

FAITH
AND
PRACTICE
Book of Discipline

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AFFILIATED WITH FRIENDS UNITED MEETING
RICHMOND, INDIANA

2021 Edition

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Introduction

Faith and Practice as a Resource

This volume of Faith and Practice is intended to serve as a resource for members of Friends Church of North Carolina. The included history and information on who we are and what we believe as Friends should be helpful to all members as they continue their daily walk with Jesus Christ. Also, the guidelines outlining the structure and processes of the organization will be helpful in business proceedings, not only in the broad scope of the larger body, but also in the maintenance of the work of the local meeting as we strive to be the hands of Christ.

Part I
Faith and Life

CHAPTER 1

Historical Statement

George Fox and the Rise of Quakerism in England

Beginnings in England

1. Quakerism had its beginning in England at a time of great religious and political ferment. The Reformation had involved crown and church alike, and the struggle with the papacy had opened the way for numerous independent movements that affected all elements of society. Over against the formalism of the established church stood Puritan attempts at reform, as well as the search for a fundamentally different expression of religious truth which at times led to fanaticism. But there were also deeply concerned Seekers whose spiritual ideals were so similar to those of George Fox that to a great extent he drew his followers and fellow workers from them. It is impossible to determine how many of his views and practices he may have adopted from that source, but since he would accept nothing until it was confirmed by his own experience, he developed the firsthand certainty which made his teachings so effective.

Fox... Childhood, Youth

2. George Fox was born in July 1624, into a home of piety. His father, Christopher, was known in his community as "Righteous Christer" and his mother, Mary, was "a good, honest, virtuous woman." In Fox's own account in his Journal, he writes, "When I came to eleven years of age, I knew pureness and righteousness; for while a child I was taught how to walk to be kept pure."¹ At nineteen years of age, experiencing deep spiritual conflict, he began a four-year period of wandering over the land, studying the Bible and seeking spiritual help from churchmen and dissenters alike. He then tells of his great religious experience, "And when all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do; then, oh! then I heard a voice which said, 'There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition'"² In 1647, at the age of twenty-three, he began the ministry that was to bring together before his death in 1691 some fifty or sixty thousand Friends in England, besides large groups in America and elsewhere.

First Called Quakers

3. The emphasis of George Fox on the "light of Christ" led to the adoption by his followers of the name, "Children of Light". This was succeeded as early as 1652 by "Friends in the Truth", or merely "Friends". The popular name, "Quakers" was said by George Fox to have been first applied by Justice Bennett in 1650, "because I bade them tremble at the word of the Lord". It was said by Robert Barclay to have been applied as a term of reproach because "sometimes the power of God will break forth into a whole meeting . . . and thereby trembling and a motion of the body will be upon most if not upon all."³

Early Organization

4. Although he declared that he was forming no new sect or denominational group but bringing a universal message, Fox soon found some organization necessary for his growing fellowship. Though various local and general meetings had been held previously, the first regular monthly meeting seems to have been organized in 1653. Fox writes in 1656: "About this time I was moved to set up the men's quarterly meetings throughout the nation," thus carrying on a work already begun and furnishing an enduring pattern of organization. General meetings had been held in various localities prior to 1668 when London Yearly Meeting began to meet regularly. Dublin (Ireland) Yearly Meeting was organized in 1669.

¹ George Fox, *Journal*.

² George Fox, *Journal*.

³ Eleanore Price Mather, *Barclay in Brief*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #28, p. 51.

Period of Persecution 5. During this early period of Quakerism, the persecution because of the refusal to take oaths, pay tithes, and attend the established church was extremely severe. About four hundred fifty of the most gifted young leaders among Fox's followers either were killed or died as a result of the various forms of persecution. The loss of this leadership was an important factor in the decline of the evangelical fervor of the early Quakers, and, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Quakerism began to settle into a period of quietism from which it did not emerge until well into the nineteenth century.

Meetings for Sufferings 6. Although there was no hesitation on the part of early Friends in recognizing the ministry of women, the first meetings for business were men's meetings; however, meetings for women were soon established, charged particularly with the care of members of their sex. The Meeting for Sufferings looked after the victims of persecution and other cases of need, and later had general charge of the affairs of the group between sessions of the yearly meeting. In most groups in America the Meeting for Sufferings was later known as the Permanent Board and later still the Representative Body. Records of births, marriages, and deaths were carefully kept by the monthly meetings, and marriages were carefully supervised. In the course of time the desire for good order, harmony and religious unity in their meetings led to rigid regulations as to the conduct of members and finally to the disownment of large numbers of persons who were not disposed to conform to certain regulations.

American Beginnings and Growth

Growth and Expansion 1. The universal aspect of Quakerism led its messengers at an early date to the continent of Europe and as far east as Turkey and Palestine. They ministered without prejudice to Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Mohammedans, and impartially to kings, nobles, and peasants. The first Friends to cross the Atlantic went to Barbados where they had large followings. Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, who came to the islands in 1655, passed on to Boston the next summer, and, as far as is known, were the first Quaker visitors to the American mainland. These women were seized at once, imprisoned, and finally sent back to their place of departure as were the other Quaker apostles who ventured to come later. But banishment, fines, whipping, imprisonment, and even hanging of four of the number on Boston Common, 1659-1661, were not sufficient to restrain their coming. "If God calls us" they declared, "woe to us if we come not". Condemned persons were accompanied by followers who were "moved of their Lord to look your bloody laws in the face."

American Yearly Meetings 2. George Fox and other early leaders visited America, evangelizing and aiding in the organization of meetings. The first yearly meeting to be organized was *New England* in 1661. *Baltimore Yearly Meeting* was established in 1672 (as Maryland Yearly Meeting) and *Virginia Yearly Meeting* in 1673 "by the motion and order of George Fox" who had attended the first and second session of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. *Virginia Yearly Meeting* united with Baltimore in 1845. *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting* was organized in 1681; *New York* in 1695 by New England; *North Carolina* in 1698; *Ohio*, the first beyond the Alleghenies, in 1813 by Baltimore. *Indiana Yearly Meeting* was organized by Ohio in 1827 and became the fruitful mother of several other yearly meetings: *Western Yearly Meeting* in Indiana and eastern Illinois in 1858; *Iowa* in 1863; *Kansas* in 1872; and *Wilmington* in 1892. *Canadian (Orthodox) Yearly Meeting* was organized by New York in 1867; *Oregon* in 1893 by Iowa; and *Nebraska* in 1908 by the Five Years Meeting (FUM) from Iowa Yearly Meeting territory.

Current American yearly meetings, year of establishment, and affiliations are: *New England Yearly Meeting* (US), 1661, Friends United Meeting (FUM) and Friends General Conference (FGC); *Baltimore Yearly Meeting* (US), 1672, FUM and FGC; *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting* (US), 1681, FGC; *New York Yearly Meeting* (US), 1695, FUM and FGC; *Ohio Yearly Meeting* (US), 1813, Conservative; *Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region* (US), 1813 (name changed from Ohio Yearly Meeting, Damascus, in 1971), Evangelical Friends Church (EFC) [formerly Evangelical Friends International]; *Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting* (US), 1821 (name changed from Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1976), FGC; *Indiana Yearly Meeting* (US), 1821, FUM; *Western Yearly Meeting* (US), 1858, FUM; *Iowa Yearly Meeting* (US), 1863, FUM; *Mid-America Yearly Meeting* (US), 1872 (name changed from Kansas Yearly Meeting in 1978), EFC; *Illinois Yearly Meeting* (US), 1875, FGC; *Iowa Yearly Meeting* (US), 1877, Conservative; *Wilmington Yearly Meeting* (US), 1892, FUM; *Northwest Yearly Meeting* (US), 1893 (name changed from Oregon Yearly Meeting in 1971), EFC; *Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends* (California, US), 1895 (name changed from California Yearly Meeting to Southwest Yearly Meeting in 1984 to Evangelical Friends Church Southwest); *North*

Carolina Yearly Meeting (US), 1904, Conservative; *Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends* (US), 1908, (name changed from Nebraska Yearly Meeting) FUM; *Cuba Yearly Meeting* (Cuba), 1927, FUM; *Jamaica Yearly Meeting* (West Indies), 1941, FUM; *Pacific Yearly Meeting* (US), 1947; *Canadian Yearly Meeting* (Canada) (union of Genesee, 1834, Hicksite; Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1867, Orthodox; and Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1881, Conservative), 1955, FUM and FGC; *Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting* (US), 1957, EFC; *South Central Yearly Meeting* (US), 1961, FGC; *Southeastern Yearly Meeting* (US), 1962, FUM and FGC; *Lake Erie Yearly Meeting* (US), 1963, FGC; *Alaska Yearly Meeting* (US), 1970, by California Yearly Meeting, EFC; *National Evangelical Friends Church* (Guatemala, Central America); *Evangelical Friends Yearly Meeting* (Honduras, Central America); *Yearly Meeting of Evangelical Friends* (El Salvador, Central America); *Religious Association of Evangelical Friends* (Mexico); *Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting* (US), 1970; *North Pacific Yearly Meeting* (US), 1973; *National Evangelical Friends Church* (Peru, South America); *Bolivian Holiness Mission Evangelical Friends Church* (Bolivia, South America); *National Evangelical Friends Church of Bolivia* (Bolivia, South America); *Northern Yearly Meeting* (US), 1975, FGC, *New Association of Friends (Indiana)* (US), 2015, FUM; *Friends Church of North Carolina* (US) 2018, FUM and *North Carolina Fellowship of Friends* (US) 2018, FUM (as a division of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, 1698).

Other Yearly Meetings 3. Yearly meetings in Africa are: *Madagascar* (Malagasy Republic, 1881, now part of the United Church); *Pemba Yearly Meeting* (Tanzania), 1916; *East Africa Yearly Meeting* (Kaimosi) (Kenya), 1946, FUM, Friends Mission from 1902; *South Africa Yearly Meeting* (South Africa), 1948; *Elgon Religious Society of Friends* (Lugulu) (Kenya), 1973; *Burundi Yearly Meeting* (Burundi), 1977, interim yearly meeting status granted by Mid-America Yearly Meeting.

Other African yearly meetings organized since 1977 are: *Bware Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Central Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chavakali Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chebuyusi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chwele Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Congo Yearly Meeting* (Congo); *East Africa Yearly Meeting of Friends (North)* (Kenya), FUM; *Elgon East Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Highland Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Kakamega Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Lugari Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Malava Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Nairobi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Nandi, Yearly Meeting*, (Kenya); *Rwanda Yearly Meeting* (Rwanda); *Tanzania Yearly Meeting* (Tanzania) FUM; *Tongaren Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Tuloi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Uganda Yearly Meeting* (Uganda), FUM; *Vihiga Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Vokoli Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM.

Yearly meetings in Asia are: *Bundelkhand*; *Mid-India*, 1907; *Japan*, 1917; *Taiwan*, 1977, by Evangelical Friends Church-Eastern Region; *Near East* (occupied West Bank and Lebanon) 1929 (originally Syria and Palestine Yearly Meeting), FUM.

Yearly meetings in Australasia are: *Australia*, 1964 and *New Zealand*, 1964.

Yearly meetings in Europe are: *Britain Yearly Meeting*, 1668 (name changed from London Yearly Meeting, 1994); *Ireland*, 1669; *Norway*, 1818; *Denmark*, 1875; *Pyrmont*, 1925 (Germany); *Netherlands*, 1931; *France*, 1933; *Sweden*, 1935; *Switzerland*, 1944; *Germany*, 1969.

Historical Sketch, North Carolina Yearly Meeting 4. In 1672, George Fox and William Edmundson, engaged in a great mission in the “service of truth”, traveled to America. William Edmundson first made his way into Carolina, and near Albemarle Sound in the general locality of the present town of Hertford, he visited Henry Phillips and his wife, the only Quaker settlers in Carolina. Henry Phillips called the inhabitants together and Edmundson had a meeting with them; the next day he held a meeting at the home of Francis Toms, and “a blessed meeting it was, for several were tendered with a sense of the Power of God and received the truth and abode in it.” These two meetings mark the planting of Quakerism in North Carolina.

A few weeks later, George Fox reached Carolina and spent eighteen days traveling through the Perquimans, Pasquotank, Chowan region and preaching to the people. In 1676, when Edmundson came the second time, he reported that he found Friends “finely settled,” but no record of organization prior to 1680 is preserved. For that year there are minutes of Perquimans Monthly Meeting recording a “general meeting” held at the home of Francis Toms. At that meeting Christopher Nicholson and Ann Atwood announced intentions of their marriage which took place the eleventh of second month 1680.

The Quarterly Meeting (later known as Eastern) was organized in 1681 with the home of Christopher Nicholson as its meeting place. In 1698 Pasquotank Monthly Meeting was set up; it usually met at the home of Henry White until after 1703 when the meeting decided “to erect a meeting house with as much speed as can be”. This meeting house at Symons Creek takes its place in colonial history as the first church erected in the state of North Carolina.

North Carolina Yearly Meeting met for the first time in 1698. Existing minutes date from 1708 to 2017.

Settlement of piedmont Carolina began just before the middle of the eighteenth century and migrations from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Nantucket brought Quaker settlers into the Cane Creek, New Garden, and Deep River areas in considerable numbers. Fifty years later, Friends from the older meetings in eastern Carolina joined the westward migration; many families went on to Indiana and Ohio, but many remained to strengthen the meetings of central Carolina. By 1759, Friends were so strongly settled in this new center that it seemed expedient to set up a quarterly meeting which took the name Western. Within its original limits, three other quarterly meetings developed as settlements grew: New Garden, set up in 1787; Deep River, in 1818; and Southern, in 1819. Eastern Quarter meanwhile established one other quarterly meeting, Contentnea, in 1789.

The rapid growth of Western Quarter led to changes in the meeting place for the North Carolina Yearly Meeting. As early as 1776, Friends began asking that it convene in Western Quarter in alternate years. In 1787 the request was granted, and in 1787 the North Carolina Yearly Meeting met at Centre Meeting House. Meanwhile, a new meeting house was being erected at New Garden, and when it was finally completed in 1791, the North Carolina Yearly Meeting convened there. Until 1813 it alternated between Symons Creek and New Garden; from 1813 until 1883 it met annually at New Garden, except for the session of 1881, which met at Friendsville, Tennessee, with Friendsville Quarterly Meeting (set up in 1871, transferred to Wilmington in 1897). Expansion into Tennessee had been quite steady and this was the second quarterly meeting established there, the first being Lost Creek (1802-1888). There had also been a quarterly meeting at Bush River for meetings in South Carolina and Georgia between 1791 and 1808. The last quarterly meetings established in North Carolina were Yadkin Valley, set up in 1889; Surry, in 1898; and Northwest in 2000.

From 1883 until 1905 the North Carolina Yearly Meeting met at High Point; from 1905 to 2000 it met in New Garden Meetinghouse or at Guilford College; from 2001 to 2015 at Black Mountain; 2016 at Camp Caraway; and the final meeting in 2017 at Quaker Lake Camp.

In 2017, North Carolina Yearly Meeting organized into two associations, effective in 2018, Friends Church of North Carolina and North Carolina Fellowship of Friends. Friends Church of North Carolina began with four quarters: Contentnea, Southern, Western, and Yadkin Valley.

Evangelical Movements of the Nineteenth Century

Ministry of Gurney 1. The development of American Quakerism has been greatly influenced by the visits of prominent English Friends. Hannah Backhouse made extensive visits in the 1830s, encouraging Bible reading and study, and the organization of Bible classes and Bible schools. Her cousin, Joseph John Gurney, who later visited nearly all the American yearly meetings, gave the Bible a still more important place in Friends' consideration and placed a new emphasis on conversion and on justification through the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Other influences reinforced these movements and when the exclusiveness that had kept Friends from outside contacts was weakened, the great American revival of the 1850s reached the younger members.

Evangelists 2. In 1860 Lindley M. Hoag of Iowa and Sybil Jones of New England were present at Indiana Yearly Meeting and encouraged a special meeting for the young Friends that became a time of vocal exercise and testimony by hundreds. As a result, an unusual group of young men and women were ready for the work of evangelism which followed. The revival movement, checked by the Civil War, reappeared and continued throughout the 1870s and the 1880s under the leadership of such evangelists as John Henry Douglas, Robert Douglas, Nathan and Esther Frame, Allen Jay, and many others. There was some opposition to the new methods and some excesses developed, but the movement spread, reaching the pillars of the meetings and the general community alike.

Development of the Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral Ministry Origins

1. The development of the pastoral ministry during the latter half of the nineteenth century was due to the growing demand for trained leadership. The change probably would have come eventually but more slowly if it had not been for the impetus given to it by the evangelical movement. Many were brought into membership by the revival meetings who had had no experience in the practices and methods of the Society of Friends nor any knowledge of their doctrines and traditions. "In places there were whole Meetings with only a few birthright members. Often converts in a series of meetings would join Friends merely because the preacher was a Quaker, and they had no other denominational preferences."¹ This called for a teaching ministry and for pastoral care such as had never been rendered in the traditional type of Quaker meeting with its system of distributed responsibility.

Employment of Pastors

2. It was natural, therefore, that the evangelist should be asked to remain in the community in full-time ministry and the shepherding of the flock. The feeling against the paid ministry diminished, and references to it were omitted in revisions of the Discipline. Definite employment and financial assistance were provided for ministers and evangelists who were called to serve as pastors. The Meeting on Ministry and Oversight became also the Pastoral Committee and was given the responsibility of selecting the pastor and supervising the work of the pastor. These developments were obvious departures from the early practices of Friends, meeting as they did at the hour of worship in a silence that might continue through the hour, or that might be broken by any one of the several resident ministers or other members of the congregation. The change to current forms took place gradually but not without regret and even opposition on the part of many. In some areas the older forms still survive, but the pastoral ministry is the prevailing pattern in most American yearly meetings.

¹Elbert Russell, *The History of Quakerism*, p. 483.

Origin of Friends United Meeting (FUM) (formerly Five Years Meeting)

Concern for Unity

1. It was apparent that if some formula of unity could be devised, it would tend to prevent further divisions among Friends if new issues or divergent leadership should again arise. The years after the separation in 1828¹, a conference of the “Orthodox” yearly meetings was held in Philadelphia where a testimony was formulated which they all adopted as a statement of belief. Other conferences were held in 1849, 1851, and 1853, following the Wilbur-Gurney separation², but were ineffective since not all the meetings were represented. Western Yearly Meeting twice asked for a conference but without success. Finally, in 1887, in response to a proposal made the year before by Indiana Yearly Meeting, twelve yearly meetings, including London and Dublin, sent delegates to a general conference held in Richmond, Indiana. Specially invited members from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Arch Street) were also present but not as official delegates. The principal work of this conference was the formulation of the Richmond Declaration of Faith, which was later adopted by six of the yearly meetings represented. London, New England, and Ohio yearly meetings did not adopt the declaration, while Dublin, New York, and Baltimore gave their general approval without formal adoption.

Origin of Five Years Meeting

2. A second conference with the same American representation met at Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1892. It was largely concerned with the consideration of the pastoral ministry to which it gave its approval. It also planned for united foreign missionary activities and for another conference to be held in the same city five years later. When this third conference met in 1897, it approved the idea of a uniform discipline which was to provide for a quinquennial conference with delegated powers. The new discipline was prepared and submitted to the yearly meetings in 1900 for approval; its adoption by eleven yearly meetings by 1902 opened the way for the organization of the Five Years Meeting. The first session was held in Indianapolis in 1902. With the exception of 1912 when the meeting was again held in Indianapolis, succeeding sessions through 1969 were held in Richmond, Indiana. Of the yearly meetings represented at the Conference of 1897, only Philadelphia and Ohio remained outside of the new organization. Canadian Yearly Meeting joined the Five Years Meeting in 1907 and with the organization of Nebraska Yearly Meeting by the Five Years Meeting in 1908, the number of thirteen constituent American yearly meetings was reached. Oregon Yearly Meeting withdrew in 1926 and Kansas in 1937. Due to the Great Depression, the 1932 sessions were postponed to 1935. Since 1960 the sessions have occurred every three years, and in 1966 the name was officially changed from Five Years Meeting of Friends to Friends United Meeting. In 1972, triennial sessions were held at the American Baptist Assembly, Green Lake, Wisconsin; in 1975 at Wilmington College, Ohio; in 1978, at William Penn College, Oskaloosa, Iowa; in 1981, at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana; in California Yearly Meeting in 1984; in 1987 at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina; in 1990 in Bloomington, Indiana; in 1993 in Clinton, New York; in 1996 at Indianapolis, Indiana; in 1999 in Williamsburg, Virginia; in 2002 in Nairobi, Kenya; in 2005 in Des Moines, Iowa; in 2008 in High Point, North Carolina; in 2011 in Wilmington, Ohio; in 2014 in Marion, Indiana; and in 2017 at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Cooperative Agencies

American Friends Service Committee

1. As a channel for service in a wide range of humanitarian activities at home and abroad, the American Friends Service Committee has achieved wide recognition. It was organized in 1917 to train and equip conscientious objectors to compulsory military training (for war relief and reconstruction work in Europe) in the First World War. Its work has been continued through the years in Europe and America, and more recently in Asia and Africa, as a religious expression of the Society of Friends in fields of social action. Whatever concerns human beings in distress, whatever may help free individuals, groups, and nations from fear, hate, or narrowness – these are subjects for the committee’s consideration. With the belief that “that of God in everyone” will respond to unselfish love and constructive goodwill, the committee attempts to interpret religion in concrete ways as a reconciling influence wherever violence and conflict have developed. Its work has been supported by all groups of Friends and by many non-Friends, and it has cooperated closely with the Friends Service Council (London).

¹ The Separation of 1828 was as a result of the Hicksite movement, believing “the Inner Light” to have authority over the scriptures.

² A division concerning the authority of Scripture and the role of the Inner Light. Joseph John Gurney held to the Quaker testimonies but saw the Scriptures as authoritative. John Wilbur believed that Scripture was a guide, but that the Inner Light was the ultimate authority. This schism (1845) produced two separate religious societies.

***Friends World
Committee for
Consultation***

2. Every generation of Friends has to rediscover the purpose and the strengths of the Religious Society of Friends for themselves and in their own time. Without this renewal, the unique combination of individual faithfulness and social gospel that is the heart of the Quaker movement will risk being lost. The development of so many yearly meetings throughout the world and the outreach of Friends in a wide variety of mission and service projects led to the formation in 1937 of Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). This consultative committee, made up of representatives from most Yearly Meetings, serves primarily as a cooperative instrument by which Friends of all types may come to know each other and work together more effectively. FWCC, in conjunction with AFSC makes possible the representation of world Quakerism at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland and New York as a non-governmental organization. Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in 56 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia & the West Pacific (AWPS), and Europe & the Middle East (EMES). FWCC's World Office is in London [website: fwcc.world].

