

**ad hoc Faith and Practice Process Clarification Committee
Report to Third Month 2017 Interim Meeting**

1. Charge approved at Tenth Month 2016 Interim Meeting

Baltimore Yearly Meeting establishes an ad hoc Faith and Practice Process Clarification Committee, which is asked to bring forward a proposal for a first reading at Interim Meeting in March 2017 to 1) offer changes to the Manual of Procedure entries relating to Faith and Practice and 2) provide more detailed guidance to the Faith and Practice Revision Committee (F&PRC) on how to approach its work. A second reading of its proposal would come to Interim Meeting in June 2017. If Interim Meeting reaches unity on a way forward at that time, the ad hoc Committee would be laid down, and the Nominating Committee would be asked to bring names for the F&PRC to Annual Session.

The Presiding Clerk and Clerk of Interim Meeting will name the clerk(s) of the ad hoc Committee, and participation on the Committee would be open to all. All are asked to help ensure diverse participation on the Committee by encouraging Friends to participate that would help achieve that diversity. The Yearly Meeting Presiding Clerk and Clerk of Interim Meeting will ensure that the Committee is diverse. Committee meeting times and locations will be publicized on the Yearly Meeting website and shared by email with those who have requested to be notified of them.

2. Ad hoc committee membership

- Karen Cunyningham, Annapolis (clerk)
- Kevin Caughlan, Sandy Spring
- Jamie DeMarco, Homewood/Adelphi
- Walt Fry, West Branch
- Peirce Hammond, Bethesda
- Susan Kaul, Bethesda
- Darcy Lane, Sandy Spring
- Fred Leonard, Stony Run
- Ann Marie Moriarty, Adelphi
- Marcy Baker Seitel, Adelphi
- Ken Stockbridge, Patapsco
- Susan Russell Walters, Homewood

3. Schedule

We held two meetings in January and one in February. We have three listening sessions scheduled in April (see below), as well as a planning meeting prior to the listening sessions. We will have additional meetings in May, June, and July, bring another report to Sixth Month Interim Meeting, and bring a final report to Annual Session. We expect to be laid down at Annual Session.

4. Status of our work

We organized the issues we plan to address under three categories:

1. Committee description, for Manual of Procedure (on p. 14 of MoP in 2016 Yearbook)
2. Committee procedures, for Manual of Procedure Section X, “Changes in *Faith and Practice*” (p. 29 of MoP in 2016 Yearbook)
3. Current guidance and advices to Committee, proposed as an advisory minute for consideration at Annual Session.

a. We started with the **first category** and agreed to recommend the following for the committee description in the *MoP*:

- The name of the committee should be the Faith and Practice Committee (striking “Revision” from the name)
- The Faith and Practice Committee should be a standing committee
- The Faith and Practice Committee should be deliberate in its relationship with other committees, particularly the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee
- The Faith and Practice Committee should have six to ten members
- Nominating Committee should consider diversity of faith and of practice when nominating members to the Faith and Practice Committee
- Standard guidance on committee composition, diversity, and rotation applies. As that is stated elsewhere in the *Manual of Procedure*, it is not stated in the proposed committee description.

b. We also began to address questions falling into the **second category**, and agreed to recommend the following in Section X of the *MoP*:

- The Faith and Practice Committee will take proposed changes to *Faith and Practice* first to Interim Meeting and then to Annual Session
- The Faith and Practice Committee may receive seasoned suggestions for changes to *Faith and Practice* from:
 - Monthly Meetings, Preparative Meetings, and Worship Groups
 - Worshiping communities, such as the camps, Young Friends, Young Adult Friends
 - Baltimore Yearly Meeting Committees
 - Quarterly Meetings
- The Faith and Practice Committee will regularly review *Faith and Practice* and initiate their own changes
- *Faith and Practice* should be a living document, with changes brought forward as needed (although not as frequently as is done for Manual of Procedure)
- Individuals with proposed changes should work through their local Meeting. The Faith and Practice Committee will help individuals with this process, working to ensure that all concerns are seasoned at the appropriate level.
- Parallel to the *Manual of Procedure* process, “In the interest of accuracy and clarity, the Faith and Practice Committee may copy-edit the *Faith and Practice*.”

We also discussed whether membership on the Faith and Practice Committee should be restricted to members of a BYM Monthly Meeting. We agreed we need input from the larger body about this.

c. **Third category** issues we plan to consider for an advisory minute include (although are not constrained to):

- Should *Faith and Practice* present the range of faith and practice in BYM? Attempt to describe a norm? Should the document be aspirational (what we want to be in addition to what we are now?)
- What is the target audience of *Faith and Practice*? What is/are its purpose(s)?
- Should faith be the primary focus of the new Faith and Practice committee?

- Should the new committee start with the approved 1988 *Faith and Practice* or the proposed 2013 version? How can the work of the committee that developed the 2013 document best be honored and used? How will proposed changes be identified relative to the current version?
- How should previously submitted suggestions be used? How should new suggestions be solicited? How should inputs be shared with the YM?
- Should the Faith and Practice Committee plan to revise the entire document, revise parts, or develop a new document? How should changes be presented?
- How should local Meetings be engaged in dialog about *Faith and Practice*?

Our working plan is to address these and other issues in a proposed advisory minute that can serve as an agreed-upon starting point for a newly appointed Faith and Practice Committee.

5. Listening sessions

We have scheduled three listening sessions, two of them in conjunction with Stewardship and Finance's Apportionment meetings. Please come and join the dialog. Your participation will help us provide necessary guidance to a new Faith and Practice Committee.

- April 15, Bethesda Friends Meeting, 1 to 3 pm
- April 22, Floyd Friends Meeting, after the apportionment meeting
- April 29, Nottingham Monthly Meeting, after the apportionment meeting

If you are unable to attend a listening session, we welcome your thoughts and comments via email to fandp@bym-rsf.org.

6. Proposed language for the Manual of Procedure

Working Draft of Committee Description: Faith and Practice Committee
(p. 14 of 2016 Yearbook)

The Faith and Practice Committee consists of six to ten persons nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Yearly Meeting, with care to name Friends that reflect the theological spectrum of Friends within the Yearly Meeting as well as the spectrum of contemplative and activist Friends.

The Committee engages with the constituents of the Yearly Meeting in exploring and clarifying our continually evolving experience with Quaker faith and practice, seeking to have the published *Faith and Practice* reflect it. To that end, the Committee is encouraged to seek ways to collaborate with other committees of the Yearly Meeting as well as engage with local Meetings. The Committee seasons potential changes to the document and proposes them to the Yearly Meeting in accordance with the process laid out in Section X. "Changes in Faith and Practice" in the *Manual of Procedure*.