

North Carolina Fellowship of Friends

We are a Christ-centered fellowship of Quaker Meetings and we affirm the autonomy of each Meeting in Quaker faith and practice

Prayer and Discernment at Forsyth Friends Meeting

9:00 A.M, Saturday, June 24, 2017

Meeting for Business at Forsyth Friends Meeting

10:00 A.M, Saturday, June 24, 2017

Meetings Represented: Ararat, Jamestown, Winston Salem, Forsyth, Spring, New Garden, Mt. Airy, First Friends, Deep River, High Point, Bethel (Franklin, VA).

Regrets: Sarah Johnson, Max Carter, Josh Brown

Introductions: The meeting opened with individual introductions from the members as well as recognition of Kathy Kellum, pastor at High Point Friends Meeting, and Wayne Blythe, pastor at Bethel Friends Meeting (Franklin, VA).

Devotional: Scott Wagoner offered the opening devotion focusing on the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well taken from John 4.

Minutes: Approved with an addition and clarification of money donated from New Garden Quarter (\$540.00)

Agenda: Approved

1. Organizational presentation-

Scott Wagoner presented a brief overview contrasting "Bounded" versus "Centered" sets based on information taken from Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch's "The Shaping of Things to Come." Bounded sets are characterized by conformity to the norm of the set/group/church, whereas Centered sets are characterized not by conformity to a norm, but whether or not the individual is moving toward the center of beliefs of the set. In the centered church the center is Jesus. NCFF has taken on the character of a "Centered" church, which does not base acceptance on conformity to an organizationally prescribed set of beliefs but, instead, on *movement toward Jesus*.

2. Report from June 3, 2017 YM Rep. Body meeting-

Mark Farlow presented a summary report of the proceedings and outcomes from NCYM Rep. Body. Many questions were raised (some answered) regarding many financial aspects of the reorganization, e.g. pastor's pension, money from trust funds, off-set of money needed to support Quaker Lake. The proportionality of allocation of assets was also questioned in light of the fact that the "authority" group is losing member meetings while NCFF is adding member meetings. Other concerns included: 1. There is no backup, supervision, or support system for the financial manager. 2. There is a conflict between the NCFF membership policy and the NCYM bylaws and the Trust Fund Operating Agreement. NCFF allows for at-large membership, but the board require participants to be members of member meetings. 3. Briefly discussed the need to separate trust funds so that they can be optimized to best aggregate use. For example, if one group does

not intend to pursue Mexico missions, it makes no sense to allocate Mexico trust fund income to that group.⁴ New documents regarding the reorganization have been posted on the NCYM website.

3. The path forward for NCFE-

The questions and concerns arising out of the report of the NCYM Rep. Body proceedings generated discussion of how the "strings" that still bind us to the YM seemed to be restraining NCFE from moving toward its full development. It was recognized that we are getting bogged down in business affairs to the exclusion of developing our theological "center." The question was raised as to what it would take for NCFE to be independent. (All the legal, business, and tax requirements have been met except for a bank account, which Mark Farlow and Clarence Mattocks will follow up on setting up). Consensus was not reached on a formal separation at this time. There was, however, acknowledgement that we have been building a viable yearly meeting and that process should not be hindered by the convoluted reorganization process. There was enthusiastic consensus for now focusing our energies toward developing our structure, processes, and theological position. Concern was expressed regarding the status of recorded pastors within NCFE and the future process of recording. It was determined that the recorded status will not be affected, and that future recording is a process to be determined as part of NCFE's development.

The clerk offered a plan to call the finance committee together to deal with the business aspect of the reorganization, the outreach committee to develop a strong social media presence, and a group to begin working on our structure, processes, and procedures. This was approved.

4. Finances --

- A. Treasurer's Report: Clarence Mattocks -- Our current balance is \$800.00 which does not include the \$540.00 donation from New Garden Quarter.
- B. Decision on future YM Askings -- not addressed at this time.

5. Organizational priorities --

- A. Seek approval of formalizing representation in FCNL, AFSC, FWCC - The clerk will follow-up with a request to these organizations to recognize our representatives.
- B. Discuss association with larger organizations, e.g. FUM and FGC--Not addressed at this time.

6. Approval for an anti-discrimination clause requested at our last meeting (draft below)-

Clarification was given that an anti-discrimination clause would apply only to the corporate structure of NCFE. In keeping with its emphasis on autonomy this policy would not apply specifically to each meeting. In other words, according to this policy, NCFE would not discriminate when it comes to appointing individuals to a position on a committee or a paid position. The policy was accepted in theory, but no decision was reached on the exact wording of this policy. It will be addressed at a later time.

7. Report from Visioning Committee- No report at this time.

8. Other business--

Other approvals:

- A letter of appreciation be sent to Superintendent Don Farlow recognizing his strong impartial leadership during the reorganization process.
- Mark Farlow to send a letter to the YM requesting a written statement for a back-up and supervisory plan for the financial office.
- Scott Wagoner to develop a bulletin insert educating members on the (Jesus) "Centered" theological nature of NCFE.
- Request for each member monthly meeting to submit queries they would like answered regarding the development of NCFE.
- Plan a "Fellowship" celebration get-together for September. Exact date and location to be announced.

The clerk recommended members read the June issue of *Friends Journal* which contains a series of articles on re-thinking Quakerism for the 21st century.

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 12 at 9:30 -- 1 p.m. at Jamestown Friends. This meeting will be longer so that we can begin the work of building the NCFE.

All hearts and minds being clear, the meeting settled into a period of silent worship prior to adjournment.

**Respectfully submitted,
Frank Massey, Clerk**