FWCC-Section of the Americas [website: fwccamericas.org]

Our Work: In the Americas, the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship.

Mission: Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.

Vision: We envision a thriving and integrated network of Friends from the Arctic to the Andes, woven together in transformative faith, learning to love, listen, and witness.

History: In the 1970s the Section of the Americas held a hemispheric conference in Wichita, Kansas. This opportunity for Latin American Friends to become better acquainted and discuss areas of shared interest and concern encouraged groups of Friends and Yearly Meetings from many countries to join and transform an organizing committee into the Comité de los Amigos Latinoamericanos (Committee of Latin American Friends, or COAL).

***Friends
Committee on
National
Legislation***

3. The Friends Committee on National Legislation is a working committee of Friends and like-minded persons who feel a special concern for the political area of religious life. It is autonomous, yet seeks by every means possible to keep itself responsive to concerns of the Religious Society of Friends. Two-thirds of the members of the General Committee are appointed by yearly meetings of the Religious Society of Friends in the United States and other Friends organizations. About one-third of the General Committee are appointed at large.

Among the committee's concerns are: world disarmament under law; supporting and improving the United Nations; economic development of underdeveloped countries; preserving civil liberties, and advancing civil rights.

The committee testifies before congressional committees regarding proposed legislation; interviews members of Congress; publishes a monthly newsletter; publishes periodical action bulletins on vital congressional issues; and encourages Friends and others to visit with and communicate with members of Congress.

CHAPTER 2

Faith and Thought

Basic Principles

Declarations of Faith

1. While we as Friends do not have a formal creed as basis of membership, it has seemed wise from time to time to make some declaration of the fundamentals of our faith. Such a declaration was the letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, which is included in the following section of this volume. A more extended statement was “The Declaration of Faith” issued by the Richmond Conference of 1887, and “Essential Truths” adopted in 1902 by the Five Years Meeting, also included in the following section. We desire at this time to call our own membership to a deeper religious life, a greater consecration of heart and will to God, and a more positive loyalty to the faith for which so many of our forerunners suffered and died.

Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Holy Scriptures

2. We reaffirm the statements of the above documents which gather up and express the central truth with regard to the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Scriptures, for which we stand now as in the past; and we urge all our members to refresh their minds by a careful reading of these documents. Additional statements are contained in paragraphs following.

Meaning of Salvation

3. Because of the universally recognized fact of sin, there is need for repentance and salvation which bring deliverance from sin and the possession of spiritual life. This comes through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, who through His love and sacrifice draws individuals to Him. Conviction of sin is awakened by the operation of the Holy Spirit, causing the soul to feel its need for reconciliation with God. Individuals thus come into newness of life and are saved from the power of sin to righteousness as they yield their lives to Him in loving and loyal obedience. A direct personal relationship to God becomes an actual reality, a transformation that may be wrought without any human agency or ceremony, since their entire spiritual life springs from the direct relation of their souls with a living and present God and cooperation with Him. Though adults may consciously and deliberately yield to evil impulses necessitating repentance, it does not follow in the views of Friends that guilt is imputed to infants. Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.” The Christian nurture of children is the highest privilege and most sacred duty of both the Christian home and the church.

The Living Presence

4. Friends give special emphasis to the vital principle that salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God. They recall that primitive Christianity was a spiritual society in which all members were priests and held direct communion with God. From the birth of the Quaker movement, Friends have regarded Christianity as essentially an experience and a way of life based on that experience. George Fox, in describing the great spiritual transformation of his early life, declares, “And this I knew experimentally.” Isaac Penington gives as his testimony, “My heart said, ‘This is He whom I waited for and sought after from my childhood . . . I have met with my God, I have met with my Saviour!’” Robert Barclay says, “I have felt a power that touched my heart and as I gave way to it I felt the evil in me weakening and the good raised up.” This intimate fellowship with God, the consciousness of Christ as a living presence, has run through the whole history of Quakerism as a warm, life-giving stream. A life led by the Holy Spirit is the logical outcome of a faith based upon belief in a direct, personal approach to God. Nothing is more certain than that God is still speaking to individuals as He did in ancient time. His Spirit guides and controls the surrendered life, makes sensitive the conscience, illuminates the mind, and strengthens the will. The Christian’s constant and supreme business is obedience to Him.

The Light of Christ

5. From the earliest days of Friends' history there are frequent references in their writings to the belief that there is in the human soul a Light which is of divine origin and which makes the individual capable of response to moral and spiritual influences. It is this divine quality that enables that person to develop the awareness of moral distinctions and obligations known as conscience, having the inspiration to live, struggle, and suffer for the achievement of what ought to be. It gives humankind preeminence over the natural world, rising above physical nature, giving divine potentialities, and making it possible to experience the joys and satisfactions of the abundant life through acceptance of obedience to Jesus Christ. It is this spiritual endowment that enables advancement beyond the narrow bounds of self toward the Christian ideals of goodness and love, and to respond to the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. George Fox often called this principle the "Seed of God," "that of God in everyone," or "the Light within." William Penn called it "the great principle of God in man, the root and spring of divine substance." Robert Barclay described it as "a real, spiritual substance" or "a divine bestowal." It is "that something we cannot call less than divine and universal for it links up with the eternal realities, and with our fellow men of whatever race or creed. It may be hidden or warped by ignorance or pride or self-will or prejudice, but it cannot be wholly lost, for it is part of that which makes us essentially men, made in the divine image, and having within us boundless possibilities of life in God."¹

Divine-Human Relationship

6. The emphasis placed by Friends upon the foregoing principles is the source of our special testimonies and activities. Since all individuals are potentially temples of God, all personality is sacred; people everywhere are the object of His special concern and so are of immeasurable worth. This doctrine of the individual dignity permeates all human associations and is the basis of true democracy; it rests on the divine-human relationship and works through all aspects of life. Yielding oneself to divine guidance, one becomes an active partner with God in the extension of His kingdom. It is the light of God within that gives a burning sense of mission and inspires the ideal of universal brotherhood. In the realization of this spiritual fellowship and divine guidance, Friends labor for the alleviation of human suffering; for the intellectual, moral, and spiritual elevation of mankind; and for purified and exalted citizenship. It is an essential part of the faith that each individual should be in truth what is professed by them in word. The underlying principle of life and action for individuals, and also for society, is transformation through the power of God and implicit obedience to His revealed will.

For more implicit and extended statements of belief, reference is made to those officially recognized at various times, especially the "Epistle addressed by George Fox and others to the Governor of Barbados in 1671" the "Declaration of Faith" issued by the Richmond Conference in 1887 and "Essential Truths" adopted in 1902 by the Five Years Meeting. (These documents are included in the following section of this printing.)

Ideals of Worship

Meaning of Worship

1. It has been said of the early Friends in America that the meeting for worship was the heart of the Quaker system, because it was in this meeting that they experienced a fresh sense of God. In such a gathering the Quaker method is extremely simple. No intermediary, ritual, or ceremony is required. Words are not essential. God does not need to be brought near for –

"Closer is He than breathing and
nearer than hands and feet."

It is the human mind and heart that need to be adjusted and made conscious of His presence. Waiting in silent meditation, or voicing prayer or praise, the worshiper experiences this fresh sense of God and, with it, a renewal of spiritual strength in communion with God and with fellow worshipers.

Meeting for Worship

2. In such a setting the whole meeting becomes a listening post for divine intimations and revelations. Vocal prayer gathers up the aspirations and needs of all the group. Hymns and spiritual songs, sung with the spirit and with the understanding, are not only appropriate but become the normal and helpful expression of faith, hope, and love toward God and in praise of Christ, the Savior of mankind. The minister speaks with freedom and power; the message, whether conceived in previous meditation and prayer or given by the immediate operation of the Spirit, will be fresh, illuminating, and uplifting. The minister will be able to draw on the resources of past experience and study as well as to interpret helpfully the present manifestations of God's will and word.

¹ London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1960), p. 120.

Friends and the Sacraments

Ceremonial Rites 1. “The external sacramental practices which prevailed in the churches of the seventeenth century seemed to George Fox to have little inner meaning and but slender spiritual significance. They seemed to him, eager as he was to preserve only vital functions, part of the deadwood of the ‘wilderness’ period of the Church’s life. He took the attitude which St. Paul had taken toward circumcision and which Martin Luther had taken a century before toward ‘Sacred works’. But he had no thought of omitting or undervaluing the Spiritual reality for which the outward sacraments stood”¹

The Inward Experience 2. As a result, Friends have never observed outward communion or baptism, the two sacraments which are practiced by most Protestant churches. In these, as in many other matters, the Friends prefer the inward rather than the outward. We believe deeply in the spiritual reality behind these forms. John the Baptist, speaking of Jesus, said, “I indeed baptize you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost” (Mark 1:8). It is the inward experience, not the outward rite, that has seemed important to Friends. Instead of observing the Lord’s Supper once a week or once a month, Friends feel that every time of worship ought to be a time of deep communion with the Divine. The words of Revelation 3:20 refer to this deeper communion which is possible without the use of bread and wine: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me.”

Friends do not, however, belittle the reverent and spiritual use of the sacraments when they are a part of vital worship. They simply do not themselves feel the need for them.

The Scriptures

Scriptures and Inspiration 1. “The Canon of Scripture may be closed, but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has not ceased. We believe that there is no literature in the world where the revelation of God is given so fully as in our New Testament Scriptures We feel them to be inspired, because they inspire us; we go to them for guidance because as we read them we feel our eyes are being opened and our spirits kindled. We search them because ‘They are they that testify of me.’ It is the living Christ we want to find, the eternal revealer of the will of God. It is the spirit behind the letter that we need.”²

Scriptures and Revelation 2. The Holy Scriptures were given by the inspiration of God and are the divinely authorized record of the moral principles and doctrines of Christianity. In them, as interpreted and unfolded by the Holy Spirit, is an ever fresh and unfailing source of spiritual truth for the proper guidance of life and practice. Their value lies in their witness to the nature and purpose of God, their account of the message and mission of Jesus Christ, and their teachings as to salvation, the way of life, and eternal destiny. In the Scriptures is found the record both of humankind’s search for God and of God’s revelation to them. Through numerous spiritual pioneers, the illumination moves from the beginnings of history to “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” The Scriptures are an inheritance of all who through the centuries have found strength and guidance in the inspired wisdom of this storehouse of spiritual experience.

Search the Scriptures 3. The chief objective of the Bible student should be to grasp spiritual truths and teachings as vital and life-giving realities rather than to regard them as matters only for intellectual or doctrinal discussion. The student should accept with appreciation all fresh light thrown upon the biblical records but should remain assured that the spiritual strength which is received from such study comes from a living communion with Him of whom the records tell. They are an inexhaustible treasury of spiritual truth, fitted to the needs and problems of each age as it interprets and appropriates the message for its own time. Their words are words of life because they testify of Him who is Life. “In keeping them there is great reward.”

Barclay on the Scriptures 4. Of the Scriptures the Quaker apologist, Robert Barclay, writes: “God hath seen meet that herein we should see as in a looking-glass the conditions and experiences of the saints of old, that, finding our experiences to answer theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hopes of obtaining the same end strengthened. This is the great work of the Scriptures, and their service to us, that we may witness them fulfilled in us, and so discern the stamp of God’s Spirit and ways upon them, by the inward acquaintance we have with the same spirit and work in our hearts.”

¹ Rufus M. Jones, *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers*, p. 72 ff.

² Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*.

Spiritual Gifts

Gifts and the Kingdom 1. In fulfillment of the promise given to Joel, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,” the Heavenly Father in His wisdom has bestowed a diversity of gifts upon His children for the building up of His kingdom. Recognizing the inherent spiritual capacity of all people and the work of grace that is shared by all believers, Friends cherish these manifold endowments and desire to bring each to full development, that the whole body may be fitly framed together by that which each member supplies.

Endowments for Service 2. These spiritual endowments include: sensitivity to human need and suffering; efficiency in ministering thereto; intuitive power of religious insight; the personality and language to communicate religious truth and enthusiasm; sympathy, intelligence, and optimism in personal counsel; comprehension of broad social problems; constructive guidance in public affairs; power of dedicated self-expression in writing and teaching, and the skillful exercise of the creative arts of invention, painting, sculpture, and music.

Gift of the Ministry 3. Friends hold in special esteem the gift qualifying for the ministry. They do not ordain ministers, but as the gift develops and obedience to the Holy Spirit is manifest, they recognize the gift and encourage its training and exercise. There are a variety of ministries: evangelism; exposition and teaching of the gospel truths; engaging in prayer and in praise; exhortation and encouragement; speaking to states and conditions; and pastoral care. No sharp line of distinction can be drawn between the different types of ministry; all may be cultivated and developed by prayerful study and close observation of human need.

CHAPTER 3

General Doctrinal Statements

Adopted and Authorized by the Five-Years Meeting of Friends (1922)

“We recognize with profound sorrow that there is in the world today a great drift of religious unsettlement, unconcern and unbelief. We desire at this time to call our own membership to a deeper religious life, a greater consecration of heart and will to God and a more positive loyalty to the faith for which so many of our forerunners suffered and died. We wish to reaffirm the statements and declarations of faith contained in our *Uniform Discipline [Faith and Practice]*, vis., ‘*The Essential Truths*’, ‘*The Declaration of Faith*’ issued by the Richmond conference, in 1887, and ‘*George Fox’s letter to the Governor of Barbadoes*’, and we urge upon all our membership to refresh their minds by a careful reading of these documents which gather up and express the central truths for which we stand, now as in the past. But we would further remind our membership that our Christian faith involves more than the adoption and profession of written statements however precious they may be. It stands and lives only in free personal loyalty and devotion to a living Christ and an inward experience of His spiritual presence and power in the soul, making the facts of our religion as real and as capable of being soundly tested as are the facts of the physical universe. May Friends everywhere bear in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus.

“Hardly less important for the promotion of our spiritual influence and power in the world is an increase of faith, trust and confidence in one another, a love that suffers long and is kind and a unity of spirit which will bind us more closely together than uniformity of thought could ever do.” – *Extract from Minute 55, page 119, of the Minutes of the Five-Years Meeting, 1922.*

ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

Adopted by the Five Years Meeting, 1902

The vital principle of the Christian faith is the truth that a man's salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God.

Salvation is deliverance from sin and the possession of spiritual life. This comes through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as the Saviour, who, through His love and sacrifice draws us to Him.

Conviction for sin is awakened by the operation of the Holy Spirit causing the soul to feel its need of reconciliation with God. When Christ is seen as the only hope of salvation, and a man yields to Him, he is brought into newness of life, and realizes that his sonship to God has become an actual reality. This transformation is wrought without the necessary agency of any human priest, or ordinance, or ceremony whatsoever. A changed nature and life bear witness to this new relation to Him.

The whole spiritual life grows out of the soul's relation to God and its cooperation with Him, not from any outward or traditional observances.

Christ Himself baptizes the surrendered soul with the Holy Spirit, enduing it with power, bestowing gifts for service. This is an efficient baptism, a direct incoming of divine power for the transformation and control of the whole man. Christ Himself is the spiritual bread which nourishes the soul, and He thus enters into and becomes a part of the being of those who partake of Him. This participation with Christ and apprehension of Him become the goal of life for the Christian, Those who thus enter into oneness with Him become also joined in living union with each other as members of one body.

Both worship and Christian fellowship spring out of this immediate relation of believing souls with their Lord.

The Holy Scriptures were given by inspiration of God and are the divinely authorized record of the doctrines which Christians are bound to accept, and the moral principles which are to regulate their lives and actions. In them, as interpreted and unfolded by the Holy Spirit, is an ever fresh and unfailing source of spiritual truth for the proper guidance of life and practice.

The doctrines of the apostolic days are held by the Friends as essentials of Christianity. The Fatherhood of God; the Deity and humanity of the Son; the gift of the Holy Spirit; the atonement through Jesus Christ by which men are reconciled to God; the resurrection; the high priesthood of Christ, and the individual priesthood of believers, are most precious truths to be held, not as traditional dogmas, but as vital, life-giving realities.

The sinful condition of man and his proneness to yield to temptation, the world's absolute need of a Saviour, and the cleansing from sin in forgiveness and sanctification through the blood of Jesus Christ, are unceasing incentives to all who believe to become laborers together with God in extending His kingdom. By this high calling The Friends are pledged to the proclamation of the truth wherever the Spirit leads, both in home and in foreign fields.

The indwelling Spirit guides and controls the surrendered life, and the Christian's constant and supreme business is obedience to Him. But while the importance of individual guidance and obedience is thus emphasized, this fact gives not ground for license; the sanctified conclusions of the Church are above the judgement of a single individual.

The Friends find no scriptural evidence or authority for any form or degree of sacerdotalism in the Christian Church, or for the establishment of any ordinance or ceremonial rite for perpetual observance. The teachings of Jesus Christ concerning the spiritual nature of religion, the impossibility of promoting the spiritual life by the ceremonial application of material things, the fact that faith in Jesus Christ Himself is all-sufficient, the purpose of His life, death, resurrection and ascension, and His presence in the believer's heart, virtually destroy every ceremonial system and point the soul to the only satisfying source of spiritual life and power.

With faith in the wisdom of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and believing that it is His purpose to make His Church on earth a power for righteousness and truth, the Friends labor for the alleviation of human suffering; for the intellectual, moral and spiritual elevation of mankind; and for purified and exalted citizenship. The Friends believe war to be incompatible with Christianity and seek to promote peaceful methods for the settlement of all the differences between nations and between men.

It is an essential part of the faith that a man should be in truth what he professes in word, and the underlying principle of life and action for individuals, and also for society, is transformation through the power of God and implicit obedience to His revealed will.

For more explicit and extended statements of belief, reference is made to those officially put forth at various times, especially to the Letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbadoes in 1671, and to the Declaration of Faith, issued by the Richmond conference of 1887.

EXTRACT FROM GEORGE FOX'S LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS, 1671

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, the Creator of all things both in heaven and in earth and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and forever more.

And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only-begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe that there is no other foundation to be laid than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who tasted death for every man, shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the captain of our salvation, who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works; he is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to-wit, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He is (as the Scriptures of Truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification, and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the shepherd and Bishop of our Souls: He is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of; saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of the brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22, 23).

He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." He rules in our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life, but of Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, grace and peace; the author and finisher of our faith. This Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; He whom the high-priest raged against and said, He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach a horrible lie, namely, "That his disciples came and stole him away by night whilst they slept." After He was arisen from the dead, the history of the acts of the apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

Concerning the Holy scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who, as the Scripture itself declares (2 Peter 1:21), spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled; (He that fulfills them is Christ), and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16); and are able to make wise unto salvation, "through faith in Christ Jesus."

DECLARATION OF FAITH ISSUED BY THE RICHMOND CONFERENCE IN 1887

(N.B. It should be understood that the quotations from scripture are made from the Authorized Version unless stated to be made from the Revised Version [RV].)

It is under a deep sense of what we owe to Him who has loved us that we feel called upon to offer a declaration of those fundamental doctrines of Christian truth that have always been professed by our branch of the Church of Christ.

Of God

We believe in one holy (Isaiah 6:3, 57:15), almighty (Genesis 17:1), all wise (Romans 11:33, 16:27), and everlasting (Psalm 90:1, 2) God, the Father (Matthew 11:25-27), the Creator (Genesis 1:1) and Preserver (Job 7:20) of all things; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by whom all things were made (John 1:3), and by whom all things consist (Colossians 1:17); and in one Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son (John 15:26, 16:7), the Reprover (John 16:8) of the world, the Witness for Christ, (John 15:26) and the Teacher (John 14:26), Guide (John 16:13), and Sanctifier (2 Thessalonians 2:13) of the people of God; and that these three are one in the eternal Godhead (Matthew 28:19, John 14:16, 17); to whom be honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ

It is with reverence and thanksgiving that we profess our unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18). In Him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:4). He is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9); through whom the light of truth in all ages has proceeded from the Father of light (James 1:17). He is the eternal Word (John 1:1) who was with God and was God, revealing Himself in infinite wisdom and love, both as man's Creator (Colossians 1:13-16) and Redeemer (Colossians 1:14); for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20), born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23-25, Luke 1:35), the word was made flesh (John 1:14) and dwelt amongst men. He came in the fullness (Galatians 4) of the appointed time, being verily foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20) that He might fulfill (Isaiah 11:1-5, 52:13-15) the eternal counsel of the righteousness and love of God for the redemption of man (Isaiah 53). In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). Though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, veiling in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7) the brightness of His glory, that, through Him the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4) toward man might appear in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); for us He endured (Isaiah 53:4, Luke 12:50, Luke 19:41, 22:44) sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness (John 4:6), pain, unutterable anguish (Luke 22:43, 44) of body and of soul, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Thus humbling Himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven, sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them, leaving us the one perfect example (1 Peter 2:21) of all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) in self-sacrificing love.

But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to His people. In Him is revealed as true God and perfect man (Ephesians 4:13), a Redeemer, at once able to suffer and almighty to save. He became obedient (Philippians 2:8) unto death, even the death of the cross, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); in whom we have redemption through His blood (Ephesians 1:7), the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. It is our joy to confess that the remission of sins which any partake of is only in and by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice and not otherwise (*Barclay's Apology*, Propos. v. and vi. par. 15, p. 141). He was buried and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:4) according to the Scriptures, becoming the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15:23) of them that sleep, and having shown Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3), He ascended into heaven, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 1:3, 9:24). With the apostles who beheld His ascension, we rest in the

assurance of the angelic messengers, “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11, and see v. 7). With the apostle John, we would desire to unite in the words “Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelations 22:20). And now, whilst thus watching and waiting, we rejoice to believe that He is our King and Saviour. He is the one Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:15), who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and man offending (George Fox’s Epistle to the Governor of Barbados); the great High Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable (Hebrews 4:14, 7:24). He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25). All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18). By him the world shall be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:31); for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father (John 5:22, 23). All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good into the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil into the resurrection of judgment (John 5:28, 29 RV).

We reverently confess and believe that divine honor and worship are due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and his name to be called upon, as the Primitive Christians did because of the glorious oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer prayers and praises to God, nor receive from Him a gracious answer of blessing, but in and through his dear Son (Declaration of 1693, in *Sewell's History*, vol. II, 379).

