oversight approved forwarding the committee's report to the Yearly Meeting for fuller consideration.

On the Relation of our Yearly Meeting to Those Seeking Affiliation with our Yearly Meeting  
(Report of Ad Hoc Committee appointed by Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight), Seventh  
Month 9, 2014

We intend for our monthly meetings and yearly meeting to have open and loving relationships with all with whom we are involved. Our spiritual heritage as Friends calls us to respond to others so as "to speak to that of God" in them. Our purposes as a Friends'

community include nurturing life in the Spirit among all with whom we come in contact, and fostering “the unity of the Spirit” as the basis for our own meetings.

2013-7, p. 73-74

1. MEMBERSHIP (See attached Appendix, item 3, from our Book of Discipline, the section on membership): We seem clear concerning the basis of membership in our monthly meetings and yearly meeting. Individual membership is in monthly meetings which are members of the yearly meeting. The spiritual life of the member is centered in the member’s monthly meeting community. It is there the member lives out the commitments made in becoming a member. This commitment is described in our Book of Discipline as the commitment of members to “listen for and give expression in their lives to the promptings of the Inner Spirit in all areas of personal discipline and service to others,” and “a readiness to wait upon the Lord and to seek Divine Guidance in those areas where they may not yet be convinced that the Quaker way of life is right.” Membership is not merely an individual affiliation with a group but an intention to live and grow into a way of life with the help of those who are also members and share this intention and this way of life. The Discipline also cautions members against the “dilution of the strength of the Quaker message.” While that phrase may have several interpretations, it might also remind us of the significance of membership and of our commitment to *mutual* responsibilities involving ourselves and the meetings to which we belong. Despite the importance of our principles and practices, membership ultimately is not grounded in those principles and practices but in our active life together in the Spirit.

Our yearly meeting structure and processes reflect this understanding of membership. As indicated above, in questions of membership, the monthly meeting is primary and the yearly meeting is secondary. Members of monthly meetings are members of the yearly meeting by virtue of their monthly meeting membership. Application for membership in each individual case is for the discernment of the monthly meeting, as are all matters related to membership of the particular member. Our Fourth Month, 2011 Representative Body meeting recorded the following minute: “The sense was reaffirmed that individual membership is for the discernment of monthly meetings not the yearly meeting.” The yearly meeting assists the monthly meetings in addressing questions of membership through clarifying faith and practice among the monthly meetings with our Book of Discipline, sharing answers to Queries, and giving specific advice when asked by a monthly meeting. Thus our structure is not hierarchical. Our monthly meetings form the yearly meeting as a nexus for wider communication and activity among its members, support for its members, and for a wider expression of our unity of and in the Spirit.

2013-7, p. 74-75

2. OTHER EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YEARLY MEETING: Relationships between our yearly meeting and those not members of our monthly meetings are less well described in our Book of Discipline and in our usual practices as a yearly meeting.

When yearly meeting is in session, it has been our practice to welcome all non-members (attenders and visitors) and invite them to participate in almost all aspects of our yearly meeting sessions including our meetings for business. We have recognized several Friends who have visited yearly meeting sessions regularly for a number of years and seemed to have a special relationship with us as “Friends of the Yearly Meeting.” These Friends remain as members of their own monthly and yearly meetings while continuing as visitors to our yearly meeting sessions.

As a consequence of others becoming aware of our yearly meeting, we have had inquiries concerning our faith and practice, and in some situations requesting a relationship with us. Through publications, online communication, and personal contact we have offered information and encouraged these inquiries about our yearly meeting and, implicitly at least, invited some kind of further relationship. When asked about membership we have informed inquirers that membership is in our monthly meetings. We have been open to working with others related to potential new worship groups or monthly meetings affiliating with our yearly meeting. We invite inquirers when possible to visit our monthly meetings and our yearly meeting sessions. (See attached Appendix, item 2, section on affiliation on our NCYM(C) website)

2013-7, p. 75-78

### 3. POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO REQUESTS FOR AFFILIATION:

#### What Is Being Requested?

While we currently respond to individual requests for affiliation with our yearly meeting by informing inquirers of our membership procedures and inviting visitation during our yearly meeting sessions, it appears we may not be responding to the spiritual needs of some of those seeking affiliation with us. Especially for those at some distance from our monthly meetings, membership and visitation are not viable means of affiliation. We are receiving a few requests from individuals who are expressing a deep sense of spiritual loneliness in their lives and of some hope that in our faith and practice they may have an answer to that loneliness. Some inquirers also appear to be requesting affiliation so as to strengthen the cause of Conservative Friends by offering to join in that effort. Some requests simply express the wish to be with Friends of “like mind.”

Aside from these few inquiries, we (the committee) are still pondering the questions: “What is it about Conservative Friends that others might be seeking by requesting membership?” and “What opportunities might the yearly meeting realize in answering these inquiries?” Some of the inquirers seem to be asking for spiritual help or seeking a validating alliance. Such expressions require our careful consideration of what, if anything, we may be able to offer them as individuals to be truly helpful. Attempts at helping in such situations have serious potential for unintentional harms both to those being helped and the helper. In making decisions about opportunities for involvement with inquirers it is important for the yearly meeting to take care not only to discern the inquirer’s need, but also whether or not we as a yearly meeting are able to be actually helpful in the particular situation.

