**NCFF Annual Gathering**

**18 August 2018**

**Quaker Lake Camp**

One hundred Friends fromArarat, Bethel, Deep River, First Friends, Forsyth, Jamestown, Mt Airy, New Garden, Somerton, Winston Salem Meetings, and guests gathered on a beautiful August day at Quaker Lake Camp our NC Fellowship of Friends inaugural annual gathering. Miami Meeting sent its regrets along with a communication (attached).

**Guests:** Kelly Kellum, Friends United Meeting General Secretary

Eduardo Diaz, Nancy Wallace, Ray Treadway from the Friends World Committee on Consultation visitation committee

Kindra Bradley, Fayetteville Quaker House

Don Farlow, Clerk of NCYM, Inc.

Chuck Fager, Sword of Peace

Eduardo Diaz, Nancy Wallace, Ray Treadway brought greetings from **FWCC Membership Discernment Committee**, and explained the process of NCFF becoming recognized by, and a member of FWCC.

**MOWA Choctaw Friends Center**: The clerk, Pat Cheadle, and Don Farlow updated Friends on the concern about the financial commitment and personnel commitment needed to keep MOWA Friends Center fully operational. Pat and Frank, in a recent visit, met with many members of the MOWA Council to learn of their interest in assuming ownership of the property. The Council has ideas for the use of the facilities, including a pre-K program, continuing the afterschool tutoring program, feeding programs for children and youth in the summer months, feeding programs for the elderly (year-round). Those gathered acknowledged that we, NCFF, does not possess the funding required to operate the facility adequately. Friends APPROVED encouraging the NCYM, Inc. Trustees to move forward in negotiating a transfer of the property to the MOWA Council.

**Committee on Meeting Nurture and Development**: Scott Wagoner presented a proposal to establish a Committee on Meeting Nurture and Development (attached). Friends APPROVED establishing the committee.

**Nominating & Discernment Committee**: Friends APPROVED granting the clerk permission to establish a nominating committee that will serve as a "clerks support committee," with the understanding that each meeting will have a member on the committee.

**Financial Report**: Carl Semmler, for the Finance Committee, presented a financial overview of where NCFF stands, seven months into this new venture. Carl reported on the amount of money received by NCFF from the investments of the Trust Funds, and the amount the meetings have contributed to NCYM, Inc., Quaker Lake Camp, and to NCFF’s activities.

**Faith & Practice**: Friends APPROVED allowing the clerk to ask the Nominating Committee to nominate a Faith and Practice Committee (Revision Committee) for presentation at the fall NCFF Business Meeting.

The clerk spoke to the “new wine and new wineskins” parable as gaining new significance as we, NCFF, has begun this journey. The clerk shared that “we” are doing a new thing, that we are informed by our past but not formed; that we will encourage Friends and Meetings to discern calls and leadings of ministry and service, and to bring those to the body for support – spiritual, financial, and persons/Meetings wishing to join.

**Next Meeting: Springfield Meeting invited Friends to their meeting house on November 10, 2018 for the Fall Business Meeting.**

Friends Adjourned for lunch and fellowship.

Frank Massey

presiding clerk

In the afternoon Friends gathered around interest tables (with many signing up to continue working on the concerns:

**Children and Youth** (some of the comments)

**Focus:** Elementary; Middle/High School; 18-25 year olds (college)

More youth orientated activities and programs; youth programming; encourage youth in Quaker values; Christian education; involve young couples in our meetings; young adults; a program to teach Quaker Process to the younger generation; nurturing youth and young friends development; How can those meeting with no children attract younger families with children?

Communication between meetings; programs at NCFF Annual Gatherings; Have children and youth participate in the Fellowship with their own governing body; programs and trips together to DC through William Penn House; increase social media presence; advertise/communicate activities; educational videos with Quaker values integrated; “Quaker Speak” youth version; provide young adult programming to “bridge” over to adult sessions; “SOUL” type activity; volunteer opportunities (QLC); Winter Retreat;

**Quaker Relations**

Focus on our faith; develop Quaker leaders; local meetings call the “shots”; support local meetings’ ministries; concentrate on what we have in common; listen and talk with each other; help only when it lift rather than putting down; highlight the ocean of light that encourages and provides opportunities to learn from each other; communication with members of seekers; focus on what we are called to (rather than our differences; hold regular session to keep community together; focus on Quakerism (study, speakers, discussions); invite well-known Quaker speakers; more intergenerational events; focus on fellowship; small group discussion on subjects so that we learn to talk having diverse opinions; support of pastors; deepen spiritual work through workshops, training, and programs; support Quaker Lake; model faithful Friends business practice including presiding and recording and committee functions; foster love; promote knowledge of each other

**Outreach**

Christmas Toy Drive or visit patients in hospitals/children hospitals around Christmas; hold informal meetings open to the public, may in public spaces, like parks; online communication groups between meeting members; increase the visibility of Friends Meeting with different forms of advertising; outreach to the “needy” in our community; support for Quaker Lake Camp; maintain a solid financial position; the welcoming message of Christ’s live; joint events with other meetings; support between meetings; communication!

**Social Justice**

Plan a project for all meetings to work on cooperatively on an annual schedule; be a presence in social issues; dealing with gun violence; immigration assistance; project that would require us to work physically with one another; social action and projects; become involved in the local community; raise money to build tiny houses for a homeless family; affirm our love of God’s creation and the need to live simplicity and lives of sufficiency; have “sister” (sibling) meetings for shared projects; keep “practice guidelines” to 10 pages, think outside the box; encourage the discipleship of welcoming the stranger, aiding the poor and lifting the downtrodden; don’t talk as much about who we are, as what we do