We would, with humble thanksgiving, bear an especial testimony to our Lord’s perpetual dominion and power in His church. Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light, their forgiveness, and their joy. All are members of this church, by whatsoever name they may be called among men, who have been baptized by the one Spirit into the one body; who are builded as living stones upon Christ, the Eternal Foundation, and are united in faith and love in that fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Head (Ephesians 1:22). All its true members are made one in Him. They have washed their robes and made them white in His precious blood (Revelation 7:14), and He has made them priests unto God and His Father (Revelation 1:6). He dwells in their hearts by faith, and gives them of His peace. His will is their law, and in Him they enjoy the true liberty, a freedom from the bondage of sin.

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is, in the unity of the eternal Godhead, one with the Father and with the Son (Matthew 28:19). He is the Comforter “whom,” saith Christ, “the Father will send in my name” (John 14:26). He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8). He testifies of and glorifies Jesus (John 16:14). It is the Holy Spirit who makes the evil manifest. He quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and opens the inward eye to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (Ephesians 2:1). Coming in the name and with the authority of the risen and ascended Saviour, He is the precious pledge of the continued love and care of our exalted King. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them, as a realized possession, to the believing soul (John 16:14). Dwelling in the hearts of believers (John 14:17), He opens their understandings that they may understand the Scriptures and become, to the humbled and surrendered heart, the Guide, Comforter, Support, and Sanctifier.

We believe that the essential qualifications for the Lord’s service are bestowed upon His children through the reception and baptism of the Holy Ghost. This Holy Spirit is the seal of reconciliation to the believer in Jesus (Ephesians 1:13, 14), the witness to his adoption into the family of the redeemed (Romans 8:15, 16); the earnest and the foretaste of the full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

We own no principle of spiritual light, life or holiness, inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We believe in no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness, but the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, bestowed on mankind, in various measures and degrees, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence, which in an especial manner, gives man preeminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him, in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God, as a being not only intelligent but responsible; for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a joyful sound. The Holy Spirit must ever be distinguished both from the conscience which He enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason, which when unsubjected to His Holy influence, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is the conscience to our inner being, the organ by which we see; and, as both light and life are essential to the

eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright, without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. One with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit can never disown or dishonor our once crucified and now risen and glorious Redeemer. We disavow all professed illumination or spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem.

The Holy Scriptures

It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that, therefore, there can be no appeal from them to any other (outward) authority whatsoever; that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31). The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized records which we are bound, as Christians to accept, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions. No one can be required to believe, as an article of faith, any doctrine which is not contained in them; and whatsoever anyone says or does, contrary to the Scriptures, though under professions of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion. To the Christian, the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. It is to be read in the right and completeness of the New; thus will its meaning be unveiled, and the humble disciple will be taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole, and mansideness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; His doctrine is learned in the doing of His will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper and richer experience of His truth and love.

Man's Creation and Fall

It pleased God, in His wisdom and goodness, to create man out of the dust of the earth, and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul; formed after the image and likeness of God, capable of fulfilling the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker (Genesis 2:7, 1:26, 27). Being free to obey, or to disobey, he fell into transgression, through unbelief, under the temptation of Satan (Genesis 3:1-7), and, thereby, lost that spiritual life of righteousness, in which he was created; and, so death passed upon him, as the inevitable consequence of his sin (Romans 5:12). As the children of fallen Adam, all mankind bear his image. They partake of his nature, and are involved in the consequences of his fall. To every member of every successive generation, the words of the Redeemer are alike applicable, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). But while we hold these views of the lost condition of man in the fall, we rejoice to believe that sin is not imputed to any, until they transgress the divine law, after sufficient capacity has been given to understand it; and that infants, though inheriting this fallen nature, are saved in the infinite mercy of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Justification and Sanctification

"God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). We believe that justification is of God's free grace, through which, upon repentance and faith, He pardons our sins, and imparts to us a new life. It is received, not for any works of righteousness that we have done (Titus 3:5), but in the unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Through faith in Him, and the shedding of His precious blood, the guilt of sin is taken away, and we stand reconciled to God.

The offering up of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation the pardon of sin involves no abrogation or relaxation of the law of holiness. It is the vindication and establishment of that law (Romans 3:31), in virtue of the free and righteous submission of the Son of God himself to all its requirements. He, the unchangeably just, proclaims Himself the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:26). From age to age, the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery, and a rock of offense to the unbelief and pride of man's fallen nature; yet, to the humble penitent whose heart is broken under the convicting power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that depth. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5), and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us

all (Isaiah 53:6), his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the exceeding sinfulness of sin for which the Savior died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he will joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received atonement (Romans 5:11).

We believe that in connection with Justification is Regeneration: that they who come to this experience know that they are not their own (1 Corinthians 6:19), that being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we are saved by His life (Romans 5:10); a new heart is given and new desires; old things are passed away, and we become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), through faith in Christ Jesus; our wills being surrendered to His holy will, grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:21).

Sanctification is experienced in the acceptance of Christ in living faith for justification, in so far as the pardoned sinner, through faith in Christ, is clothed with a measure of His righteousness and receives the Spirit of promise; for, as saith the Apostle, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). We rejoice to believe that the provisions of God's grace are sufficient to deliver from the power, as well as from the guilt, of sin, and to enable His believing children always to triumph in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14). How full of encouragement is the declaration, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). Whosoever submits himself wholly to God, believing and appropriating his promises, and exercising faith in Christ Jesus, will have his heart continually cleansed from all sin, by His precious blood, and, through the renewed refining power of the Holy Spirit, be kept in conformity to the will of God, will love Him with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and be able to say, with the Apostle Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). Thus, in its full experience, Sanctification is the deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. To this we are everyone called that we may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life (Luke 1:74, 75). It was the prayer of the apostle for the believers, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24). Yet the most holy Christian is still liable to temptation, is exposed to the subtle assaults of Satan, and can only continue to follow holiness as he humbly watches unto prayer, and is kept in constant dependence upon his Saviour, walking in the light (1 John. 1:7), in the loving obedience of faith.

The Resurrection and Final Judgment

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that there shall be a resurrection from the death, both of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15), and that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ whom he hath ordained (Acts 17:31). For, as saith the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

We sincerely believe, not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen and sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with Him in glory. But that all the wicked, who live in rebellion, against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. And that the soul of every man and woman shall be reserved, in its own distinct and proper being, and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44); that being first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said, "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53), the change shall be such as will accord with the declaration, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50). We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality, and shall be the children of God, being the children of resurrection (Luke 20:36). (See also Declaration of 1693, *Sewell's History*, vol. II, 383, 384.)

"Our citizenship is in heaven" (RV), from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself (Philippians 3:20, 21).

We believe that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; according to the declaration of our compassionate Redeemer, to whom the judgment is committed, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46 RV).

Baptism

We would express our continued conviction that our Lord appointed no outward rite or ceremony for observance in His church. We accept every command of our Lord in what we believe to be its genuine import, as absolutely conclusive. The question of the use of outward ordinances is with us a question, not as to the authority of Christ, but as to His real meaning. We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is, under the Christian dispensation, but one baptism (Ephesians 4:4, 5), even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body (1 Corinthians 12:13 RV). This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away the filth of the flesh (1 Peter 3:21), but that inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the experience of His love and power, as the risen and ascended Saviour. No baptism in outward water can satisfy the description of the apostle, of being buried with Christ by baptism unto death (Romans 6:4). It is with the Spirit alone that any can thus be baptized. In this experience the announcement of the Forerunner of our Lord is fulfilled. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matthew 3:11). In this view we accept the commission of our blessed Lord as given in Matthew 28:18-20 verses: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, 'All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world'" (RV). This commission, as we believe, was not designed to set up a new ritual under the new covenant, or to connect the initiation into a membership, in its nature essentially spiritual, with a mere ceremony of a typical character. Otherwise it was not impossible for the Apostle Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (2 Corinthians 11:5), to have disclaimed that which would, in that case, have been of the essence of his commission when he wrote "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 1:17). Whenever an external ceremony is commanded, the particulars, the mode and incidents of that ceremony, become of its essence. There is an utter absence of these particulars in the text before us, which confirms our persuasion that the commission must be construed in connection with the spiritual power which the risen Lord promised should attend the witness of his apostles and of the church to Him, and which after Pentecost, so mightily accompanied their ministry of the word and prayer, that those to whom they were sent were introduced into an experience wherein they had a saving knowledge of, and living fellowship with, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Supper of the Lord

Intimately connected with the conviction already expressed is the view that we have ever maintained as to the true supper of the Lord. We are well aware that our Lord was pleased to make use of a variety of symbolical utterances, but he often gently upbraided His disciples for accepting literally what He had intended only in its spiritual meaning. His teaching, as in His parables or in the command to wash one another's feet, was often in symbols, and ought ever to be received in the light of His own emphatic declaration, "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). The old covenant was full of ceremonial symbols; the new covenant, to which our Saviour alluded at the last supper, is expressly declared by the prophet to be "not according to the old" (Jeremiah 31:32, Hebrews 8:9). We cannot believe that in setting up this new covenant the Lord Jesus intended an institution out of harmony with the spirit of this prophecy. The eating of His body and the drinking of His blood cannot be an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of their Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives to drink of the fullness that is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking that is the true supper of the Lord.

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit, "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter who shall abide with you forever" (John 14:16). Convincing of sin testifying of Jesus, taking of the things of Christ, this blessed Comforter communicates to the believer and to the church, in a gracious, abiding manifestation, the real presence of the Lord. As the great remembrancer, through whom the promise is fulfilled, He needs no ritual or priestly intervention in bringing to the experience of the true commemoration and communion. "Behold" saith the risen Redeemer, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). In an especial manner, when assembled for congregational worship, are believers invited to the festival of the Saviour's peace, and, in a united act of faith and love, unfettered by any outward rite or ceremonial, to partake together of the body that was broken and of the blood that was shed for them without the gates of Jerusalem. In such a worship they are enabled

to understand the words of the apostle as expressive of a sweet and most real experience: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17).

Public Worship

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms: it may be without words as well as with them, but it must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of the end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord. Having become His adopted children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our privilege to meet together and unite in the worship of Almighty God, to wait upon Him for the renewal of our strength, for communication one with another, for the edification of believers in the exercise of various spiritual gifts, and for the declaration of the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted who may gather with us. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ there is a church, and Christ, the living Head, in the midst of them. Through His mediation without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality, is the Father to be approached and reverently worshiped. The Lord Jesus has forever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law, by the offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary, and graciously provided spiritual offerings for the service of His temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song of melody of the heart (Ephesians 5:19), the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love, these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is pleased to prepare, by His Spirit, in the hearts of them that receive Him, and to present with acceptance unto God.

By the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, He as the Head of the church, alone selects and qualifies those who are to present His messages or engage in other service for Him; and, hence, we cannot commit any formal arrangement to anyone in our regular meetings for worship. We are well aware that the Lord has provided a diversity of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6) for the needs both of the church and of the world, and we desire that the church may feel her responsibility, under the government of her Great Head, in doing her part to foster these gifts, and in making arrangements for their proper exercise.

It is not for individual exaltation, but for mutual profit, that the gifts are bestowed (1 Corinthians 12:7); and every living church, abiding under the government of Christ, is humbly and thankfully to receive and exercise them, in subjection to her Holy Head. The church that quenches the Spirit and lives to itself alone must die.

We believe the preaching of the Gospel to be one of the chief means, divinely appointed, for the spreading of the glad tidings of life and salvation through our crucified Redeemer, for the awakening and conversion of sinners, and for the comfort and edification of believers. As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him; and that, as in the primitive church, so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men, agreeably to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17). Respecting which the apostle declares "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). As the gift is freely received so it is to be freely exercised (Matthew 10:8; see also Acts 20:33-35) in simple obedience to the will of God.

Spiritual gifts, precious as they are, must not be mistaken for grace; they add to our responsibility, but do not raise the minister above his brethren or sisters. They must be exercised in continued dependence upon our Lord and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and His grace exalted. "He that is greatest among you" said our Lord and Master, "let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:26, 27).

While the church cannot confer spiritual gifts, it is its duty to recognize and foster them, and to promote their efficiency by all the means in its power. And while, on the one hand, the Gospel should never be preached for money (Acts 8:20, 20:33-35), on the other it is the duty of the church to make such provision that it shall never be hindered for want of it.

The church, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Knowing that it is the Spirit of God that can alone prepare and qualify the instruments who fulfill this command, the true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal, and, when he hears the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

Prayer and Praise

Prayer is the outcome of our sense of need, and of our continual dependence upon God. He who uttered the invitation, "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matthew 7:7), is himself the Mediator and High Priest who, by His spirit, prompts the petition, and who presents it with the acceptance before God. With such an invitation, prayer becomes the duty and the privilege of all who are called by His name. Prayer is, in the awakening soul, the utterance of the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13), and, at every stage of the believer's course, prayer is essential to his spiritual life. A life without prayer is a life practically without God. The Christian's life is a continual asking. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies, from Him who delights to bless. Prayer is not confined to the closet. When uttered in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it becomes an important part of public worship, and, whenever the Lord's people meet together in His name, it is their privilege to wait upon Him for the spirit of Grace and supplications (Zechariah 12:10). A life of prayer cannot be other than a life of praise. As the peace of Christ reigns in the church, her living members accept all that they receive, as from His pure bounty, and each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of His house, whether as individuals, in families, or in congregations, they will be still praising Him (Psalm 84:4), heart answering to heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Psalm 103:1).

Liberty of Conscience in its Relation to Civil Government

That conscience should be free, and that in matters of religious doctrine and worship man is accountable only to God, are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament: and which are confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel, and by the example of our Lord and His disciples. To rule over the conscience, and to command the spiritual allegiance of his creature man, is the high and sacred prerogative of God alone. In religion every act ought to be free. A forced worship is plainly a contradiction in terms, under that dispensation in which the worship of the Father must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

We have ever maintained that it is the duty of Christians to obey the enactments of civil government except those which interfere with our allegiance to God. We owe much to its blessings. Through it we enjoy liberty and protection, in connection with law and order. Civil Government is a divine ordinance (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:13-16) instituted to promote the best welfare of man, hence magistrates are to be regarded as God's ministers who should be a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well. Therefore, it is with us a matter of conscience to render them respect and obedience in the exercise of their proper functions.

Marriage

Marriage is an institution graciously ordained by the Creator Himself, for the help and continuance of the human family. It is not a mere civil contract, and ought never to be entered upon without a reference to the sanction and blessing of Him who ordained it. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life (Matthew 19:5-6), designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmeets to each other in things temporal and spiritual. To this end it should imply concurrence in spiritual as well as temporal concerns, and should be entered upon discreetly, soberly, and in fear of the Lord.

Peace

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Lawgiver, and the whole spirit of His Gospel, and that no plea of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe to Him who hath said, "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27). In enjoining this love, and the forgiveness of injuries, He who has brought us to Himself has not prescribed for man precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice, or of which the practice is to be postponed until all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent now, and that we have in the prophetic Scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application not only to individuals, but to nations also (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:1). When nations conform their laws to this divine teaching, wars must necessarily cease.

We would, in humility, but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace, in strict conformity with His commands.

Oaths

We hold it to be the inalienable privilege of the disciple of the Lord Jesus that his statements concerning matters of fact within his knowledge should be accepted, under all circumstances, as expressing his belief as to the fact asserted. We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matthew 5:34); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well-being. This command, in our persuasion, applies not to profane swearing only, but to judicial oaths also. It abrogates any previous permission to the contrary, and is, for the Christian, absolutely conclusive.

The First Day of the Week

Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought to be at all times present with the Christian, we would express our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that He has been pleased to honor the setting apart of one day in seven for the purpose of holy rest, religious duties, and public worship, and we desire that all under our name may avail themselves of this great privilege as those who are called to be risen with Christ, and to seek those things that are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1). May the release thus granted from other occupations be diligently improved. On this day of the week especially ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures and for waiting upon the Lord; and we trust that, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of the day may be so ordered as not to frustrate the gracious provision thus made for us by our Heavenly Father, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship or for private retirement and devotional reading. In presenting this declaration of our Christian faith, we desire that all our members may be afresh encouraged, in humility and devotedness, to renewed faithfulness in fulfilling their part in the great mission of the Church, and through the Church to the world around us, in the name of our Crucified Redeemer. *Life from Christ, life in Christ*, must ever be the basis of *life for Christ*. For this we have been created and redeemed, and by this alone can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied.

CHAPTER 4

Life and Action

The Way of Life

Motives for Service 1. Just as the Quaker faith gives spirit, form, and substance to the Quaker manner of worship, so also the concern that Friends feel to take up and share the burden of the world's suffering springs out of their central faith and intimate fellowship of worship. The liberation, enlargement, and fulfillment of one's life is the ideal objective of Friends in every humanitarian undertaking. As Friends endeavor to transform oppressive social and economic systems, to end war, to eliminate brutal and degrading forms of punishment, and to remedy other harmful conditions, it is with the positive conviction that we are laboring in the service of the Master who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." In the words of John Woolman, Friends believe that ". . . to labor for the perfect redemption from the spirit of oppression is the great business of the whole family of Christ Jesus in this world."¹

Qualifications for Service 2. Such service is always consistent with the Christlike spirit of love and goodwill; it is never the result of the spirit of violence and coercion. Godly conditions of living only prevail when individual hearts are filled with the spirit so that they provide Fruits of the Spirit. Only when hearts are so filled will sacrificial giving not only by the sharing of financial resources, but also sharing of time and energy, even to the extent of losing income or even life. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Inner Compulsion 3. It is the Quaker ideal to comprehend the ethical and spiritual significance of the whole situation and to deal with it above the storm of controversy and propaganda. Such an attitude brings into view the transcendent or eternal aspect which should be the aim of the religious body. It is often necessary to wait in silence until the message comes; but when it does come, nothing must hinder saying the word which needs to be said or doing the deed which the times and circumstances demand.

Forces of the Holy Spirit 4. Ideals have no power until they are incarnated in lives through which they can work. The essential matter is the spiritual quality of those who compose the social and economic order. In a world always threatened by the forces of evil, one can help toward its betterment by a confident reliance on the forces of the Holy Spirit on the soul which must be applied in cooperation with God.

Value of Historical Approach 5. Many of the ideals and testimonies of present-day Quakerism may be traced back to the earliest period in its history. The testimonies have been confirmed by many Quaker historians and journalists, and by numerous minutes, advices, and epistles, found in the records of Friends. Therefore, it is felt that some consideration of the statements and activities of the Friends of earlier days is necessary to the proper understanding of the Quaker message and the way of life which it inspires. Understanding Friend's past better prepares and equips us to meet the challenges of the future.

Evangelism and Extension

New Testament Evangelism 1. The early Christians, in obedience to the divine compulsion to share with others the spiritual riches of the gospel of Jesus, zealously proclaimed the Gospel. This early evangelism was not a campaign to develop a new religious cult but was, rather, the sharing of the joys of salvation by

¹ John Woolman essay, "A Plea for the Poor" Chapter 13, final sentence.

those who had actually experienced this spiritual transformation. With a zeal and power that stand as a pattern for any age, these first evangelists soon carried the “Good News” to the entire Mediterranean area.

Publishers of Truth 2. In a similar manner, early Friends were moved by an irresistible urge from the Holy Spirit to tell as many as possible of the joyous, newly found freedom of a direct approach to God without mediating instruments. This doctrine of free access to divine redemptive grace was preached without regard to the social rank, race, or gender of those who would give audience. As a result of the work as earnest “publishers of truth”, Quakerism soon extended over much of the western seventeenth-century world.

Period of Quietism 3. When Friends passed into their period of quietism¹, they lost interest as a group in the aggressive preaching of the gospel message and became intro-spective and largely concerned in maintaining their testimony against "creaturely activity." It should be said in justice to this period that it had some positive values. It was characterized by extreme sensitivity to strength as revealed by the journals and advices of the time. There was also quite a measure of surrendered and dedicated life. But, as one might expect from the weakening of the evangelistic impulse, there resulted not only a loss of membership, but also a decline in spiritual vitality.

New Awakening 4. Then came the new spirit of evangelism which swept over America in the nineteenth century and caused a new awakening among Friends. As they felt the joy and enthusiasm of a life surrendered and dedicated to the indwelling Christ, they again experienced something of their early evangelistic zeal and took their place in proclaiming the gospel of Christ to the world.

Evangelistic Methods 5. The logical and natural consequence of a restored personal fellowship with God was, and continues to be, a compelling concern to share with other people both at home and abroad the spiritual satisfactions of that fellowship. The ministries of preaching, teaching, Christian service, and group activity are to be considered as divinely appointed instruments for carrying the Christian message wherever the way opens. Friends have found evangelistic efforts of different kinds useful, as they have been adapted to the various needs of meetings. These include special evangelistic meetings conducted either by the pastor or by visiting ministers, preaching missions carried on by a group of Christian leaders, and evangelism by home visitation.

Need of Steady Building 6. Though periods of intensive evangelistic effort are spiritually beneficial, the work of the meeting, including that of the pastor, should be carried on throughout the year with the purpose of deepening and enriching the religious life of the members. The most stable and healthful conditions usually follow constant and steady building of Christian character. The relationship of children with the meeting through associate membership provides a great opportunity for special work in evangelism. Methods of a teaching ministry, such as preparatory classes given at the intellectual and spiritual level of the young, will bear rich fruit in later years. Loyalty to Christ places upon Friends the constant obligation to seek by every appropriate method to win individuals to the Christian life.

Missionary Enterprise

Beyond the Seas 1. The earliest activities of the Society of Friends were essentially missionary. Those who were convinced sounded forth their message, first in England and soon in foreign lands, in the faith that a response would be found among many of like spirit. In 1660 they could report “great work and service of the Lord beyond the seas” ranging from Palestine and Turkey in the East to Newfoundland and Virginia in the West. Even during the period of quietism there were fruitful labors by individuals who responded to deeply felt calls for special services at home and abroad. Among these were Mary Fisher, Ann Austin, John Woolman, William Allen, Daniel Wheeler, Elizabeth Fry, and Stephen Grellet, with their concerns for the Native Americans, Negro slaves, Russian serfs, and prisoners of body or of spirit throughout the world.

First Organized 2. These activities had important and far-reaching results, but gradually the conviction grew that such brief and transient visits were not a full discharge of Christian duty. It was realized that the needs of non-Christian lands required services continuing for many years or even for the lifetime of the workers. This made necessary a greater financial outlay and more systematic methods of securing support. Beginning in 1866 with the establishment of a station in central India by English Friends, the work of foreign missions under the care of English and American Friends has extended around the world. At first such work was carried on by committees of concerned Friends, but later it generally became a part of the organized activities of the various yearly meetings. For those composing Friends United

¹ An explanation of the period of quietism can be found in Part I, Chapter 1, second page, under the heading of “Period of Persecution”.