#### Possible Responses

Our yearly meeting might consider some changes in our understanding of membership to provide some form of membership for such inquirers, but it is difficult to see how any alternative manner of membership in the yearly meeting itself could provide the discernment, nurture and accountability of a local monthly meeting where direct relationships are possible, if not always realized.

Two distinct alternatives for relationships with distant Friends or inquirers might be within our capacity as a yearly meeting as a way for the inquirer to be affiliated for the purpose of spiritual support with our yearly meeting:

1. An idea which might be developed would be identifying inquirers wishing to belong to a “Wider North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Fellowship” so as to have regular communication as a group with the yearly meeting.

2. Another idea would be developing the capacity to respond to the expressed spiritual needs of individual inquirers by offering correspondence with a yearly meeting member as a “spiritual Friend,” if so requested by the inquirer.

The first alternative would offer a program inquirers could participate in, while the second appears more individual and personal. Both alternatives would rely on the yearly meeting accepting as a real concern this spiritual outreach. A sufficient number of individual members with appropriate skills would need to accept the tasks involved and devote the time and energy required for the actions to be relationally significant. The development of either idea would need careful consideration by the yearly meeting as to the actual possibilities and necessary limits of such affiliations or associations. We (the committee) cannot recommend undertaking either of these alternatives without a clearer discernment by the yearly meeting of its concern to be more involved in responding to such inquirers with the required commitments of time, skills, and efforts.

#### Appendix

Yearly Meeting documents related to the question under consideration:

1. The minute from the Fourth Month 28, 2013 Representative Body meeting which initiated the question:

2. Section on affiliation on our NCYM(C) website:

Inquiries about Membership and Meeting Affiliation

Feeling a close connection to North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)? We welcome inquiries about individual membership and monthly meeting affiliation. Modern modes of travel and communication make long distances a less formidable obstacle to strong relationships among Friends than was the case in previous generations. Meaningful membership is possible where the commitment to a strong and healthy relationship is sustained.

**Individual Membership:** In our yearly meeting, individual membership rests with a monthly meeting, not the yearly meeting. Several monthly meetings have members who live outside their local area, or outside North Carolina. The quality of the relationship between the individual and the meeting is more important than the physical distance that separates them. To begin exploring membership with us, get to know the Friends in one of our monthly meetings. Information about locations, times of worship, etc., are available from the monthly meeting contacts.

**Monthly Meeting Affiliation:** North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) has a long history of welcoming unaffiliated monthly meetings into the yearly meeting. The most recent of these was Davidson Monthly Meeting in 2009. Monthly meetings interested in exploring affiliation should begin by sending representatives to our yearly meeting sessions, Representative Body meetings, and other events (see the Calendar). If interest continues, a period of intentional inter-visitation and dialogue would follow.

Monthly meetings are asked to read and consider this report to discern if there are those in our meetings who might be led to engage with those inquiring from a distance.

-Worship Group Conservative Heredia Costa Rica

-worship group in Becket, MA. . . . a letter from the Northampton (MA) Friends Meeting oversight committee for the worship group, under whose care the worship group functions, 2012-10, p. 8 (2013 Minute Book).

Northampton Friends appreciate the response of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) to our Friends Caroline Whitbeck's desire for communication and fellowship with NCYMC in relation to the worship group she has felt led to establish in Becket, Massachusetts. This worship group is under the care of Northampton Friends Meeting, which is a member of New England Yearly Meeting.

-Friends are also again encouraged to visit Croatan Friends in New Bern.

Inquiries about Affiliation: 2010, p. 8

The clerk asked for guidance on how to respond to groups that feel a kinship with our yearly meeting but which are not within easy traveling distance. There is a sense that true faith community requires face-to-face contact. ... The sense of the meeting [Representative Body] was that when groups (including existing monthly meetings) or individuals inquire, the yearly meeting clerk is to welcome them, especially to visit; to come and be with us. The clerk should do this as requests come in, and is to emphasize being with us in our true form, and then see if they still want to be with us after knowing us.

The sense was reaffirmed that individual membership is for the discernment of monthly meetings not the yearly meeting.

The sense was that requests for affiliation with North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) from monthly meetings affiliated with other yearly meeting[s] require special tact in proceeding with discernment, but we are open to exploring. It was reiterated that this exploration requires extended interaction and being led by the Spirit as to the rightness of this relationship.

Encouraging publication: 1991, p. 8; 1992, 55; and 1995, p. 14.

The yearly meeting has a history of encouraging individuals and monthly meetings to publish newsletters, journals, and even books.

A minute from Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight that recommended that yearly meeting consider the publication of all or some of Lloyd Lee Wilson's essays was read. Friends agreed to establish a committee to write a statement to be used following the title page of the essays. The committee will bring the suggested statement to the next business session for further consideration.

The statement submitted by the committee was read and approved. The meeting approved that Lloyd Lee Wilson move forward with publication of the essays. The same committee will continue to work with Lloyd Lee Wilson, at his request, and offer support as needed to him. (1992, p. 55)

Paul Thompson of England has written ... requesting permission to print more copies of "A Brief Statement of the Doctrines and Principles ..." which was issued by the yearly meeting in Woodland in 1935. Friends agreed to ask the Friends Historical Collection of Guilford College to review the leaflet for accuracy against the original one. If it is accurate, Friends have no objection to the group in Britain publishing it. The clerk will make note in a letter to Paul Thompson that some of the practices have changed. (1995, p. 14)