
PIEDMONT FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP and PIEDMONT FRIENDS YEARLY MEETING 2022—An Organizational Review

Dear Piedmont Friends,

After more than 50 years of Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF) and six years since the founding of Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting (PFYM), we invite you to participate in the discernment for an organizational way forward for Piedmont Friends.

HISTORY

Friends Meetings throughout the region were drawn together in 1968 out of concern for peace and social justice, particularly in response to the Vietnam War. PFF was created to offer fellowship and support, and for the founding of Quaker House in Fayetteville as an expression of the Friends Peace Testimony.

The current meetings of PFF:

- Abingdon
- Boone
- Chapel Hill
- Charlotte
 - Upstate Worship Group
- Davidson
- Durham
- Eno Friends (Hillsborough)
- Fancy Gap
- Fayetteville
- Friendship
- New Garden
- Raleigh
- Salem Creek
- Spring
- Wilkes County
- Winston-Salem

In 2015, the meetings of PFF supported the formation of a yearly meeting (PFYM) for meetings which were wanting an affiliation with a yearly meeting. The meetings that have become part of PFYM:

- Abingdon (VA)
- Chapel Hill
- Charlotte
 - Upstate (SC) Worship Group
- Eno Friends
- Fancy Gap (VA)
- New Garden
- Raleigh
- Salem Creek

Together, PFF & PFYM have offered opportunities for fellowship, education, sharing concerns and information, as well as maintaining a connection to the larger world of Friends, including

- Friends General Conference
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- American Friends Service Committee
- Friends World Committee for Consultation

Further, PFF & PFYM were foundational in the creation of Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation (FCNCL). Most recently, Piedmont Friends have come together to form the 2022 FGC Gathering Host Committee.

CURRENT SITUATION

For the past six years, PFF and PFYM have functioned as collaborating, but separate, organizations.

Jointly, PFF and PFYM plan the annual spring and fall retreats; share a website, information and listserv groups for peace and social concerns; hold FCNCL and the 2022 Gathering in our spiritual care. While there is unity in the work of Piedmont Friends, the two organizations are often duplicating efforts.

Member meetings are finding it difficult to recruit representatives to serve on the two representative bodies. Sometimes the distinctions and structure of the two organizations are confusing and difficult to interpret. Meetings are being challenged to fill their leadership positions and PFF/PFYM are similarly challenged. Friends are feeling “stretched thin” by the many needs for clerkships and committee work in our home meetings and in our larger Friends organizations. Some of our meetings have become less active in PFF over the past few years.

Given the current situation, we want to test member meetings’ connection to Piedmont Friends— what is working, what are the challenges, what are Friends’ desires for Piedmont Friends? — and to consider an alternative way forward.

PROPOSAL

Friends are asked to consider moving the work of PFF and PFYM into a unified body of “Piedmont Friends—Yearly Meeting and Fellowship,” combining organizational functions and leadership.

Those meetings which are currently members of PFYM will be designated as a “Yearly Meeting member; the PFF meetings not currently members of PFYM will be designated as a “Fellowship member” of “Piedmont Friends—Yearly Meeting and Fellowship.”

Regardless of affiliation, all meetings are invited into the unified work of “Piedmont Friends,” including representation to larger Quaker organizations; appointing representative(s) to quarterly/interim meeting; annual spiritual condition reporting; participating in various workshops, presentations and meeting clerks calls; participating

in the annual retreat and annual sessions; holding the work of Piedmont Friends in the Light, etc.

Functionally, Piedmont Friends would have one representative body, one annual meeting/sessions, one leadership group (clerks, recording clerk, treasurer, executive committee, etc.), one set of representatives to Friends organizations, etc. The unified body would continue to plan the spring and fall retreats for fellowship and support, offer opportunities for member meetings and individual Friends to share information and concerns, maintain the shared website, as well as opportunities to participate in the wider work of Friends.

The shared budgetary function held by PFF will continue as part of the unified body, to support the work, outreach and mission of all Piedmont Friends.

The hope for a unified body of “Piedmont Friends” is that meetings will continue to find meaning and spiritual deepening in affiliation, that Piedmont Friends will be an inclusive collaboration of meetings—large and small—in carrying out the work of the Spirit among Friends in the piedmont region and beyond.

QUERIES

1. What is your meeting’s experience with PFF/PFYM in its current structure—benefits, challenges?
2. How do you see the proposal of a unified “Piedmont Friends—Yearly Meeting and Fellowship” affecting (strengthening and/or challenging) your meeting?
3. What concerns does your meeting have about the proposal for a unified body of Piedmont Friends?

We are asking for your meeting’s response to the queries, additional feedback, questions and thoughts by the end of February, to be shared in a called joint meeting of the PFF and PFYM representative bodies March 5th for discernment for moving forward with this proposal. Please respond via email to:

PFF Clerk, Bill Moore— bill@nzmoore.com

PFYM Co-clerks, Sally Freeman & Paul Klever— pfymclerk@gmail.com

In Peace,

On behalf of the representative bodies of PFF and PFYM,
Bill Moore, Clerk, PFF

Sally Freeman & Paul Klever, Co-clerks, PFYM

Marian Beane (Charlotte), Jeff Brown (Chapel Hill), Nancy Riemer (Raleigh)

To:

Clerks, PFF (&PFYM) Meetings