Meeting (formerly the Five Years Meeting), most of the missionary efforts both at home and abroad are now administered unitedly by Global Ministries.

Missionary Incentive 3. Missionary enterprise grows out of the essence of Christianity itself. Sharing with others the best one has and knows is basic to true Christian living. The highest incentive of the missionary effort is the love of Christ which constrains His followers to “go into all the world.” As one acts in accordance with this motive, the spirit of obedience grows and ripens into outgoing love and compassion for those who are in need of the gospel.

Intelligent Adaptation 4. Discerning leaders in the field of missionary enterprise have reached the clear conviction that the spiritual objectives desired cannot be achieved by a reproduction in other lands of the American form of church government. Friends, therefore, should not insist upon a form of worship which may or may not prove helpful on the various mission fields. The primary aim should always be to instill Christ’s principles of living as fundamental and adaptable to every form and stage of human development. With this in mind, missionaries should encourage forms of expression and organization among different races and nationalities that are in accordance with their varying aptitudes and experiences.

Expanding Program 5. New opportunities for Christian service are constantly opening. Christ centered perceptions of Biblical Truth become clearer as one matures and seeks God’s purpose. New avenues of approach and fresh methods of presenting the message will develop as each generation makes its advance in knowledge and experience. To this service all followers of Christ are called. In the words of George Fox: “Let all nations hear the sound, by word or writing. Spare no place, spare not tongue nor pen, but be obedient to the Lord God; go through the world and be valiant for the truth upon earth . . . Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.”

Christian Education

The Training of Children 1. George Fox, quoting from the Book of Proverbs, once said, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Here is the duty of parents, and the duty of children, which is to be followed and practiced.” Friends of those days took seriously the religious training of their children. The religious motive was always the dominant one; the aim was to lead children to God and to participation in the creating of a Christian social order. These purposes could not then, and cannot now, be attained through a single agency, nor merely by the use of an hour or two on one day of the week; yet there is a special value attached to Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and other such courses of religious instruction as it may provide.

Friends’ First Day Schools 2. American Friends became interested in the Bible school soon after its origin in England in 1780. A “Society for the Institution and Support of the First Day or Sunday Schools in the City of Philadelphia” organized in 1791, had Friends among its members. Bible schools were carried on in scattered areas in the early part of the nineteenth century and multiplied rapidly after 1830, though there was some opposition to them on the grounds that such organized study of the Bible was a departure from the Friends’ position of dependence on spiritual guidance. Held first in homes, then in Friends’ schoolhouses, Sunday School later became an integral part of most meetings.

Christian Training 3. Need of attention to the work of Christian education has increased with the general replacement of Friends’ schools by the public school system which has little concern for instruction in religion and biblical subjects. There is a general secularization of life that affects the very atmosphere in which children are reared. The unity of the family life that formerly prevailed is often broken up by the diversified interests of the members of the household, thus rendering family worship more difficult. Many parents feel poorly equipped for guiding the spiritual growth of their children. In the light of such considerations the importance of provisions for carrying on the work of Christian education can hardly be overstressed.

Essential Objectives 4. A plan for adequate Christian Education should embrace the home, the meeting (*i.e.* Sunday School, VBS, children and youth ministries, *etc.*) and Christian youth oriented civic events. Objectives include an increasing sense of reality of God in human experience, a growing under-

standing and appreciation of Jesus Christ, a dedication of one's life to Him, a continuous development of Christlike character, and a deepening respect for "that of God" in others. Rightly guided Bible study, a sympathetic evaluation of significant religious experiences, acquaintance with the history and principles of Friends, definite preparation for worship, and an appreciation of the Quaker method of arriving at group decisions are some of the essentials of a program for such education. Ministers and teachers should earnestly prepare themselves for their duties as leaders in this important work.

Upward Call 5. An abiding, compelling motive is the desire that young people shall realize for themselves a vital Christian experience and learn in natural ways to build the Christian ideals into personal, social, industrial, and international relationships. Regular attendance at the meeting for worship and an active interest and participation in all activities of the meeting are factors of proven value in their contribution to spiritual growth, and are necessary for the continuance of the life of the church. As always, the church of today faces the future with confidence in the courage, sincerity, and faithfulness to "the upward calling" of oncoming generations.

The Social Order

Early Reforms 1. The abolition of slavery, prison reform, the humane treatment of the mentally ill and defective, systematic relief for the poor, provisions for their employment and self-help, the education of poor children, the prevention of injurious employment of children in industry, and the use of fair and fixed prices for goods and services are some of the activities in which Friends pioneered in times of much indifference and even vigorous opposition. They established for themselves new ethical standards and sought earnestly that these be applied to every victim of oppression or wrong.

Concern for Justice 2. George Fox felt a deep concern for justice in social and economic relationships. He visited magistrates to urge that fair wages be fixed for laborers; he wrote to Parliament urging the redistribution of wealth so as to relieve the poor; he besought employers to treat their servants as they, under like circumstances, would wish to be treated. In brief, according to his conception, the practical workings of Christianity reached into every phase of human relations, so that, wherever inequity or injustice was discovered, there was a matter for spiritual concern and remedial action. His intense and constructive evangelism in the social and economic fields gave a quality to early Quakerism that has survived changing conditions from the simple, localized, industrial, and economic systems of his day to the worldwide complexities of modern times.

Reformers 3. The records of past achievements include the names of such well-known Friends as Elizabeth Fry in prison reform; John Woolman, Anthony Benezet, Joseph Sturge, Susan B. Anthony, and John Greenleaf Whittier in the abolition of slavery, and John Bellers and William Allen in the relief of the poor and unemployed and in the promotion of popular education.

Wrongs Righted 4. The profound changes wrought by the industrial revolution and the effects of modern invention challenge Quakerism to adapt its philosophy to the new conditions and prove its applicability to present-day problems. The technological revolution introduced cultural change that rivals or exceeds that of the industrial revolution. The obligation rests on Friends to demonstrate that economic wrongs can be righted and that justice for oppressed minorities or for any underprivileged group can be secured without the use of violence. The theory of violent coercion relies on the ability of one group to impose its will upon another by mere preponderance of physical or economic strength. The yielding of the weak to the strong does not prove that the right has been vindicated nor that opinions have been altered.

The More Excellent Way 5. The slower but more effective process of education is a field in which Friends are called to use the weight of enlightened influence. The mere enactment of good laws does not in itself constitute reform; just and fair administration is also necessary. The constant aim should be to bring about such a spiritual transformation of all persons concerned that outward laws will be superseded by "the more excellent way". This transformation comes through the work of the Holy Spirit that Christ gives to his followers. Laws and education can do much good, but only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can change the heart.

*Ethical
Obligations*

6. The development of a sensitive conscience concerning the existing maladjustments, unfair prices, and positive evils of our economic system should be a vital concern to all Friends. As a consumer every person should endeavor to control his purchases so as to encourage healthful living conditions and adequate wages. The producer is under an ethical obligation to produce goods under sanitary conditions and without deception as to quality. Upon the employer rests the responsibility to see that those in his employ receive adequate wages and general treatment that will not dwarf but rather develop their personalities. The employee should feel obligated to render loyal and efficient service to his employer and to exercise proper care in the use of tools and machinery and in the handling of materials used or produced in his work. As an investor, the individual should strive to avoid support of antisocial enterprises. The problem of distribution in the world's economic order should be a matter for profound Christian concern. The availability of the necessities of life to all people is highly important in the promotion of the political and economic stability of the world.

Technology can be a threat to spiritual health, and like any tool, it is neither good nor bad on its own, but in how it is used, or in some cases, abused. Friends are not called to avoid technology or social media, but to keep them in their proper place. Anything that has addictive properties can easily become an idol. Our first loyalty is always to the Lord Jesus.

*Social
Redemption*

7. In every social or business relationship, Friends should seek diligently and experiment actively, within the boundaries set by scripture, to find ways of producing a social order based on the Christian principles of justice, love, and goodwill. So keenly did early Friends feel their responsibility as individual members of society that, when they observed the violation of moral and religious principles, they assumed an attitude of penitence for society's sins. A greater measure of such responsibility must be felt by Christians of the present day if they are to be effective agents in carrying on the work of social redemption. Friends realize that change comes not through judgment, but through repentance.

Ideals in General Education

*Early Quaker
Education*

1. Although certain that education alone "was not sufficient to fit a man to be a minister of Christ", early Friends were nonetheless concerned that a lack of it should hinder the highest development of the youth under their care. Far in advance of his time, George Fox advised that schools be provided for "girls and young maidens" as well as for boys, for instruction "in whatever things were civil and useful in the creation." William Penn also held and expressed at length advanced views on the importance of right methods and aims in the education of children, warning against such as would "make them scholars but not men". Schools were opened in Pennsylvania in 1683, only two years after Penn's grant, and a Friends public school was set up in Philadelphia in 1689.

*School and
Meeting*

2. The democratic organization of the Society of Friends has given emphasis to the importance of intellectual training as an aid to spiritual development and effective Christian service. The positions taken by the leaders noted previously have been steadily maintained. Monthly meeting minutes and other records from the very beginning contain many expressions of concern that the education of the young be promoted and safeguarded. School and meeting have constantly gone hand in hand as a united bulwark of Quakerism throughout the world.

*Institutions
of Learning*

3. This practical application of ideals put Friends in the forefront in the development of educational opportunities and standards in this country. Their elementary and secondary schools in several states were the forerunners of the public school system, which has, for the most part, superseded the numerous Quaker institutions of earlier days. A few survive, mostly in the eastern part of the United States; and these, with a number of strategically located colleges, do a highly important work in furthering the interests of Friends both in thoroughness of scholarship and in the development of Christian leaders.

*Aims of
Education*

4. "The aim of education is the full and harmonious development of the resources of the human spirit. Human nature has within it the promise of a divine growth; upon this we base our faith as a religious community. There can, therefore, be no task nearer our hearts than to help all our members towards the fulfillment of this promise. Such fulfillment means that body and mind alike bring all their gifts to fruition in the unity of the spirit. Here is a clear call to educative effort as a part of the very purpose of the Christian religion. We

desire to testify in word and deed to the truth that religion gathers the whole of life into its domain. We believe that there are godlike possibilities in every man. We must proclaim a Christian gospel of education which in breadth and depth shall be worthy of this faith. . . . The intellect is an integral part of man's spiritual equipment; and its development brings with it a growth in personality and an increased power of facing difficult moral issues. The man whose mind is many-sided has a special contribution to make to the solution of the complex personal and social problems of modern life."¹

Friends and the State

Under Authority 1. The first authentic pronouncement of early Friends on their relation to the state was made in the days of Oliver Cromwell in the form of an advice from a meeting of ministers and elders. It urged fellow members to accept public office, if they could rightly do so, as a means of serving their community. George Fox professed his loyalty to protector and king in turn, declaring, "Our prayers are for them that are in authority, that under them we may live a godly life in peace." In those days of unsettlement and strife, Friends utterly disowned all plottings and armed resistance against the government.

Limitations of Authority 2. Friends set definite limitations, however, to the authority of their rulers. More than once George Fox demanded of officers of the law whether he should obey God or man and warned the king to "hearken to God's voice" or he would be overthrown. If occasion arises when it is necessary to refuse obedience to unjust laws, such conscientious objection should not be entered into lightly or hastily and should be made with love and forbearance toward those who disagree. The conquest of evil is to be effected only by the overpowering force of truth and righteousness. Friends' testimonies in support of these principles in the days of their persecution and their steadiest insistence on the right of the freedom of conscience, peaceable assembly, and worship did much to gain religious liberty for citizens of both England and America.

God and Government 3. Friends' influence has been felt in the abolishment or modification of harmful laws and customs in many fields. Government by divine guidance rather than by arbitrary compulsion and the prevention of criminal acts rather than their punishment are the primary objectives of Friends. Their testimony against capital punishment is based on the belief that it is a violation of the sacredness of human life, that it disregards the fundamental capacity of all persons to respond to right influences, and that it gives no opportunity to reform the offender.

Highest Allegiance 4. Friends regard the state as a social instrument to be used for the cooperative promotion of the common welfare. The source of its authority and the most reliable guide in its administration should be the inward conviction of right possessed by its citizens. "Our highest allegiance as Christians is not to the state but to the kingdom of God. But this does not mean that we have not duties, as Christians, toward the state and the nation to which we belong, or that our attitude toward the state should be a negative one, or one of indifference."² Good government depends on observance of the laws of God by those in authority. It behooves all Friends to fit themselves for efficient public service and to be faithful to their performance of duty as they are gifted and guided by the inspiration of God.

Interracial Relations

Testimony Against Racial Prejudice 1. The conception of "that of God in everyone" makes it impossible for Friends to draw lines of distinction in capacity or privilege between different races or nations. It is the concern of Friends that Caucasians, Native Americans, African-Americans, those of Asian and Latin American descent, and all other peoples may share equally in the heritage of justice, freedom, and brotherly love, which is their inalienable right. "For God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). Friends believe that any racial discrimination, whether by legal enactment or by cultural or economic practices, is essentially a violation of His law of love. To dwell together in friendly relations, on a basis of mutual respect,

¹ London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1925), p. 93, par. 6.

² London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1925).

courtesy, and understanding, is our ideal. George Fox, in an epistle to Friends in America, wrote: "Let your light shine among the Indians, the blacks and the whites, that ye may answer the truth in them, and to bring them to the standard and ensign that God hath set up, Christ Jesus."

Woolman and Slavery 2. In 1688, Germantown Monthly Meeting in Pennsylvania made what is believed to be the first official protest of any religious body against slavery. Friends' position in general on the question was far from clear, however; and it was not until 1760 that the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was ready to call on Friends everywhere to free their slaves. There had always been those who had testified against the practice, and much effective work had been done in the preceding decades, notably by Woolman. His faithfully borne testimony to the necessity of making conduct conform to profession was so fruitful a message that Friends were generally free of slaveholding by 1780. Their efforts were then devoted to the convincing of society in general of the iniquity of slavery.

In the period before the Civil War the homes of many Quakers became stations for the "Underground Railroad" by which thousands of slaves gained their freedom. After the Emancipation Proclamation, Friends became very active in aiding ex-slaves to establish themselves as free citizens in the full employment of their rights. Since the Civil War, various yearly meetings have founded schools and orphans' homes for African-American children, and many individual Friends, in the belief that there should be no distinction of privilege on the basis of color, have cooperated with numerous movements for the promotion of the social and economic welfare of African-Americans.

Native Americans 3. President Grant in his first annual message to Congress made the following statement: "I have attempted a new policy towards these wards of the nation. The Society of Friends is well known in having succeeded in living at peace with the Indians in the early settlement of Pennsylvania. They are also known for their opposition to all strife, violence and war, and are generally known for their strict integrity and fair dealing. These considerations induced me to give the management of a few reservations of Indians to them and to throw the burden of selection of agents upon the Society itself. The result has proven most satisfactory."

Native American Missions 4. In 1869 missionary work among Native Americans was placed under the care of the Associated Executive Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs and has been carried on principally for the tribes of Oklahoma. The story of how many of the hardened Modoc warriors from Oregon became humble and peace-loving Christians is one of the most remarkable in the history of Christian missions.

Peace Testimony

No Participation in War 1. We condemn war as the greatest violation of the sacredness of human life and reaffirm our faith that all war is absolutely contradictory to the plain precepts of Christ, and the whole spirit of His Gospel. We hold that no argument of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release individuals or nations from obedience to the teachings of Him who said, "Love your enemies." It is our purpose to live in that spirit that takes away the occasion for war and to suffer violence, if necessary, as did our Lord, but never return evil for evil.

War Renounced 2. Statements against war have been issued by Friends during practically every military crisis since the earliest days of their history. In 1660 the following declaration was made to Charles II by George Fox and others: "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretense whatever. . . . And we certainly know and testify to the whole world that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us unto all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdom of this world." The Conference of All Friends held in London in 1920 adopted this statement: "The fundamental ground of our opposition to war is religious and ethical. It is attached to the nature of God as revealed in Christ and to the nature of man as related to Him. . . . The Christian way of life as revealed in the New Testament, the voice of conscience revealed in the soul, the preciousness of personality revealed by the transforming force of love, and the irrationality revealed in modern warfare, either together or singly, present grounds which, for those who feel them, make participation in war under any conditions impossible."

***Overcoming
Evil***

3. Christ's teaching that evil cannot be overcome by evil, but only by love and the returning of good for evil, has been abundantly proved by the fact that Christianity has attained its greatest heights of spiritual power under persecution, and has died spiritually when it resorted to violence for its propagation and protection. Friends, in following Christ's way of love, are a leaven for peace far beyond their number and find abundant openings for a ministry of healing and reconciliation amongst people of all nations. Romans 12:18 states, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Therefore, Friends feel that nonparticipation in military training and war is the action which follows the message and example of Jesus. Friends hold that nonparticipation is the way to maintain full witness to Christ's way of love; however, understand that some individuals may feel led to serve. While such service is not encouraged, those who may feel led to serve are supported in their service. Those who feel led to serve are encouraged to seek non-combative roles.

***Building
Peace***

4. Friends, realizing the evil nature of war, have always felt a strong responsibility for leadership in building peace and eliminating war. Friends have given leadership to all types of practical work for peace. These have included encouraging our government to apply Christian principles in relations with other nations; opposition to militarism and conscription; expressing love for all through bringing food, clothing, and other help to those in need (including "enemies"); world court and federal world government.

War Relief

5. The work in Europe of the Friends Service Council (London) and the American Friends Service Committee during and after the First World War is example of the practical application of Friends' philosophy to international affairs. This work has continued during and after many other struggles, including feeding the hungry, relocating the displaced and efforts to promote friendly understanding and goodwill around the world.

Sanctity of the Home

Marriage

1. Marriage is a sacred institution between a man and a woman, graciously ordained by the Creator himself for the help and continuance of the human family. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life, and should be entered into reverently, advisedly, and with full consciousness of the guidance and sanction of Him who ordained it, and who alone can consummate the spiritual union of two hearts and lives. The home and family were honored and blessed by our Lord; and when he wished to portray the Kingdom of Heaven he drew his figures from these relationships.

Responsibilities

2. Marriage involves the most sacred obligations and responsibilities of life. In absolute fidelity and devotion, and as helpmeets in things temporal and spiritual, the husband and wife are to seek the well-being of each other. The virtues of life, forbearance, understanding, and self-forgetful service are the requisites of a happy home. Children have the divine right to be born into an atmosphere of love and to be reared in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by consecrated parents. It is the solemn duty of parents to build and maintain a home where mutual respect, love, courtesy, loyalty, and helpfulness are the standards of conduct.

Divorce

3. Since marriage is a solemn engagement for the term of life, and a union of souls ordained by God Himself, Friends bear a strong testimony against divorce. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Recreation and Entertainment

***Recreation and
Entertainment***

Rest and recreation are necessary to every person in the maintenance of physical, mental, and spiritual health. Friends are encouraged to consider all entertainment carefully and to weigh whether it is consistent with Christian principles and standards. It is also important to recognize that technology has a moral and spiritual dimension – for both children and adults. When entertainment and/or technology activities are in doubt, and when such doubts cannot be intelligently and conscientiously resolved, they should be avoided.

The church and the community should cooperate in furnishing wholesome and constructive social activities and recreation for the young people, in accordance with their needs. Thus high standards of quality and moral influence may be maintained, and the problem of unwholesome commercialized entertainment largely avoided.

Addictions

Addictions 1. Friends maintain a strong testimony against all addictive behavior. The Quaker testimonies of simplicity and moderation are expansive enough to encourage great caution with any substance or activity that has the potential to be addictive. These substances and activities are many and varied, including legal and illegal, moral and immoral and sometimes even encouraged or prescribed. Care should also be taken that one's activity does not become "a stumbling block" for others and realize that what may not be problematic or addictive for one individual may be an issue for those within that person's area of influence.

Oaths

Honesty 1. The basis of Friends testimony against taking oaths is the word of Jesus: "Swear not at all" and "Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matthew 5:34, 37). (See also James 5:12.) These scriptural injunctions not only plainly forbid the taking of oaths, but emphasize simple and direct honesty in speech. The truth is to be spoken at all times. An individual's word must be "as good as his bond".

Exemption 2. Friends and others conscientiously opposed to oaths are generally exempt by law from such procedure. A simple affirmation may be taken instead. Requests for the use of the affirmation will be respected by all officers acquainted with the law, and those ignorant of it should be informed of its provisions.

Secret Organizations

Freedom of Action The rights of individuals to freedom of action is emphasized, but Friends are cautioned against membership in an organization which will directly or indirectly diminish sympathy with any portion of society or tend to compete with the church of Jesus Christ as the center of one's interest and loyalty.

Observance of A Day of Rest

Day of Rest In accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, we believe that our loving Heavenly Father, with a full understanding of our physical and spiritual needs, has graciously set apart one day in seven for rest and worship. While we do not understand this to be a day of legalistic restrictions and prohibitions (Mark 2:27), it is to be kept holy and sacred, free from the stress and the labor of the other six days, and dedicated to the purposes for which it was ordained. We bear a testimony against commercialized Sunday recreation and entertainment, and against industries which operate on Sunday, not of necessity but for profit. Friends are urged not to participate in them.

Simplicity

Quality of Life The lives of Friends should be characterized by simplicity and sincerity. Friends feel that simplicity in speech, in dress, and in manner of living is the Christian ideal. Members are constrained to "free themselves from luxurious and self-indulgent ways of living"¹ and to seek rather a depth and purity of life consistent with "the Light within".

As the Society of Friends, we are more concerned for the progress of the kingdom of God than for power, prestige and possessions. We should be eager to do all that is possible to bring men and women to Christ, to see justice and equal opportunity given to all, and to see that conditions for world peace are sought and maintained. One's entire life is considered to be a sacred stewardship.

¹ Caroline Emilia Stephens, *Quaker Strongholds*, pg. 144

CHAPTER 5

The Queries

The purpose of the Queries is to direct attention to the true source of spiritual strength, to promote individual faithfulness to Christ, and to keep the church in a healthy condition. They are of value in appraising the state of society and in helping each member to determine through self-examination whether he/she is living a consistent Christian life. The Queries should be read frequently in private devotions and at specified intervals both in monthly and in quarterly meetings.

Meetings should find a method to share The Queries on a regular and frequent basis.

General Queries

- Spiritual Growth* 1. Do you strive for the constant realization of God's presence in your life? Do you profess your unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Are you sensitive and obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Do you endeavor to advance your spiritual growth by the prayerful study of the Bible and other devotional literature?
- Meetings for Worship and Business* 2. Are all meetings for worship and for business held regularly and are you regular and punctual in attending? Do you come with heart and mind prepared for communion with God and fellowship with one another? Do you individually assume your rightful share in the responsibility of the work and worship of the meeting? Are your meetings for business times of spiritual concern and prayerful search for the way of truth?
- Christian Fellowship* 3. Do you love one another as becomes the followers of Christ? Are you careful of the reputation of others? When differences arise, do you make earnest effort to end them speedily?
- Home and Family* 4. Do you practice the daily reading of the scriptures in your families, giving time for reverent meditation? Do you make your home a place of hospitality, friendliness, peace, and Christian fellowship? Do you promote the moral and spiritual life of your children through careful supervision of their education, recreation, and friendships?
- Youth and the Church* 5. Do you seek the conversion to Jesus Christ and spiritual development of your young people? Do you instruct them in the principles and practices of Friends? Do you strive to create a community life that will promote their mental and physical well-being?

- Standards of Life*** 6. Do you observe simplicity and moderation in your manner of living? Do you give proper attention to the rules of health? As ambassadors of Christ, are you careful to avoid activities and the use of substances which adversely affect your Christian witness?
- Business Responsibility*** 7. Are you careful to keep service to Christ's Kingdom before professional/career responsibilities? Are you truthful and honest in your business transactions, punctual in fulfilling your promises, and prompt in the payment of your debts? Do you give an honest day's work for a day's pay?
- Missionary Outreach*** 8. Do you make diligent effort to acquaint yourselves and those under your care with spiritual needs locally and globally? Do you support by prayer and systematic giving those who are laboring to extend Christ's Kingdom? Do you use your spiritual gifts in serving humanity as God grants you light to see such service?
- Peace*** 9. Do you consistently practice the Christian principles of love and goodwill toward all people? Do you work actively for peace and for the removal of the causes of war? Do you observe the testimony of Friends against military training and service? Do you endeavor to make clear to all whom you can influence, that war is inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Jesus?
- Attitudes in Race Relations*** 10. Does your attitude toward people of other races indicate your belief in their right to equal opportunity? Do you believe in the spiritual capacity of individuals of all races and do you recognize their equality in the sight of God? Are you aware of your responsibility as a Christian to help in the elimination of racial discrimination and prejudice?
- Social Conscience*** 11. Do you minister to others, understanding that when you minister to "the least of these..." you are ministering to Christ as well? Do you as workers, employers, producers, consumers, and investors endeavor to cultivate goodwill and mutual understanding in your economic relationships? Do you intelligently exercise all of your constitutional privileges and thus seek to promote Christian influence locally, nationally, and internationally?

Queries for Meetings on Ministry and Counsel

Responsibilities of Membership

1. Do you as elders and ministers recognize your responsibility in setting an example of faithfulness and loyalty to the meetings for worship and business? Do you accept appointment to this group as a definite response to the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus”? Are you concerned that the needs of all are ministered to in your meetings, whether by silent worship, inspirational speaking, or reverent music?

Relations with Other Members

2. Are you aware of the necessity of harmonious relations with your fellow members as a basis for the most effective service to the church? Do you as leaders in the meeting earnestly try to win individuals to Christ and to strengthen the faith and loyalty of fellow Christians?

Spiritual Gifts

3. Do you endeavor to recognize and develop your special talents and abilities for service in the meeting, and do you pray for divine guidance in their use? Do you cultivate the spiritual gifts of the members of your meeting? Are you always ready to encourage and advise those who engage in the vocal ministry or in other Christian work?

Personal Life and Conduct

4. Do you provide in your schedule of activities an opportunity for daily devotions? Do you prayerfully seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of scriptural truth? Does your personal conduct reflect the true dignity of Christian character as set forth in the Scriptures? Do you strive to live so that others see Christ in you?

Queries for Pastors

1. Do you conduct your activities in such a way as to be a Christian role model? Do you realize that the way you live may be the only Bible some will read?

2. Do you consider that your participation in some activities may be a “stumbling block” for others, especially in your Meeting?

3. Do you dress appropriately and do you use acceptable language at all times?

4. Do you keep up with regular Bible reading and study? Are you spending earnest time in prayer and meditation daily?

5. Are you participating in activities of FCNC? Do you attend Annual Sessions? Do you attend quarterly meeting on a regular basis? Do you attend FCNC minister’s meetings, conferences and workshops?

6. Do you read at least three (3) religious and inspirational books per year?

7. Do you provide spiritual, emotional and personal support to families going through terminal illness or the death of a loved one? Do you keep confidential information to yourself?

8. Do you provide new members of your Ministry and Counsel with a copy of Ministry and Counsel Guidelines?

Part II
Organization and
Business Procedure

CHAPTER 1

Form of Government of the Friends Church of North Carolina

Ideals in Organization

The Church 1. The Christian group whose faith and activities have been described in Part I is known historically as the Religious Society of Friends and more commonly as Quakers. The choice by early Friends to use the term “Religious Society” as a name for the group gives a clear indication of their attitude toward organization. The term meant a fellowship, a vitally spiritual body held together by spiritual forces freshly operating through each individual, without creed, ritual, or any sacramental administration. The Religious Society of Friends is a community of believers in which there is but one Master and no intermediary affecting any individual's relationship to God. There is the understanding that we seek to live a life beyond Sunday Morning – to have Christianity in all parts of our living, to live such that Jesus Christ encompasses our entire life. The name, Friends Church, is used by many local meetings and certain yearly meetings to indicate that as children of Christ, each member is part of the Universal Church of Christ.

Equal Rights 2. Friends recognize the fact that God has endowed each person with gifts which are to be developed and exercised to the extent of one's ability. Each member has duties and responsibilities varying in accordance with the member's talents and the faithfulness with which the member has cultivated them. All have equal rights and privileges in considering and in deciding the courses of action to be taken by the meeting. No appointments made for a particular service confer upon the appointed person or group any degree of arbitrary or final authority. Friends recognize no distinction in the rights, privileges, or responsibilities of members.

Waiting for Guidance 3. The practice of holding meetings for business following a period of worship opens the way for continuation of the religious fellowship experienced during such a period. The same reverent waiting that operates in the meetings for worship is also helpful in seeking divine guidance and unity of action in the transaction of business. The right conduct of these meetings even in routine matters is important to the spiritual life of all. Such meetings are a part of the organized undertaking to promote the Kingdom of God. Service in them may be rightfully regarded as service for Him.

Friendly Method 4. It is the practice of Friends to give unhurried and sympathetic consideration to all proposals and expressions of opinion. They endeavor to respect an earnest and sincere minority and, if it seems necessary, may postpone action until they have secured more light on the question at issue and have attained a greater degree of unanimity. Each Friend should be certain that the expressed concern and comments are led by the Spirit of God. It is desired that unanimity be attained, however it is understood that complete unanimity in all issues may not always be possible when one considers the imperfection of humans as individuals. After due consideration has been given to all points of view, it is the duty of the clerk of the meeting to weigh carefully the various expressions and to state what is believed to be the will of the meeting. When all participants are prayerfully seeking to be led by the Spirit, the will of the meeting should be the mind of the Lord.

Tenure of Office 5. In keeping with the Quaker ideals of service and the distribution of responsibility, the monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings should not unduly prolong the services of officers and committee members nor give to one person many appointments. In following this policy of rotation in office, Friends can develop the talents of a wider range of members.

Basis of Membership

Active Members 1. Friends receive into active membership those whose faith in Christ as a personal Savior is manifest in their lives and who are in unity with the teachings of Christian truth as held by Friends. Membership is seen “primarily in terms of discipleship. It implies a sense of responsibility. . . a sense of commitment . . .” and “a willingness to be used by God.”¹ (A more detailed description of membership and steps to becoming a member or associate member are discussed in the following chapter.)

Associate Members 2. The children of members are automatically enrolled at birth as associate members. Other children may be enrolled under special provisions. The enrollment of children as associate members is an expression of the conviction that children born into this fellowship rightfully possess a precious heritage. Children and youth have a unique interest in and claim upon the church, and it should earnestly seek their spiritual well-being and development. Friends thus express the belief that by proper encouragement and guidance on the part of parents, teachers, ministers, and elders, their children and youth may be led to a voluntary acceptance of that relationship with Jesus Christ as set forth in this book of *Faith and Practice*.

Monthly Meeting

At Worship 1. The monthly meeting is composed of resident and nonresident members and consists of the meeting for worship and the meeting for business, including all of the activities and organizations connected therewith. The meeting for worship is a fellowship of those who find it spiritually profitable to be associated in worship and service and is a united expression of the human longing for vital religious experience.

At Business 2. The development of these processes of spiritual enrichment involves certain organizational factors such as the activities of officers and committees, matters of finance, group concerns, and the determination of attitudes and policies on subjects of common or public interest. For the care of such matters a meeting for business consisting of the whole membership, known as the monthly meeting, convenes each month. If two or more congregations are associated in one monthly meeting, each congregation may have a local or preparative business meeting, subordinate to the monthly meeting and limited in its authority to purely local matters.²

For the care of spiritual interests and the promotion of consistent conduct among the members, each monthly meeting selects elders who, together with the recorded ministers and invited recorded ministers, are specifically charged with these responsibilities in the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

¹ Church Government, *London Yearly Meeting* (1968), 831.

² See New Meetings in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Monthly Meeting

Organization and Functions

Organization and Duties 1. A monthly meeting is a regular organization of one or more congregations and consists of all persons who are recorded upon its list of members.

A monthly meeting is duly organized for the transaction of business when it has been established by the Representative Body and has appointed a presiding clerk. It shall hold monthly sessions for the transaction of business. Each member has the right and obligation to participate in the deliberations and work of the meeting, prayerfully submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit.

It shall make an annual evaluation of the state of society, indicating the spiritual condition or health of the meeting within its membership. This statement of its spiritual condition may include objectives and accomplishments which are indicative of the spiritual life of the meeting, indicating strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. The monthly meeting shall make an annual tabulation of its essential statistics and transmit a copy to Friends Church of North Carolina along with such other reports as may be requested. It may transmit to the yearly meeting, the Representative Body, or the quarterly meeting any appropriate recommendations which the meeting is united in sending.

Special Sessions 2. Special sessions of the monthly meeting may be called by either the presiding clerk or the assistant presiding clerk upon the request of three members. Notice shall be given at a regular meeting of the congregation at least seven days prior to the date of holding the special meeting; it shall name the business to be considered and the persons calling for the special meeting. No business may be considered at a special meeting other than the business for which it was called.

Appointment of Officers 3. The monthly meeting shall appoint a presiding clerk, a recording clerk, and such other officers as may be needed to expedite the business of the meeting and manage its books and affairs. It shall be the duty of the presiding clerk to see that the business is properly presented to the meeting for its consideration, to announce decisions when made, and to sign documents on behalf of the monthly meeting. The recording clerk shall keep an accurate set of minutes, showing all matters brought to the attention of the meeting and the actions taken. These shall be kept in permanent form in a minute book after they have been approved by the meeting. The minutes of each meeting must be signed by the clerk and recording clerk and dated correctly. The recording clerk, or other designated person, shall keep a current and correct record of all matters pertaining to membership, such as births, marriages, deaths, members joining by application, transfers of associate members to active membership, and transfers of members to and from other meetings.

Treasurer 4. The monthly meeting shall appoint a treasurer, who shall receive and disburse funds as directed by the meeting, keep a regular account of money so received and disbursed, and submit a complete report of the state of the treasury to the monthly meeting annually. A report of the financial activities for the past month should be given at each monthly meeting.

Internal Audit 5. The monthly meeting shall appoint an auditing committee which shall be responsible for an annual audit of the meeting accounts, including but not limited to the general account, building fund account, missions account, endowment accounts, trust accounts, cemetery accounts, memorial accounts, and youth accounts.

Trustees 6. Unless the laws of the state pertaining to the appointment and service of trustees provide otherwise, the monthly meeting shall appoint three or more trustees for the period of three years, one-third of the terms expiring each year. It shall be the responsibility of the trustees to hold all property in the name of the meeting. Where the financial responsibility of the meeting is involved, and in other matters, the trustees should, except in emergencies, act only in accordance with the expressed will of the meeting.

Tenure in Office 7. All officers of the monthly meeting shall be appointed annually, unless otherwise stated. All appointees hold their positions until their successors are appointed. Where numbers permit, committee members may be appointed to a two-year or a three-year cycle, giving special attention to rotation in office. Rotation in office is recommended as contributing to the training of new workers and the spreading of responsibility among the membership.

Records 8. Monthly meeting records should be kept in a form approved by the yearly meeting. The official minutes should be signed by the clerk and the recording clerk of the monthly meeting. The minute books and records should be carefully preserved in duplicate. The original copies should be deposited each year in the Friends Historical Collection at Guilford College's Hege Library.

Committees

Nominating Committee 1. The monthly meeting shall appoint a Nominating Committee which shall function throughout the year. This committee should represent the interests of the entire monthly meeting. It shall make nominations for positions as directed by the monthly meeting. It should consult with the proposed nominees before presenting their names to the monthly meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve for a period of three years, one-third being appointed each year. Any member of the meeting may make additional nominations to the monthly meeting.

Stewardship-Finance Committee 2. The monthly meeting should make annual appointments to a Stewardship-Finance Committee with one-third of the terms expiring each year. Responsibilities of this committee shall include preparation of an annual budget for consideration by the monthly meeting, raising funds necessary to carry out the work of the monthly meeting and promoting ideals of Christian stewardship within the membership of the monthly meeting.

The monthly meeting may appoint both a Finance Committee and a Stewardship Committee.

The Finance Committee should meet regularly, not less than once each month, to give careful attention to the financial needs and interests of the meeting. The treasurer should write checks only upon official direction.

The Stewardship Committee, when established as a separate committee, should work closely with the Finance Committee in promoting the ideals of Christian stewardship throughout the membership of the meeting. The primary emphasis should be upon service in the name of Christ, rather than upon fund-raising as an end in itself. Friends will seek to avoid appeals to stewardship that employ sensational methods, legal compulsion, self-glorification or self-interest, or imply that through good works one can assure salvation. The aim of our stewardship is the commitment of the whole person to the cause of Christ's Kingdom.

Meetings are admonished to give consideration to allocating a reasonable portion of their finances to outreach and service beyond their own local expenditures.

Christian stewardship is the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions, based upon the conviction that these gifts from God are held in trust, to be used in His service in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love. The New Testament teaches that giving should be regular, systematic, and proportionate (1 Corinthians 16:2). The tithe is recommended as a biblical, reasonable, and acceptable standard of monetary giving.

Experience has shown that efficient methods of church financing are a blessing, both to the individual and to the monthly meeting. Members should be taught basic principles of Christian stewardship and encouraged to be faithful servants of God.

Friends are admonished to give freely of their talents to the work of Christ's Kingdom by devoting a reasonable amount of time to Christian service.

Standing Committees 4. Each monthly meeting should appoint committees to represent each area of service in the monthly meeting. At least one person should be appointed for each concern. It is suggested that areas of service include those recognized by the yearly meeting, such as Christian education, evangelism, literature, missions, music, peace, Young Friends, and social issues and ministries. The monthly meeting may appoint such other committees as may be needed to accomplish its work.

Reports 5. Each standing committee should submit a complete report at the end of the fiscal year and may report at more frequent intervals as needed.

Relation to Quarterly Meeting and to Yearly Meeting

Representatives 1. Two or more representatives shall be appointed by each monthly meeting to attend the quarterly meeting. Each monthly meeting shall appoint one or more of its members to serve as representatives to the annual sessions of the yearly meeting. It shall also appoint one person as a member of the Representative Body, preferably the clerk.

Meeting on Ministry and Counsel

Membership 1. Each Monthly Meeting shall have a committee on Ministry and Counsel that shall be composed of all the elders and resident ministers accepted for that service by the monthly meeting. (Appointment and responsibilities of Elders are discussed later in this chapter.) Pastors or those serving the meeting in a similar capacity shall be members of this body by virtue of their position in the meeting. The Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall select one or more members of this body to serve as clerks who shall keep a written record of proceedings.

Additional Counsel 2. To coordinate and strengthen the work of the monthly meeting, the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may call in for consultation other persons of monthly meeting as deemed necessary.

Time of Meetings 3. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall hold regular sessions, preferably each month, but not less frequently than once in three months. Special meetings may be called by the presiding clerk of Ministry and Counsel on request of three members of Ministry and Counsel. All members of Ministry and Counsel shall be informed of the meeting.

Appointment of Representatives 4. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint representatives to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Duties 5. It shall be the duty of this body to have general care of the spiritual welfare and religious work of the meeting. The elders should be especially concerned for the ministry of the meeting, participating themselves as divinely directed. This body should be watchful of the interests of the non-resident and non-attending members, as well as regular attenders. All meeting families should be visited, giving special care to those who are not members and inviting them to join in membership when they are prepared. Watchful care should be extended to see that associate members are nurtured in the Christian life and are encouraged to become active members as soon as they are ready for such membership.

Relations to Pastor 6. When a monthly meeting has made arrangements for a pastor to assist in its efforts to fulfill its Christian mission, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel must not allow its own responsibilities in the life of the meeting to be neglected or diminished.

A clear understanding of the work to be done cooperatively must be reached. When this is done, the pastor may expect the full support of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel in prayer, counsel, and cooperative efforts. The pastor may be provided a job description at the time the call is issued, clearly setting forth pastoral responsibilities.

Pastoral Arrangements 7. If and when a meeting decides that it may invite a pastor to serve in its behalf in a relationship for which they both feel a concern, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall seek the counsel of the superintendent and/or clerk of the yearly meeting and make other necessary interviews and inquiries that will enable it to make recommendations to the monthly meeting. Any recommendation relative to

pastoral appointments or changes must be made by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel to the monthly meeting where final decision shall be made and appropriate action taken.

If and when a meeting decides to invite a minister to serve as a pastor, the meeting shall provide sufficient funds to free the worker for such service and enable the pastor to do the work to be done effectively. The salary shall be determined by the Meeting and Ministry and Counsel in consultation with the Finance Committee and included in the recommendation to the monthly meeting.

When pastoral arrangements, or changes, are being considered by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel or the monthly meeting, the pastor should not be present except by invitation of the meeting considering the matter.

Memorials 8. A record of all deaths in the meeting should be in the meeting records. Memorials sharing the life and ministry of deceased Friends may be prepared by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and referred to the monthly meeting to which said member belonged. If approved by the monthly meeting, such memorials shall be recorded in its minutes and a copy inserted in a book of memorials to be provided by the meeting. Depending on the extent of the Christian service of the Friend beyond the limits of his local meeting, copies of the memorial may be sent to the quarterly meeting and to the yearly meeting. All records of deaths and all memorials shall be placed in the Friends Historical Collection of Guilford College's Hege Library.

State of Society 9. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall annually appoint one or more of its members to prepare and present to its sessions a report of the spiritual condition of the monthly meeting. The report when approved shall be forwarded to the monthly meeting for its consideration and disposition. The report shall cover such activities giving evidence of spiritual vitality of the members, their social concerns, special Christian work in which members may be engaged outside the limits of the meeting, the quality of the ministry in the meetings for worship, and significant accomplishments which may give incentive to others. The spiritual condition, however, should not simply be a list of the good things and accomplishments in the meeting, but should include areas of spiritual concern, opportunities for improvement and service as well as identifying areas of weakness.

When the monthly meeting has seriously considered and approved this report, copies should be made available to the entire meeting and copies forwarded to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel should prepare a summary to be sent to Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Elders

Appointment 1. The Nominating Committee of the monthly meeting shall annually propose to the monthly meeting the names of persons who in their judgment possess or may develop the capacities of spiritual discernment and leadership qualifying them for the position of elder. They should also have a good understanding of and dedication to the principles and work of the Religious Society of Friends. If the nominations received are satisfactory to the monthly meeting, it shall proceed with their appointment. Each monthly meeting should have at least three elders so that a breadth of counsel will give weight to their conclusions. One-third of the elders shall be appointed each year. Without sacrificing efficiency or the spiritual quality of the meeting, attention should be given to providing rotation in office as a means by which other Friends with gifts may be introduced to the responsibility of membership in the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Both men and women should be appointed, and a range of ages and spiritual gifts should be included. Continual reappointment without adequate ability and spiritual concern may be detrimental to the development of the meeting.

Duties of Elders 2. Elders should jointly feel the responsibility for the spiritual condition of the members and cooperate with, encourage, and strengthen those who share in public ministry and pastoral work. They should have an understanding of the scriptures, the teaching of Christianity, and a knowledge of the work and purpose of Friends.

Because of the delicate and sensitive nature of much of their work, elders must observe the highest levels of confidentiality.

Elders share in responsibility for appropriate vocal ministry in meetings for worship and should encourage others

who give acceptable vocal ministry in meeting for worship evidencing true spiritual leading. They should seek to guide into helpful lines of service those who do not give such evidence. They should be alert to find and suggest avenues of service, especially to new or young members.

Elders should tenderly discuss with members of the meeting as to their spiritual condition and, in friendly helpfulness, endeavor to aid all in the attainment of a high standard of Christian life and unselfish service. Elders should exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of a consistent moral life by the members of the meeting. If the occasion arises, elders should gently counsel any member whose behavior, values, or attitudes are contrary to the Christian faith or out of unity with Friends' principles. Elders should endeavor to guide members toward an orderly life and useful service in full fellowship with the meeting.

Not Transferable 3. The position of elder is not transferable to another meeting.

Minutes for Service

Minute Granted 1. When any Friend feels the call of God to service beyond the limits of the individual's yearly meeting, the person shall present the concern to the monthly meeting of which the person is a member. If this meeting concurs, it shall transmit a written statement of the nature and field of the proposed service together with an expression of its unity and concurrence herein to the clerk of the quarterly meeting who shall in turn, if the meeting approves, transmit the same to the clerk of the Representative Body of the yearly meeting. If that body approves, it shall grant the applicant a minute defining the nature and field of service and expressing the unity and concurrence of the yearly meeting through its Representative Body. Monthly meetings may grant Letters of Introduction for members who will be visiting within the limits of other yearly meetings.

Minute Returned 2. All minutes or letters should be returned to the meetings that granted them upon completion of service.

Rules of Membership

Reception by Application 1. Application for membership should be made in writing to the monthly meeting. (A form is provided in the Appendix of this volume.) This application should be acknowledged by the clerk and directed to the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Application for membership in a preparative meeting should be made in the same manner as with a monthly meeting and the same guidelines followed. The preparative meeting should seek the advice of the sponsoring organization, then act upon the application and send a notice of its action to the sponsor.

Steps to Membership 2. It shall be the duty of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel to guide applicants for membership in their search for Truth. It shall designate one or more of its members to confer with the applicant at an early date. It is not the purpose of the conference to conduct a pointed examination. The purpose is to share views and to ascertain whether the applicant seeks a fuller understanding of the basic principles of Christian living, finds satisfaction in the faith of Friends, and desires to join with Friends in a corporate and continuing search for Truth. It should be made clear to the applicant that regular attendance of meetings for worship and business and a willingness to support the work and services of the meeting with one's time, talents, and financial resources are responsibilities of membership.

After hearing the discernment of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, the monthly meeting shall act upon the application for membership.

Welcome 3. The monthly meeting clerk shall inform the applicant of the action of the monthly meeting. If it has been favorable, a committee may be appointed to visit and welcome the applicant into membership. Announcement of the applicant's membership may be made at a regular meeting for worship when all members may have an opportunity to extend a welcome such as the right hand of fellowship.

Associate Members 4. Parents and guardians may make application for the enrollment of minor children as associate members, when applying for membership or when transferring from other denominations. If only one parent is a member, the children may be enrolled as associate members upon the request of that parent and the consent of the other. Such requests shall be made to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Children of non-members

may be received into associate membership upon parent request and recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. It is understood that by having a dedication for an infant, the meeting is accepting that child as an associate member, regardless of the membership status of the parents. (A certificate acknowledging the Associate Membership status of minor children is included in the Appendix of this volume).

Associate to Active 5. An associate member may apply for active membership on the same basis as any other applicant. When an associate member reaches the age of maturity and fails to apply for active membership, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall endeavor to provide the counsel and care that may help encourage a decision about membership.

Transfer of Membership 6. Members moving to the limits of another monthly meeting should request the transfer of their membership to that meeting. At the discretion of the monthly meeting, certificates shall be issued for such members if requested. The monthly meeting receiving a certificate shall inform the meeting which issued it of the action taken thereon. A certificate of membership shall be issued to a monthly meeting and shall be sent to the clerk thereof, who shall submit it to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for consideration and appropriate recommendation to the monthly meeting.

Quarterly meetings and the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee shall issue certificates of membership for members of preparative meetings under their care.

Joining Other Bodies 7. If a member in good standing wishes to unite with some other denomination, the monthly meeting may issue a letter of recommendation to the church chosen by the member, whereupon membership with Friends shall cease.

Church Letters 8. When an applicant for membership brings a letter of recommendation from another denomination, the monthly meeting may exercise its judgment in regard to receiving the applicant on this recommendation. All certificates and letters should first be presented to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Records 9. The acceptance and issuance of all certificates and letters shall be recorded in the minutes of the monthly meeting and the list of members shall be changed accordingly. Removal certificates for recorded ministers shall include a statement of their recording.

Resignation 10. Resignation of membership shall be made in writing to the monthly meeting. The monthly meeting may exercise its discretion in accepting a resignation. Before taking action, however, the matter should be referred to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for study and recommendation.

Forfeiture 11. When any member becomes a member of another meeting or denomination without having requested a letter of recommendation, the monthly meeting, upon verification, shall remove the member's name from its list of members and inform the member of its action.

Discontinuance 12. A member moving beyond the limits of the monthly meeting should correspond with the meeting and contribute to its support. Monthly meetings should correspond with absent members. If no information has been received from a member for a period of three years, the monthly meeting, upon recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel after due care and concern has been exercised, may remove the name from its list of members.

Dismissal 13. When any member habitually neglects attendance at meeting, fails to contribute to its support, and is generally inactive in the work of Friends, the monthly meeting may refer the matter back to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Elders should prayerfully counsel with the member, after which the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may recommend to the monthly meeting that the name be removed from the monthly meeting membership list.

Associate Membership Discontinued 14. An associate member who shows no interest in becoming an active member after reaching the age of 18, upon recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, shall be removed from the list of members.

Dealing with Problems

Disownment 1. All formal complaints against a member shall be introduced to the monthly meeting by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The monthly meeting shall appoint a committee to confer with the offender. The committee shall endeavor, in a spirit of love and tenderness, to resolve the difficulties and to lead the individual to that state of mind and heart that will enable the member to be restored to fellowship with the monthly meeting. If the exercise of due care and forbearance shall be of no avail, the monthly meeting shall execute a minute of disownment and furnish the person involved with a copy. The membership records of the monthly meeting shall be corrected accordingly.

Right of Appeal 2. When an offender is dissatisfied with the decision of the monthly meeting, the decision is appealable to the quarterly meeting for a review of the case. Such an appeal must be filed with the clerk of quarterly meeting within three months following the decision of the monthly meeting. If the quarterly meeting upholds the decision of the monthly meeting, the member may appeal to the next meeting of Representative Body or annual session of yearly meeting. The decision of the yearly meeting shall be final. When a case is reviewed before a quarterly meeting or yearly meeting, a committee of three shall be appointed to represent the meeting from which the appeal is made. When meetings consider appeals, they shall endeavor to exercise a spirit of fairness and goodwill. Frequently, hearings of a case can be conducted by common accord before a judicious and representative committee appointed by the meeting to which appeal is made.

Marriage When Arranged by the Meeting

Significance 1. Throughout their history as an organization, Friends have provided a form of ceremony in keeping with the belief in the deep religious significance of marriage. The avoidance of undue haste, the emphasis upon the equality of the sexes, the responsibility assumed by the monthly meeting, the thoughtful attention given to the religious, moral, and physical qualifications, and the impressive statement of the marriage vows by the contracting parties are all important features of the Friends¹ marriage practice. Persons desiring to unite in marriage through the meeting shall proceed as follows:

Report Intentions 2. The man and the woman desiring to be married under the care of monthly meeting shall report their intentions to the monthly meeting of which either is a member. If both are Friends, this is done by obtaining a statement of certification for each person signed by two or more elders of the meeting to which each person belongs to the effect that no obstruction to their proposed marriage appears. These certificates and a letter declaring their intent are submitted to the monthly meeting under whose care they wish to be married, which may then proceed according to the rules of *Faith and Practice* and the provisions of the law of the state.²

Committee Appointed 3. If certifications are not presented or if for other causes inquiry is desired by the monthly meeting of either person, the monthly meeting may appoint a committee of inquiry consisting of two men and two women to seek further clearness for the marriage. They may consider such things as maturity, clearness from other engagements, the consent of parents or guardians in the case of minors, and rights of children by a previous marriage, if there are such. If the parties belong to different meetings, a committee may be appointed in each meeting. Reports may be made to the next regular sessions of monthly meetings or to special sessions, and, if the reports are found to be satisfactory, they shall be sent to the meeting in which the marriage is to be held, and the parties will be at liberty to proceed accordingly.

One Not a Member 4. If one person is not a member of Friends, certifications, prepared as in paragraph 2, should be presented to the monthly meeting of which the other party is a member; or a committee may be appointed by said meeting which may proceed as in paragraph 3.

¹ See *A Wedding After the Manner of Friends*, published by North Carolina Yearly Meeting (1975, revised 2022)

² See Appendix G

Non-members 5. A monthly meeting may allow a marriage ceremony within the meeting when both persons are non-members. In such a case the meeting shall appoint a committee to proceed as in paragraph 3, or, alternately, certifications shall be signed by three elders of the monthly meeting to which the application is addressed. If the findings of the committee or the certifications are satisfactory, the proceedings in relation to the proposed marriage shall be in the same manner as if the contracting persons were members of Friends.

Oversight of Marriage 6. After a couple has been liberated to proceed with arrangements for their marriage, a committee of oversight consisting of not less than two women and two men shall be appointed by the monthly meeting to attend the marriage and report to the following session of the monthly meeting as to whether it has been properly solemnized.

Marriage in Meeting 7. The marriage shall be solemnized in a meeting for worship at a time convenient to the contracting persons (Appendix E).

Certificate 8. Following the marriage a certificate shall be signed by the couple. The certificate shall then be audibly read by a designated person. At the conclusion of the meeting it shall be signed by others as witnesses (Appendix F).

Officiant 9. The pastor, recorded minister, or other clergy may assist in the solemnization of a marriage within the meeting, if the couple so desires. If the marriage ceremony is performed without participation of a pastor, recorded minister, or other clergy, the presiding clerk of the monthly meeting is authorized to certify the marriage to the appropriate legal authorities.

With the Minister Participating

Meeting's Concern 1. Members of Friends Church of North Carolina, influenced by the general acceptance of pastoral leadership, recognize the fact that many young people are looking to pastors and other Friends ministers for guidance in relation to marriage. The meeting should share a concern for the happiness and spiritual welfare of those who request the pastor to participate in the solemnization of their marriage. It should cooperate in every possible way with the pastor in keeping the marriage procedure harmonious with the ideals of Friends.

Advice to Ministers 2. Pastors and recorded ministers are recognized by the state as qualified to perform the functions of clergy in the solemnization of marriage. They are advised, therefore, to exercise due care to observe all legal requirements as set by the several states, and also to endeavor to make the exchange of marriage vows a matter of the deepest religious import to the contracting parties and to all who are present.

Counseling 3. Pastors are encouraged to conduct classes for young people in which helpful counsel may be given to those contemplating marriage and to all youth in the matter of choosing their life companions. Personal counsel with individuals and couples is also advised. But in cases where previous consultation has not been possible, pastors are urged to ascertain as fully as they are able, all circumstances that would concern the qualifications of the contracting parties for marriage and to satisfy themselves that all legal and moral requirements have been observed.

Marriage Service 4. Pastors and other ministers are encouraged to use a marriage service in keeping with the ideals of Friends. In recognition of the importance of pastoral leadership in ever widening areas and the prevalence of pastoral service in connection with marriage, a ceremony is provided for the help it may give those who feel the need for guidance (Appendix H).

CHAPTER 3

Quarterly Meeting

Organization and Functions

- Membership** 1. The quarterly meeting consists of the members of its monthly meetings.
- Officers and Committees** 2. The quarterly meeting shall appoint a presiding clerk, a recording clerk, a treasurer, and committees and other officers as needed. When it becomes necessary for the quarterly meeting to hold property, it shall appoint three or more trustees for a period of three years, with one-third of the number appointed each year, unless the laws of the state pertaining to the appointment and service of trustees provide otherwise. It shall be the responsibility of the trustees to hold title to all property in the name of the quarterly meeting. Those trustees shall in all cases act only in accordance with the express will of the quarterly meeting, except in case of emergency.
- Nominating Committee** 3. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed annually, to serve throughout the year. The function of this committee shall not abridge the right of any member of the meeting to suggest additional nominations.
- Functions** 4. The quarterly meeting in session has the responsibility to seek inspiration, enlightened vision, and a determined will for Christian living in today's world. Worship should possess the assembled Friends and guide their meditations. In this spirit they should seek to reach beyond their human resources as they aspire to counter the forces of evil and find ways of shaping human society in God's will. Sessions of the quarterly meeting should be used by Friends to match their minds and their faith with great issues which challenge the Christian church. This faith calls for united efforts for the cure of war, the abolition of poverty, hunger, and ignorance, and for the conquest of racial discrimination and indifference to human suffering. The cry of the destitute, the exploited, and the hopeless should be heard by the gathered Friends. With all these should come the charge, "think on these things".

A committee shall be appointed, or specific arrangements made, to plan with care the program for each session of the quarterly meeting. Each monthly meeting shall be provided necessary information regarding program and business well in advance of the date of the session of the quarterly meeting. Yearly meeting business and concerns shall be given careful consideration.

The quarterly meeting shall be alert for ways by which the local meetings may join together in efforts to make their Christian witness more effective. Due consideration shall be given to concerns from local meetings. To assist in these efforts, a Communications committee should be appointed to receive and disseminate information to and from the quarter

The quarterly meeting shall seek ways by which the Queries may have a place of influence in the life of Friends.

- Relations with Yearly Meeting** 5. When it is considered necessary or helpful in the life of the Society, the quarterly meeting may recommend to the Representative Body:
- The laying down of one of its member monthly meetings.
 - The uniting of two or more monthly meetings into one.
 - The joining of one monthly meeting to another quarterly meeting.
 - The division of one quarterly meeting into two.

The quarterly meeting may recommend to the Representative Body the transfer of a monthly meeting to another yearly meeting, provided that the monthly meeting has requested the transfer. Such transfer would not become effective until approved by the Representative Body and the other yearly meeting concerned.

The quarterly meeting shall, upon the recommendation of its Nominating Committee, appoint one person to serve on the Finance Committee of the yearly meeting and one person to serve on the yearly meeting Nominating Committee. The quarterly meeting shall also appoint individuals to serve on each of the following yearly meeting committees: Christian Education, Outreach, Administrative Oversight Committee and the Committee on Clerks. These appointments shall be made annually. **Only Friends who can and will give the necessary time and thought to the work involved should be named to these committees.**

The quarterly meeting may make appropriate recommendations to the Representative Body and to the annual assembly of the yearly meeting.

Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel

Membership 1. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall be composed of all the members of the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel within the Quarter.

Meeting Time 2. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall meet for worship and business near the time of the sessions of the quarterly meeting.

Duties 3. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall be concerned with pastoral work within its limits. It shall be diligent and judicious in advising measures and means for the promotion of spiritual life and godliness; it shall give special attention to new congregations, weak meetings, and those in need of ministry; and it shall make recommendations to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel regarding the training and recording of prospective ministers. In conjunction with the quarterly meeting it shall endeavor to find means by which Friends may deepen their spiritual energies and enrich their Christian message.

The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint one person to serve on the Nominating Committee of the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is urged to appoint a standing Recording Committee to encourage meetings to seek members who may be led into ministry and to encourage individuals from their membership under the care of the Friends Church of North Carolina Recording Committee.

CHAPTER 4

Friends Church of North Carolina

Organization and Functions

Functions 1. Friends Church of North Carolina, as a fellowship in the Society of Friends, creates and directs the organization and procedures through which Friends seek to translate their faith to the larger society.

Membership 2. Friends Church of North Carolina consists of all the members of its monthly meetings and preparative meetings under the care of monthly meetings, quarterly meetings or the yearly meeting Outreach Commission.

Jurisdiction 3. The Yearly Meeting has power to decide all questions of administration, to counsel, admonish, or discipline its subordinate Meetings, to instituted measures and provide means for of the promotion of truth and righteousness, and to inaugurate and carry on departments of religious and philanthropic work.

The Annual Assembly 4. All members have the privilege and responsibility to attend and participate in the sessions of the yearly meeting when it is possible for them to do so. In order to insure adequate attendance of capable and concerned Friends, provision is made for the designation of a number of representatives who are expected to faithfully attend and conscientiously fulfill their responsibilities through all the sessions. In addition to its Representative Body appointee, every active monthly meeting in its November session may appoint one representative for each one hundred of its membership, or major portion thereof for service during the following year. Every monthly meeting shall appoint at least one representative to yearly meeting to attend the sessions of yearly meeting and report to the monthly meeting. According to the Bylaws, all members in attendance shall make up the "Board of Trustees" and have the responsibility to carry out the business of Friends Church of North Carolina.

The appointment of representatives to the annual assembly of the yearly meeting shall be made each year. When possible, the monthly meeting should not give any one person the task of serving simultaneously as its representative to the annual assembly of the yearly meeting and as its member of the Representative Body.

The yearly meeting shall be opened at the appointed time and place by the presiding clerk. In the absence of the presiding clerk, the assistant presiding clerk shall perform this service. If neither shall be present, the recording clerk shall open the meeting.

Time of Holding Yearly Meeting 5. The date of convening Friends Church of North Carolina annual sessions shall be set by yearly meeting in session. The date may be changed by Representative Body. If no meeting is set otherwise, the annual meeting shall be held during, or as close as reasonably feasible to, the first week of the eighth month of each year at a time and place set by the Presiding Clerk of Friends Church of North Carolina.

Appointment of Clerks 6. Members of the yearly meeting in annual session shall consider the report of the Committee on Clerks, recommending a presiding clerk, assistant presiding clerk, recording clerks, appointees to the Nominating Committee, and others as may be deemed necessary for the efficient transaction of business and meeting other purposes of the sessions of the yearly meeting.

The yearly meeting presiding clerk, the assistant presiding clerk, and the recording clerks shall also serve in like positions for the Representative Body.

Each of the quarterly meetings in their January or February session shall appoint one person to serve on the yearly meeting Committee on Clerks. They shall also appoint an alternate to serve in the absence of the appointee. These appointments shall be made annually.

Quarterly meeting clerks shall notify the Presiding Clerk of Friends Church of North Carolina of these appointments. It shall be the responsibility of the Presiding Clerk to notify the convener selected on quarterly meeting alphabetical rotation basis. The convener will call a meeting. No business can be transacted with less than fifty percent (50%) of members present. An alternate can serve in place of the appointed member. The Committee on Clerks shall make its recommendation to the first business session of the yearly meeting in annual session. The report of this committee shall not preclude the consideration of other persons for any of the positions.

When approved by the yearly meeting, clerks shall take office at the close of yearly meeting sessions. It is recommended that they not be appointed for more than five consecutive one-year terms.

Purposes 7. Friends assemble in their annual sessions that they may “come to know one another in that which is eternal”, promote Christian faith, love and unity, and seek through worship and deliberation the light and vision for creative Christian service. The yearly meeting may receive, for its deliberations and disposition, recommendations from the representatives to yearly meeting and from the Representative Body. When recommendations come to it from either subordinate meetings, committees, individual members, the Friends United Meeting, or any related Friends organization, the clerk shall refer them to the representatives for their consideration and disposition. When considered advisable, a recommendation may be referred back to the yearly meeting for action.

The major responsibilities of Friends Church of North Carolina in yearly meeting sessions are to be met in the role and character of a general meeting. In their annual sessions Friends are called to seek, by the most effective conference methods possible, a clear understanding of the relation of their faith to forces which they can see shaping the destiny of humanity to the dangers and needs which cause people to be gripped by fear or despair. In the spirit of worship the minds and hearts of Friends must be given fully to the search for the nature and direction of their united witness. Here they should seek together to know God’s will for them in the face of the great forces which plague and menace mankind: poverty, hunger, greed, hate, war, and man’s indifference to human ills.

The following matters are reserved for decision to yearly meeting in annual session and cannot be delegated: the recommendation of the Committee on Clerks, any change in *Faith and Practice*, the recording of a minister, and any statement of faith or pronouncement given in the name of Friends Church of North Carolina which is not clearly stated in this *Faith and Practice*.

Junior Yearly Meeting and Young Friends Yearly Meeting

Junior Yearly Meeting 1. Junior Yearly Meeting is conducted for children of nursery through junior high age and runs concurrently with the adult sessions of yearly meeting. The program is similar in pattern to the adult body except that recreation and activities are added to give a threefold program of worship, work, and play. Junior Yearly Meeting is set up and conducted by persons appointed by the Christian Education Committee.

Young Friends Yearly Meeting 2. Young Friends Yearly Meeting is organized and conducted by the Young Friends Activities Committee in cooperation with the yearly meeting Program Committee. It may run concurrently with the adult session or be set for another time. The program shall include worship, study, recreation, and business. Clerks and officers shall be approved to serve for one year. Epistles and messages are to be prepared and sent to other Young Friends groups.

The Representative Body

Oversight 1. A major responsibility of the Representative Body in its oversight of the work carried on by the yearly meeting organization is the coordination of the work program of the various departments. As an aid to the achievement of this purpose the Representative Body may delegate specific responsibilities to either the Administrative Oversight Committee or to any other appropriate committee. A description of any such delegated powers should be incorporated in the yearly meeting administrative handbook. (The administrative handbook is a listing of all committees and commissions in Friends Church of North Carolina along with their responsibilities and appointment structure.)

Decision-Making 2. The Representative Body is the decision-making body of Friends Church of North Carolina when yearly meeting is not in session. It shall act upon matters referred to it by the yearly meeting in session and conduct other business of Friends Church of North Carolina between sessions of the yearly meeting, except matters reserved for decision by the yearly meeting in session.

Membership 3. The Representative Body shall consist of all members present, who shall make up the “Board of Trustees”. The following should make special effort to be in attendance.

a. Two representatives from each monthly meeting, preparative meeting, or fellowship.

b. Chairpersons of standing FCNC committees and commissions

c. The following officials by position:

Administrative Oversight Committee chairperson

Friends Homes Board chairperson

Ministers Association president

Meeting on Ministry and Counsel presiding clerk

Meeting on Ministry and Counsel assistant presiding clerk

One representative from Quaker Lake Board of Directors

One representative from NC Quaker Men

Yearly meeting superintendent

Stewardship-Finance chairperson

Treasurer

One representative from NCYM, Inc.

One representative from NC USFW

Yearly meeting presiding clerk

Yearly meeting assistant presiding clerk

Yearly meeting Program Committee chairperson

Yearly meeting recording clerks

d. A Young Friend from each quarterly meeting.

Appointed representatives serve a term of one year.

Other Responsibilities 4. Any issue not resolved by the yearly meeting in session may be referred by the presiding clerk to the Representative Body for consideration and recommendation to a later session of the yearly meeting. Matters of new business brought to the yearly meeting may be referred to the Representative Body for review and recommendation.

The following responsibilities are delegated to Representative Body, subject to the directions of yearly meeting in session to increase or diminish these responsibilities:

a. General care and oversight of all matters which call for the united concern and interests of Friends in Friends Church of North Carolina, except as otherwise provided in this Book of Discipline, *Faith and Practice*.

b. Appointment of committees, boards, and commissions upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.

c. Determination of the size of committees and fields of work

d. Appointment of the superintendent and other staff personnel upon recommendation of the Administrative Oversight Committee as shown in the yearly meeting administrative handbook.

e. Transaction of all business of the yearly meeting not specifically reserved for yearly meeting in session.

f. General oversight of all lands, properties, estates and charitable donations in cooperation with the yearly meeting trustees and/or the trustees of the trust funds.

g. Giving direction to the trustees of the yearly meeting relative to signing deeds, mortgages and other legal documents.

h. Extend advice and assistance to persons suffering for the Christian testimonies.

- i. Preparation and maintenance of an administrative handbook of supplementary provisions, including:
 - 1) A description of organization purposes and duties not defined in *Faith and Practice*.
 - 2) A list of duties and rules of procedure for committees and commissions as directed by the yearly meeting in session.

Time of Meeting 5. The Representative Body shall meet at least three (3) times each year (Annual Sessions shall be considered one of these sessions). The dates for the upcoming year should be published no later than Annual Sessions each year. The clerks of yearly meeting serve as clerks of Representative Body. The minutes of Representative Body and the reports of the committees, boards, and commissions of the yearly meeting shall be published with the *Yearly Meeting Minutes*.

Special Meetings 6. Special meetings shall be called by the presiding clerk at the direction of the Administrative Oversight Committee. Thirty (30) days prior to a called meeting, each member of Representative Body shall be supplied with an agenda which gives the time and place of the meeting and lists all items of business to be considered.

Agenda Committee 7. The presiding clerk and assistant clerk of the Representative Body and the superintendent of the yearly meeting shall prepare an agenda for each session of the Representative Body. The clerk of the Representative Body shall serve as chairperson of this committee. Included in the agenda shall be matters of importance relative to the orderly process of the work program for which the various departments of the yearly meeting are responsible. It shall be the responsibility of the Agenda Committee to supply members of Representative Body information about important matters of business which may require action on their part not less than one week before action is to be taken.

Committees, Boards, and Commissions

Membership 1. Any member of the yearly meeting with the competence and will to work on a particular committee, board, or commission may be appointed to the position by the Representative Body, unless otherwise provided by this *Faith and Practice*.

The Administrative Oversight Committee

Membership 1. Each Quarterly Meeting shall appoint two persons to serve on the Administrative Oversight Committee, at least one of which shall be other than a recorded minister. Friends chosen as members of this committee should be persons known for their valued service to the yearly meeting, spiritual maturity, administrative competence, broad view of the testimonies of Friends, and ability to see the work of this committee as it relates to the whole program of the yearly meeting.

The presiding clerk of the yearly meeting, the assistant presiding clerk of the yearly meeting, the treasurer of the yearly meeting, the superintendent of the yearly meeting, the chairperson of the yearly meeting Program Committee, chairperson of the Finance Committee, and the presiding clerk of the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall be *ex-officio* members of the Administrative Oversight Committee.

Those appointed to this committee shall be named for a three-year term and should not be asked to serve for more than two terms in succession. Appointments should be made so that the term of not more than three would be ending in any one year.

If a member of this committee is not able to render active service in the work of the committee, the Quarterly Meeting shall recommend a replacement without waiting for the end of the term for which the member in question was appointed.

The yearly meeting assistant presiding clerk shall serve as the presiding clerk of the Administrative Oversight Committee. The Administrative Oversight Committee shall appoint a member to serve on the Finance Committee.

Duties and Responsibilities 2. The Administrative Oversight Committee is subordinate to the Representative Body and is subject to its care and guidance. When circumstances seem to warrant, the Administrative Oversight Committee may direct the clerk of the Representative Body to call a special session of that body. The deliberations in the special session shall be restricted to the matter or matters for which it was called.

At any appropriate time, the Administrative Oversight Committee shall recommend for the consideration of the Representative Body, the name of a suitable Friend to serve as superintendent of the yearly meeting. In like manner other employees may be appointed as needed.

The duties of the yearly meeting staff shall be clearly defined by the Administrative Oversight Committee and included in the administrative handbook. These become effective when approved by the Representative Body. The salary and benefits administration is under the oversight of the Administrative Oversight Committee.

The Administrative Oversight Committee will be responsible for the maintenance and care of all yearly meeting property, except those specifically assigned to other bodies.

The Administrative Oversight Committee shall share jointly with the Finance Committee the preparation of a draft of the annual budget of the yearly meeting and the determination of the monthly meeting financial obligation to be presented at the appropriate time to the Representative Body. Special fund-raising activities must be coordinated through the Administrative Oversight Committee.

In the normal course of events, numerous administrative functions not specifically listed in this discipline, *Faith and Practice*, may be found to belong among the duties of the Administrative Oversight Committee. As they emerge, they should be brought to the attention of the Representative Body and on its approval included in the administrative handbook.

The Nominating Committee

Membership 1. The Nominating Committee of the yearly meeting shall be composed of individuals judiciously chosen in the following manner: two by each quarterly meeting. Persons appointed to this committee are expected to have adequate knowledge of the organization, the work program, and of the leadership of the yearly meeting.

The superintendent of the yearly meeting (the yearly meeting presiding clerk in the event that there is no superintendent) shall convene the committee for its first meeting and preside until the committee approves a chairperson. Thereafter, the committee shall maintain its own organization from year to year, allowing the chairperson to rotate by quarter.

One person may not serve on more than one of the following committees simultaneously: Committee on Clerks, Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee, and Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel Nominating Committee. Nominating Committee members may not nominate themselves to serve on the Administrative and Oversight Committee.

Duties 2. The Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Representative Body the names of persons to serve on each yearly meeting committee, board, and commission and affiliated organization except as may be otherwise provided in *Faith and Practice*.

It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to suggest to the yearly meeting the names of persons to serve on committees that may be established to facilitate the purposes of the annual assembly of the yearly meeting.

The Program Committee

Membership 1. Persons serving on the Program Committee should be Friends who have a broad knowledge of Quakerism as it has moved through history and a deep appreciation of the relevancy of Quaker testimonies to contemporary human affairs.

Duties 2. The Program Committee should plan the program for the annual sessions of the yearly meeting to carry out in full measure the purposes of these sessions as defined in *Faith and Practice*. With the advice and consent of the Representative Body, the Program Committee may project plans for yearly meeting sessions through more than one year into the future.

With the consent of the quarterly meetings, plans may be made to carry the emphases of the yearly meeting to the sessions of the quarterly meetings. Plans for the emphases and their presentation in the sessions of the quarterly meeting should be made by the Program Committee in consultation with the clerks of the respective quarterly meetings.

Trustees of Real Property

Membership 1. Trustees of Real Property shall be approved by the Representative Body upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. There shall be not less than three nor more than six trustees at any one time. Trustees of Real Property shall serve terms of six years. Terms shall be designated so that at least one and not more

than two terms shall expire each year. The Representative Body shall appoint successors to fill unexpired terms in cases of death, resignation, and removal.

Trustees of Real Property may be removed by the Representative Body for good cause, including without limitation, physical or mental disability, separation from the Society of Friends, or any misfeasance or malfeasance in the performance of duties as trustee, upon giving reasonable notice and opportunity to be heard. (Trustees of Real Property need not be appointed until such time as Friends Church of North Carolina has need of such service.)

Duties 2. Title to real and personal property (except its trust funds) of the yearly meeting shall be held by the Trustees of Real Property. At the direction of the Representative Body, the Trustees of Real Property shall execute deeds, notes, deeds of trust, security agreements, contracts, and other instruments requiring execution by the yearly meeting. The Trustees of Real Property shall perform all such other duties as may be delegated to them by the Representative Body.

Property of Discontinued Meetings 3. When a meeting is discontinued, the physical property and investments belonging to said meeting shall be vested in the yearly meeting, except when otherwise determined by deed or other legal restriction. Such property is to be held for some specific purpose, or used for the advancement of the general work of the yearly meeting, as that body may determine. All funds held from such discontinued meetings shall be administered as far as possible in accordance with the directions of the original donors. A meeting is not to be considered as discontinued if it unites as an organized group with another Friends meeting.

Trustees of Trust Funds

Duties 1. Trust assets of the yearly meeting shall be held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds. It shall be the duty of the trustees of the trust funds to hold, manage, invest, and reinvest the trust funds in such manner as to realize optimum income consistent with the safety of the investments, utilizing due diligence, skill, and prudence in keeping with the generally accepted fiduciary standards and the moral and ethical standards of Friends Church of North Carolina. They are encouraged to observe socially responsible principles as set forth in the *Faith and Practice* when selecting investments. In carrying out their duties, the Trustees of the Trust Funds shall observe and comply with any limitations or restrictions imposed by the donors of specific funds or by the Representative Body of Friends Church of North Carolina.

Governance 2. The Trustees of the Trust Funds shall adopt bylaws, approve their officers, and adopt appropriate operating procedures.

Finance Committee

Duties 1. The duties of the Finance Committee are as follows:

- a. Prepare and recommend in cooperation with the Administrative Oversight Committee to the Representative Body for adoption, an annual budget for the yearly meeting and determine the financial obligation for each monthly meeting. (When based on membership, such financial obligation shall be based on active members of each meeting.)
- b. Prepare, select, and promote the use of stewardship program materials, literature, and audiovisual aids.
- c. Arrange for conferences and seminars on the local and yearly meeting levels.
- d. Promote effective methods for meeting the financial needs of the yearly meeting.
- e. Conduct a continuous program of education relative to:
 - 1) The needs which exist in the world and our channels of ministering to them.
 - 2) The Christian use of time and abilities as well as financial resources.
- f. Nominate a treasurer and an assistant treasurer for the yearly meeting to be approved by the Representative Body.

Treasurer of the Yearly Meeting

Appointment 1. The treasurer and assistant treasurer of the yearly meeting shall be approved by the Representative Body for terms of three years each. The terms of treasurer and assistant treasurer shall not coincide. The Finance Committee shall nominate, and the Representative Body shall approve, a successor to complete an unexpired term. The Representative Body is authorized to remove the treasurer or assistant treasurer for cause, including, but not limited to, physical or mental incapacity and misfeasance or malfeasance in office, after due notice and opportunity to be heard.

Duties 2. The treasurer shall be responsible for disbursing the funds of the yearly meeting as directed by the Representative Body. The assistant treasurer shall act in the absence of the treasurer and shall perform such other duties as the Representative Body may assign.

Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel

Membership 1. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is composed of the members of the Monthly Meetings on Ministry and Counsel within its limits.

Clerks, Reports 2. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall: appoint clerks, receive reports from the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings on Ministry and Counsel, and report annually to the yearly meeting the conditions and work of the ministry and of the membership; it may address epistles of advice and instruction to its subordinate meetings, and appoint committees to visit them.

Duties 3. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall carefully consider subjects which have reference to spiritual needs and may report its judgment to the yearly meeting for action.

Term of Service 4. Representatives appointed to Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel serve from yearly meeting session to the following yearly meeting session.

Time of Meeting 5. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall meet at such time as the yearly meeting shall direct and, thereafter, at the call of the clerks, but in no case shall its sessions be held so as to conflict with the sessions of the yearly meeting.

Called Meeting 6. There may be called sessions of Ministry and Counsel throughout the year as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee of the Ministry and Counsel with notification mailed three weeks in advance to pastors and representatives.

Executive Committee 7. An Executive Committee for Ministry and Counsel shall be composed of clerks and chairpersons of subcommittees of the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Committee on Training and Recording 8. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint a Standing Committee on the Training and Recording of Ministers, composed of eight members, at least one-half of whom shall be other than recorded ministers. Appointments shall be made for four years, the term of two members expiring each year. Those members of the yearly meeting who are recommended by the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel as having a gift in the ministry shall be under the care of this committee as to educational and other requirements. (See "Procedures for Recording of Ministers".)

Amending and Revising *Faith and Practice*

Representative Body Role 1. From time to time, Friends may sense a need to amend or revise *Faith and Practice*. Such changes should be made cautiously and with an ample opportunity for prayerful deliberation.

Any proposal for amending or revising *Faith and Practice* shall be referred to the Representative Body for consideration. Upon preliminary approval by the Representative Body, the proposal shall be referred to the Standing Committee on *Faith and Practice* which shall study the proposal and make such recommendations as it deems necessary to the next session of Representative Body. Any amendment or revision approved by the Representative Body shall be submitted in such a manner as to indicate clearly what the proposed amendment or revision will accomplish. If approved, the proposal shall then be submitted to the clerk of each monthly meeting of Friends Church of North Carolina no later than two months preceding the beginning of the next session of the yearly meeting. The clerk of each monthly meeting shall present the proposal, together with the full explanation for the change to the monthly meeting for careful consideration so that its representative to yearly meeting may reflect the monthly meeting's judgment on the proposal. Final consideration and action on the proposal shall take place at the annual session of the yearly meeting. The yearly meeting shall determine the conditions under which the new amendment or revision shall become operative.

Standing Committee 2. The yearly meeting Standing Committee on *Faith and Practice* shall consist of six members who shall be nominated by the yearly meeting Nominating Committee and approved by the Representative Body. Members serve three-year terms with one-third of the members being newly appointed each year. The committee shall, with the cooperation and guidance of the clerks and superintendent of the yearly meeting, monitor the business sessions of the yearly meeting for the purpose of ascertaining and presenting to the Representative Body the proposed amendments and revisions to *Faith and Practice* as may be necessary and prudent. A chairperson shall be selected by the committee who shall maintain a current compilation of all approved amendments and revisions to *Faith and Practice*, a copy of which shall be available for reference in the yearly meeting office.

CHAPTER 5

Friends United Meeting

Preface

Friends United Meeting (formed in 1902 as the Five Years Meeting of Friends) is an international Christian association of Friends (Quakers) made up of Yearly Meetings and smaller Quaker groups that consult and work together for the purposes of *evangelism, global partnerships, leadership and resource development, and communications*. In 1993, the General Board accepted the purpose statement, which states: *“Friends United Meeting commits itself to energize and equip Friends, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord.”*

In the year 1950, the Five Years Meeting authorized an official statement of its Organization and Procedure to be published as Chapter V in its Faith and Practice. In 1963, the change to Triennial Sessions was approved, and the new name of “Friends United Meeting” was approved in 1966. The Organization and Procedure Manual was revised at the Triennial Sessions in 1996, and amended in 1999 and 2005. The present Organization and Procedure was approved by the Body of Representatives during the Triennial sessions in 2014.

The purpose of the Organization and Procedure Manual is to describe the global structures of the association, define the roles and responsibilities of membership, clarify agreed governance policies, and provide guidance on the application of organizational procedures of Friends United Meeting.

Membership and Triennial Sessions

Membership Friends United Meeting is an association of those Yearly Meetings and other groups that have been received into membership according to the following:

Any Yearly Meeting or Association that is established from one or more existing FUM Yearly Meeting(s), and is recognized by such Yearly Meeting(s), upon application to the General Board is entitled to associate membership in Friends United Meeting. The General Board may ask the new associate member Yearly Meeting or Association to follow application guidelines before being accepted into full membership. Upon acceptance by the General Board as full members, the Yearly Meeting or Association shall name representatives to the General Board and assume the other rights and responsibilities of membership. At the next Triennial Session, the new member Yearly Meeting or Association shall be recognized as a full member.

Applications for membership in Friends United Meeting received from Yearly Meetings or Associations not formerly affiliated with FUM shall be considered on an individual basis, following guidelines established by the General Board. It is expected that all applicants for membership will align with FUM’s purpose statement, be willing to engage in active global partnership, and financially support FUM’s worldwide mission.

Membership of Other Groups Applications for membership in Friends United Meeting received from a group that is not organized as a Yearly Meeting will be considered on an individual basis. Discernment will include respect for the integrity of FUM member bodies in the geographical area in which the applicant is located, alignment with the Friends United Meeting purpose statement, willingness to join an active global partnership, and financial support for FUM’s worldwide mission. Such groups are entitled to appoint up to two representatives to Triennial sessions.

Affiliated Organizations Affiliated Organizations may each appoint one representative to the General Board and three representatives to the Triennial session. They share in the discussion of business matters and in the decisions made.

• **United Society of Friends Women International** — The United Society of Friends Women International has, as its principal objective, the uniting of all Friends' women in Christian fellowship, service, spiritual development, education, and mission among Friends. The United Society includes the women's societies in FUM member Yearly Meetings as well as a few groups outside FUM membership.

• **Quaker Men International** — The Quaker Men movement among Friends started essentially as a local Meeting enterprise, later becoming a Yearly Meeting and Friends United Meeting movement. It seeks to enlist the manpower of its membership for effective service through the local Meeting. With a background of development in several Yearly Meetings, the Quaker Men organization of Friends United Meeting was formed. This organization promotes and supports special projects with which the local Meetings, Yearly Meetings, and Friends United Meeting are concerned.

Jurisdiction Friends United Meeting shall have jurisdiction over all matters delegated to it by its constituent members. Friends United Meeting may provide member Yearly Meetings, Associations, and other affiliated groups with advice and counsel, and members may look to it for advice and counsel.

Triennial Sessions Friends United Meeting meets in Triennial Sessions at a time and place designated by the minutes of its own adjournment or by the General Board. Friends United Meeting shall publish a complete record of its proceedings.

Triennial Representatives Each member Yearly Meeting and Association is entitled to appoint five representatives to the Triennial Sessions, plus one additional representative for each one thousand members or major fraction thereof. Affiliated organizations may appoint up to three representatives each. Other member groups may appoint up to two representatives each. Vacancies in the quota of any one Yearly Meeting may be filled by action of that Yearly Meeting, or by its representatives to the Triennial Sessions.

The representatives may participate in a travel pool to equalize expenses. Expenses for travel of the designated number of Representatives to and from the Triennial Sessions of Friends United Meeting shall be paid by the Yearly Meetings. But to equalize these expenses, a pool shall be arranged whereby each Yearly Meeting shall pay the expenses of its quota of Representatives according to the average expenses of all the Representatives in attendance. Details in connection with the pool shall be determined by the General Board.

Authority/Responsibility The Triennial Representative Body establishes the organizational governance structure and procedures of Friends United Meeting. It also appoints the officers of the organization. The Representative Body may receive items of business from the General Board and, in turn, the Representative Body may refer appropriate matters to the General Board. If not satisfied with the channels used by the Clerks or the New Business Committee, those presenting new proposals may appeal to the Representative Body.

Business Procedures The Presiding Clerk and Assistant Presiding Clerk of Friends United Meeting shall serve as Clerks of the Representative Body and of the plenary sessions. (Plenary sessions include all in attendance and are not restricted to only those appointed by yearly meetings.) If the Presiding Clerk shall be absent from any meetings, one of the Assistant Presiding Clerks shall preside. The Presiding Clerk may step aside to present a report, to offer a viewpoint or information, during which time the appointed Assistant Presiding Clerk will preside.

The Representative Body consists of all those specifically named by their Yearly Meeting and other member group or affiliate organization as representatives to the Triennial in accordance with Section III-B. Major matters and proposals shall be considered by the Representative Body and the plenary sessions. Routine procedural matters may be acted upon by the Representative Body and reported to the Plenary Session, which reserves the right to approve, disapprove, or reconsider.

It is the prerogative of the Presiding Clerk to call executive meetings of the Representative Body if needed. Alternatively, the Presiding Clerk may consider Triennial plenary sessions to be sessions of the Representative Body, and may ask those making presentations or responding to business to identify themselves and state whether they are representatives or attendees.

Triennial Committees

Each Yearly Meeting and Association shall name one of its Representatives to serve on the Triennial Nominating Committee and another to serve on the New Business Committee. These Committees serve the Representative Body **only** during the Triennial Sessions.

1. The New Business Committee screens and channels items to the Representative Body. Each Yearly Meeting and Association shall name one of its Representatives to serve on the New Business Committee. This Committee will serve the Representative Body only during the Triennial Sessions.

2. In the year preceding the Triennial Sessions, the Presiding Clerk shall solicit from each member Yearly Meeting the name of a person to serve on the **Triennial Nominating Committee**. These names should be in the hands of the FUM office at least three months prior to the Triennial sessions. The clerk shall then convene the Triennial Nominating committee as soon as is practical to begin the work of finding persons to serve as Presiding Clerk, Assistant Presiding Clerk North America-Caribbean Region, Assistant Presiding Clerk Africa Region, Recording Clerk North America-Caribbean Region, Recording Clerk Africa Region, Treasurer, and Trustees for the next Triennium. The Triennial Nominating Committee will bring names of recommended officers to the Representative Body during the triennial sessions for approval.

3. Triennial Planning Committee—The Triennial Program Planning Committee shall consist of one person appointed by each member Yearly Meeting and Association. This person may or may not be a General Board member. The clerk of this committee shall be the appointee of the host Yearly Meeting. This committee shall meet during the time of General Board meetings, and at such other times and ways as may be necessary, to plan the program for the upcoming Triennial Sessions.

The General Board

General Board Meetings

The General Board shall meet at least once a year, at times it determines. Meetings are generally held two or three times per year. Meetings of the General Board are open, except when the Presiding Clerk convenes executive sessions. In executive session, attendance is limited to the members designated below.

Composition

The General Board shall consist of members as follows:

- Appointees of constituent Yearly Meetings and Associations (See #1 below),
- Presiding Clerk, Assistant Presiding Clerks, Recording Clerks,
- Two continuing members from the previous General Board Executive Board’s membership,
- One member from each of the affiliated organizations,
- The Treasurer of Friends United Meeting,
- One member appointed by the Trustees of Friends United Meeting, and
- Three Young Adult Friends.

1. Representatives —Yearly Meetings, Associations, and affiliated organizations shall make their appointments to the General Board during the year preceding Friends United Meeting Triennial Sessions. Appointees will take office at the first session of the General Board following these sessions. Persons appointed to fill vacancies shall take office at the first meeting of the General Board following the appointment by their Yearly Meeting.

Yearly Meetings and Associations are entitled to appoint the following numbers of General Board members: Membership of 3,000 or less, 2 appointees; 3,001 and over, 3 appointees.

2. Young Adult Friends (ages 18–35) —Young Adult Friends members of the General Board are nominated by the General Board Nominating Committee with the advice of the members of the General Board, who shall inform themselves of suitable Young Adult Friends in their own Yearly Meetings. This provision is not intended to preclude the service by Yearly Meeting appointment of Friends in this age range.

3. Resource Members —The General Secretary is a resource member of the General Board. At the discretion of the General Board, any of the Staff may be appointed by the General Secretary to serve on or attend any committee except the Executive Board.

Authority/Responsibility In the interim between Triennial Sessions, the General Board is the legal representative of Friends United Meeting. It shall have the authority and responsibility to act for Friends United Meeting between Triennial Sessions. The General Board:

- Establishes the vision, strategic direction, and policies for the organization,
- Considers and approves new program initiatives and project partner relationships,
- Appoints task groups and/or committees to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of FUM programs,
- Gives guidance and direction to the Executive Board concerning the work of FUM between General Board meetings,
- Seeks effective ways to function as a global board, sharing strategic decision-making as a full board including both the North America/Caribbean and the Africa Regions of the board,
- Approves the annual budget,
- Makes appointments to the Executive Board, other committees of the General Board, to project partners, and to cooperative and ecumenical groups (Nominations come from the Nominating Committee, see section V-C.),
- Approves the hiring of the General Secretary (A recommended appointment comes from the Executive Board, see section V-D.),
- Makes appointments to fill vacancies among the positions of Clerks, Treasurers, and Trustees if they occur during the interim between sessions, and
- In the interim between Triennial Sessions, the General Board is the legal representative of Friends United Meeting. It shall have the authority and responsibility to act for Friends United Meeting between Triennial Sessions. It shall meet at least once a year, at times it determines.

The General Board shall report to the Representative Body of Friends United Meeting in Triennial Sessions. Its report shall include its appointment of the General Secretary who shall be introduced to the Representatives at the Plenary Sessions. The General Board is authorized to fill vacancies among the positions of Clerks, Treasurers, and Trustees if they occur during the interim between sessions.

Note: The responsibilities of the former American Friends Board of Missions, World Ministries Commission, and Meeting Ministries Commission are assumed by the General Board.

Friends United Meeting Staff

General Secretary The General Secretary is appointed by the General Board and serves as the executive member of the staff. The General Secretary provides administrative oversight to FUM’s programs, budgets, and staff members.

Other Staff Other staff is appointed by the General Secretary to carry out the purposes and functions of Friends United Meeting.

Subsidiary Organizations

Friends United Meeting operates some organizations that function as semi-independent programs within FUM. These organizations have their own articles of incorporation, bylaws, Boards of Directors and financial statements, but are also under the oversight of the FUM General Board, and financially accountable to the Triennial. Any change to their bylaws must be approved by the General Board. Their Boards of Directors are approved by the General Board. Financial statements and audits are incorporated into a consolidated financial statement and audit report for FUM. These organizations currently include:

- Friends Theological College
- Ramallah Friends Schools

Relations with Other Bodies

Cooperative Organizations Cooperative organizations are those whose interests and concerns parallel or supplement the work of Friends United Meeting. Representatives are welcome to attend General Board sessions as observers at their own expense. An observer has the privilege to speak but may not enter into the decision making. The General Board may make appointments to these organizations in response to requests from them. Those so appointed will report back to the General Board on an annual basis. These may include but not be limited to:

- American Friends Service Committee
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Friends World Committee for Consultation
- Friends Committee on Scouting

Ecumenical Organizations Ecumenical organizations are those that promote Christian fellowship and service through national or international structures. Their representatives may attend the General Board or Triennial Sessions by request as observers at their own expense. The General Board may make appointments to these organizations in response to requests from them. Those so appointed will report to the General Board on an annual basis. FUM's membership in these groups is desirable, but financial restraints have limited participation. Membership in these organizations generally relies on donations designated for that purpose:

- National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
- World Council of Churches
- Christian Churches Together in the USA
- Christian Peacemaker Teams

CHAPTER 6

New Meetings

Meeting for Worship and Fellowship 1. A meeting for worship and fellowship is composed of persons who are drawn together in meetings for worship, regularly held in the manner of Friends, to satisfy their desire for spiritual growth in the faith of Friends and in the practice of Christian service. Those who participate in the fellowship should endeavor to provide the proper religious training for their children and aim to extend their religious influence beyond the membership.

Preparative Meeting 2. A preparative meeting may be established by a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting and may be laid down by the same. It is similar to a monthly meeting in character, organization, and responsibility, though it is generally less extensive in its organization and work. Under guidance of its sponsoring group, the preparative meeting has, to the extent of its resources, the responsibility for its meeting for worship and for its expression of the Christian message. It shall maintain regular communication with its sponsor.

When a preparative meeting is considered ready to acquire real estate which it deems necessary for the accomplishment of its purpose, the sponsoring monthly meeting or quarterly meeting may direct its trustees to hold the deed to such property in the name of the sponsor.

When the Church Extension Committee finds that a meeting for worship and fellowship, which it sponsors, is ready to acquire needed real estate it may recommend that the title be held by the yearly meeting. When the Representative Body approves this recommendation it shall direct the trustees of the yearly meeting to have the title drawn up in the name of the yearly meeting.

The preparative meeting shall maintain its own membership roll, which will be jointly held by the sponsoring monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting. The basis of membership for a preparative meeting shall be the same as to a monthly meeting. Its members participate in the deliberations and work of the sponsoring monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting. The preparative meeting may not speak for or in the name of the sponsoring organization, but it may make recommendations to the monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting on matters of corporate concern to the members of the preparative meeting.

Setting up a Monthly Meeting 3. Alternate courses in the procedure for the establishment of monthly meetings are provided in the practice of Friends in FCNC: a new meeting for worship and fellowship is sponsored by an appropriate monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting.

- a. *The Monthly Meeting as Sponsor.* Circumstances, such as geographic proximity or close association of members of the monthly meeting to the group of persons who have the concern for the new meeting for worship and fellowship may normally lead to the sponsorship of the monthly meeting. The monthly meeting will establish a preparative meeting when the Friends in the new meeting appear to be ready for the added responsibilities of this meeting. The monthly meeting shall recommend to the Representative Body the establishment of a monthly meeting when the preparative meeting shows evidence of the necessary strength and promise of permanence to warrant such action.

- b. *The Quarterly Meeting as Sponsor:* Cooperative concern for outreach and growth expressed within a quarterly meeting may lead to its sponsorship of a preparative meeting. When the quarterly meeting sees the need for a new meeting it shall provide the counsel and assistance necessary for the nurture and development of a preparative meeting. Property provided for the use of the preparative meeting shall be held by the quarterly meeting trustees until the preparative meeting becomes a monthly meeting. The quarterly meeting shall recommend to the Representative Body the establishment of a monthly meeting when the quarterly meeting is convinced the preparative meeting has shown evidence of a strength and promise of permanence.
- c. *Church Extension Committee as Sponsor:* The Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting is in a position to see and respond to needs for new meetings which no monthly meeting or quarterly meeting in the yearly meeting is in position to recognize or meet. When the committee is faced with a need for a new meeting, it shall provide the counsel and other assistance necessary for the nurture and development of a new meeting for worship and fellowship. When the new meeting is ready for the organization and functions of a preparative meeting, the Church Extension Committee should seek to find an appropriate monthly meeting or quarterly meeting which is in a position to grant that status to the new meeting. If such an arrangement is not feasible, the new meeting may be allowed to continue under the care of the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee as a meeting for worship and fellowship, with organization and functions similar to those of a preparative meeting. A meeting for worship and fellowship under the care of the Church Extension Committee may participate in the activities of, and send representation to, a quarterly meeting when consent for such participation is granted by the quarterly meeting. The Church Extension Committee shall send to the Representative Body a recommendation for the establishment of a monthly meeting as soon as it is convinced that the members of the preparative meeting are ready for that step.
- d. *Action by the Representative Body:* When the recommendation for establishment of a monthly meeting reaches the Representative Body from either a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee, it shall appoint a committee of its own members to visit the new meeting to evaluate the strength of the meeting, confer with the members on the responsibilities of a monthly meeting, and report the findings to the next session of the Representative Body. If the Representative Body does not approve a recommendation for the establishment of a monthly meeting, it shall notify the body which made the recommendation and give reasons for the action.

When the Representative Body approves a proposal for the establishment of a monthly meeting, it shall appoint a committee to serve as its agent in the first session of the new monthly meeting. The clerk, or some other member of the committee, shall read the opening minute of the new meeting, read the minute which gives the Representative Body's approval of the establishment of the monthly meeting, and call the names of the Friends who have brought to the meeting their certificates of transfer of membership from the sponsoring organization together with the new names that the preparative meeting wishes to submit for membership of the meeting for its establishment as a monthly meeting. The member of the committee shall continue to preside until the monthly meeting has appointed a presiding clerk.

- e. *The Superintendent and/ Clerk:* The superintendent of the yearly meeting should always be alert for indications of the need for establishing new meetings for worship and fellowship and cooperate in any helpful manner with either a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee in all stages of the development of the meeting. The counsel of the superintendent and/or Clerk should be sought in any steps leading to securing pastoral assistance or in any steps to acquire or build a meetinghouse.

CHAPTER 7

Ministers

Procedure for the Recording of Ministers

Evidence of Gift 1. When a member has spoken in the public ministry to the edification and spiritual help of the meeting, and has rendered said service in such a manner and afforded a basis for the formation of a judgment as to the nature of the individual's gifts and calling, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall carefully consider whether there is evidence of a gift in the ministry that should be officially recognized. While a spoken message may be helpful in its place, and should be esteemed and encouraged accordingly, not every person who speaks in public should be given official recognition. Recording should enhance and improve the opportunity for service, not simply bestow an honor. It should be borne in mind that such recognition in ministry is not only a seal of approval of one who is locally helpful, but that it also involves extension of service beyond the local community. Recorded ministers not only have opportunity for service among Friends generally, but because of the increase of interdenominational activity, such recognition opens the way for contacts and associations with ministers and members of other religious bodies.

Character and Qualifications 2. A recorded Friends minister must be a member of a monthly meeting within Friends Church of North Carolina, above reproach in character, and a person of deep religious experience and dedication. Such a person must have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and of Friends' testimonies and ideals, possessing the skills of a competent leader without being "priestly" or losing the spirit and status of the servant. In financial and business affairs the minister must be of scrupulous honesty and integrity, in all respects an example of Christian living. The minister is expected to meet the standards of daily living set forth in the Queries.

Responsibility of Monthly Meeting 3. When the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is satisfied a member has a gift in the ministry, and is of suitable character and aptitude, it shall report its recommendation to monthly meeting. The monthly meeting should consider the recommendation. If approved, the recommendation should be returned to the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel which shall forward a minute of this action to the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Responsibility of Quarterly Meeting 4. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall upon receipt of the recommendation from the local monthly meeting appoint a committee to appraise the general fitness of the individual under consideration and report its findings back to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If the report is favorable, the recommendation shall be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel by an extract from the minutes of the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Continuing the Recording 5. If the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel approves the action of the quarterly meeting, it shall entrust the person to the care of the Committee on Training and Recording of Ministers. This committee shall have the person under its care until all requirements of the yearly meeting are fulfilled. In case an individual placed under the care of the committee shows no interest in doing the prescribed study for a period of three years, the committee may recommend to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel that the person no longer be considered for recording. (The committee may at its discretion make work assignments to individual Friends requesting same, providing it is clearly understood that such voluntary study is for personal Christian nurture, and not as a part of the recording process.)

When an individual who has been placed under the care of the committee by the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel has completed the prescribed course of study, the committee shall review again the general fitness, character, and

aptitude of the individual for the ministry. A statement of this evaluation shall be included with its report to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If this report is favorable, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may, after full and careful consideration, recommend to the yearly meeting that the member under consideration be recorded as a minister.

Final Action 6. When the yearly meeting has acted favorably, the recording is completed. The clerk shall furnish a copy of the minute to the quarterly meeting, to the monthly meeting where the process originated, and to any other concerned monthly meeting. Such meetings shall enter this minute on their books of record. The individual thus recorded shall also be furnished a copy of this minute.

The yearly meeting may, upon request, issue to recorded ministers in good standing certificates or cards which may be used for identification purposes. These shall be valid for one year only and shall be signed by the clerk of the yearly meeting and/or the superintendent.

Disapproval 7. When a recommendation to record a member as a minister is not approved, the body taking this action shall so inform the referring meetings.

Reconsideration 8. Friends should recognize clearly that the status of recorded minister is not necessarily of lifelong continuance. In case a member who has been recorded as a minister willfully and deliberately neglects the call and is inactive in the ministry over a period of five years, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, after full and careful consideration of the circumstances, shall recommend to the yearly meeting that the recorded minister's name be dropped from the list of recorded ministers. Illness or retirement shall not be considered as cause for discontinuing a person's status as a recorded minister.

If a recorded minister violates ethical standards, indulges in conduct unbecoming to a minister of the Gospel, or so lives as to bring reproach upon the church, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may consider a proposal to discontinue the person's status as a recorded minister. Such a proposal may originate in a Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel of which the person is a member and be recommended to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, or it may originate in the latter body. In either case, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint a committee to make the necessary inquiry and report back to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If that body finds that the ministerial status of the person being investigated should be terminated, it shall report its decision to the yearly meeting for final action. The person being investigated and the monthly meeting to which the person belongs shall be notified before the final action is taken, and care shall be exercised that any rights involved are fully safeguarded.

Accepted Pastoral Supply 9. In some instances a person feeling a call to the ministry may have the general qualifications and ability to do accepted pastoral work but may find some obstruction (such as obtaining an undergraduate degree) to qualify for full recording status. All other requirements for recording must be met to qualify for Accepted Pastoral Supply status. After five years of continuous service as a minister in Friends Church of North Carolina, the person designated Accepted Pastoral Supply could become a recorded minister.

In such cases the Committee on Recording shall make a recommendation to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel that this person be recognized as Accepted Pastoral Supply and granted an appropriate certificate. Appropriate minutes shall be sent in behalf of the individual in the same manner as recording.

The status of Accepted Pastoral Supply shall be terminated by (1) the completion of the recording process, (2) failure to serve as pastoral supply for a period of one year, or (3) for conditions set forth under "Reconsideration". Should reconsideration become necessary the procedure shall be the same as for recorded ministers.

Transfer of Recording 10. The recording of a minister is transferable with the certificate of membership from one yearly meeting to another. It is expected, however, that a minister planning to engage in the pastoral ministry will endeavor to meet the educational and other requirements to which the transfer is made.

Immediately upon accepting a pastorate in Friends Church of North Carolina, the minister's credentials shall be made available for review. The yearly meeting Committee on Training and Recording of Ministers shall review the credentials and make a report of their findings to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The minister shall be expected to fulfill equivalent requirements for recording in Friends Church of North Carolina. Further work, including the study of Friends' history and principle, may be required. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall furnish a certificate of authorization to each pastor who meets established criteria for serving in the yearly meeting.

Any person ordained in a different denomination seeking to be recorded by Friends Church of North Carolina shall be subject to the requirements of the Recording Committee.

The Recording Committee may issue a temporary certificate of authorization. Before the recording process can begin, the individual must be a member of a monthly meeting in the yearly meeting. If the candidate has not begun the process within two years, this lack of progress shall be reported to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel which may withdraw the certificate of authorization.

Pastoral Meetings

- The Pastor and the Meeting* 1. Pastors should recognize the opportunity for public ministry in the meeting for worship. They should prepare themselves by careful, prayerful study to expound the scriptures, to awaken the consciences of those who hear, to inspire a longing for Christ, and to guide all the congregation, particularly young people and children, in the search for God and the Christian way of life. They should realize the value of silent worship and respect the privilege and responsibility of others to participate in the vocal ministry of the meeting.
- The Pastor and the Community* 2. In the development of a sense of responsibility on the part of the meeting toward the community, pastors should maintain an interest in public affairs and should cooperate with other churches and associations in fostering in every possible way the welfare of the community.
- The Pastor and the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel* 3. The pastor shall be a member, but not an officer, of the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The pastor should present concerns for the consideration of this body but have no more authority over its decisions than other members. All matters of policy affecting the meeting for worship, the undertaking of special evangelistic efforts, and programs of work should be submitted to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for discussion and decision.
- The Pastor and Committees* 4. At the discretion of individual monthly meetings, pastors may be asked to sustain a cooperative relationship with all the committees of the meeting, assisting in their programs and policies.
- Pastoral Secretary* 5. Some meetings employ pastoral secretaries instead of pastors. They are generally not recorded ministers. Their relationship to the committees of the monthly meeting and to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is the same as that of pastors.

Non-Pastoral Meetings

Responsibilities In most of the local meetings of this yearly meeting pastors assist in the accomplishment of the purposes of the meetings. For this reason the above standards and procedures relative to the pastor are deemed necessary. However, in some of the local meetings the full responsibility for worship and work is carried by the membership of the meeting without the assistance of a pastor.

Friends should give aid and encouragement to local meetings to find, through prayer and experience, the form of worship and the fields of service which enable them to meet to the fullest extent the spiritual needs of those within the limits of the meeting.

Appendix

A. Application for Membership

“Friends receive into active membership those whose faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is manifest in their lives and who are in unity with the teachings of Christian truth as held by Friends.” *Faith and Practice*, Part II, Chapter 1.

On the basis of the above statement, accepting Jesus Christ as my Saviour, declaring it to be my purpose to devote my life to His service and to follow His teachings, agreeing to observe the rules and practices of Friends, and to be loyal to the interests of this Meeting, I do hereby make application for membership in _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends.

Date _____, 20____

Signed _____ Clerk

Signed _____

Approved by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and recommended to the Monthly Meeting.

Date _____, 20____

Signed _____ Clerk

Signed _____

B. Removal Certificate
(One Monthly Meeting to Another)

To _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends:

Dear Friends,

This is to certify that _____ is a member of this Meeting. Upon due inquiry no obstruction appears to the granting of _____ request for a certificate to your Meeting. We therefore recommend _____ to your Christian care. Please acknowledge h_____ reception by returning to our clerk the annexed statement, properly filled and signed.

In love, we are your Friends,

By direction, and on behalf of _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends, held at _____ State of _____, this _____ day of _____ month, 20__.

_____, Clerk

_____, Address

Acknowledgement

To _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends:

We have received the removal certificate issued by you the _____ day of _____ month, 20__ and have accepted _____ into membership with us.

In behalf of _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends, held at _____, this _____ day of _____ month, 20__.

_____, Clerk

C. Letter to Other Denominations

To _____ Church:

_____ and _____, member(s) of _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends, having expressed the desire to unite in membership with the above named Church, this letter of dismissal is granted in favor of said Church, and he (she) is [they are] commended to your Christian fellowship.

By direction of _____ Monthly Meeting

_____, Clerk

_____, Address

D. Form of Affirmation

I affirm that I will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

E. Marriage Vows

(Within the Meeting)

At a suitable time in the meeting the parties shall stand, and taking each other by the right hand shall declare – the man first:

“In the presence of the Lord and before these friends, I take thee, D.E., to be my wife promising, with divine assistance, to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband as long as we both shall live.”

The woman in like manner:

“In the presence of the Lord and before these friends, I take thee, A.B., to be my husband promising, with divine assistance, to be unto thee a loving and faithful wife as long as we both shall live.”

F. Certificate of Marriage

of _____, and State of _____

WHEREAS, A.B, of _____ County, son of C.B., and E., his wife, of _____, and D.E. of _____, County of _____ and State of _____, daughter of H.E, and K., his wife, of _____, having declared their intention of marriage with each other to the _____ Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends of _____ held at _____, State of _____ on the _____ day of the _____ month of the year two thousand and _____, and nothing being found to obstruct, they were set at liberty by that Meeting to accomplish their intentions.

NOW THESE ARE TO CERTIFY to whom it may concern, that for the accomplishment of their marriage, this _____ day of the _____ month of the year two thousand and _____, they the said A.B. and D.E., appeared in an appointed meeting held at _____ under the oversight of the _____ Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends in the presence of a committee thereof appointed for that purpose, and A.B., taking D.E. by the hand, declared that he took her to be his wife, promising, with divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband as long as they both should live; and then D.E. did in a like manner declare that she took him, A.B., to be her husband, promising, with divine assistance, to be unto him a loving and faithful wife as long as they both should live.

And in further confirmation thereof, they, the said A.B. and D.E, (she according to the custom of marriage, adopting the surname of her husband) did then and there to these present set their hands.

_____, A.B.

_____, D.E.B

AND WE, having been present at the solemnization of the said marriage, did as witness thereto, set our hands.

G. Certificate When Requesting Marriage

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we are acquainted with _____ of _____ who desires to be married according to the customs of Friends, and that, in our judgment, there is no valid objection to the proposed marriage.

Signed this _____ day of _____ Month 20 ____.

Elders of _____ Monthly Meeting of Friends.

H. Marriage Service, A Minister Participating

Introductory

Marriage, in its deepest meaning, is an inward experience – the voluntary union of personalities effected in the mutual self-giving of hearts that truly love, implicitly trust, and courageously accept each other in good faith. Such marriage is honored and blessed of God as the fulfillment of His supreme design for man and woman, who alone of all creation bear His divine image. The State sanctions and the Church adorns marriage as the ideal relationship in human society. The wisdom of the ages bears testimony to the beneficent values which this honorable estate yields in the happiness and well-being of mankind.

(If the “giving of the bride” is desired, the minister may say:)

“Who among the kinfolk (or friends) of this bride-to-be shares her great joy and presents her to the man of her choice with the benediction of her family?”

The father, brother, or other person will answer: “I do.”

To the Contracting Parties

Marriage involves at once the highest privilege and the greatest responsibilities of life. Its achievements of happiness and success are dependent upon the mutual love, the unfailing patience, and the absolute fidelity of one to the other. You will henceforth live a blended life, each seeking and promoting the joy, the comfort, the health, and the enrichment of the other, all of which will divide your sorrows and multiply your satisfactions.

The Vows of Marriage

If you have carefully considered the sacredness of the obligations assumed when lives are wed, and are well assured that you are prepared to enter into this covenant, binding yourselves each to the other in holy sanctuary of the home as long as you both shall live, will you please face each other, clasp your right hands, and repeat these vows which have brought joy to so many others:

(Each repeat from memory if possible; if not, then follow the minister:)

The man: “In the presence of the Lord, and before these friends, I take thee, (D.E.) to be my wife, promising with divine assistance, to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband as long as with both shall live.”

The woman: “In the presence of the Lord, and before these friends, I take thee (A.B.) to be my husband, promising with divine assistance, to be unto thee a loving and faithful wife, as long as we both shall live.”

(Unclasp hands and face the minister.)

(If a ring is [or rings are] to be given and received, the minister may say:)

“What do you offer as a token of your pledge of love and loyalty?”

(The groom or attendant places the ring or both place rings, in the minister’s hands, or upon his book, saying simply, “This ring.”)

To the man: “Do you, A.B., offer this ring as a token that you will keep this covenant and perform these vows?”

He answers: “I do.”

To the woman: “Do you, D.E., accept this ring as a token that you will keep this covenant and perform these vows?”

She answers: “I do.”

(In case of a double ring service, the minister may say:)

To both parties: “Do you, A.B., and you, D.E., give and receive these rings as a pledge that you will keep this covenant and perform these vows?”

Together they answer: “We do.”

The minister: “Let this ring [these rings] ever be to you a symbol of the preciousness, the purity, and the permanence of true wedded love.”

Recognition

In recognition of that real marriage between you, accomplished in the uniting of your hearts by mutual love and confidence, and in conformity to the laws of this state by whose sanctions these visible expressions of your pledged fidelity have been given and received, as a minister acknowledged by the church, I do now recognize you as husband and wife. Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

Prayer by the minister.

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Alternate Vows

If more formal vows than those in the foregoing ceremony are desired, the following is suggested:)

To the man: A.B., do you take D.E., whose hand you hold, choosing her alone from all the world, to be your wedded wife? Will you love her and comfort her, support and cherish her in sickness and in health, in prosperity and adversity, and forsaking all others, remain faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

He answers: "I do."

To the woman: D.E., do you take A.B., whose hand you hold, to be your wedded husband? Will you love him and comfort him in sickness and in health, in sunshine and in storm, and, forsaking all others, remain faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

She answers: "I do."

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