

Faith and Practice (F&P) Committee Presentation at Interim Meeting, March 23, 2019

Background

At 2013 Annual Session, Friends considered an extensive revision to the approved 1988 Faith and Practice. Friends were not in unity to adopt the 2013 draft, citing concerns about substance and process. Minutes expressed the intention to use the 2013 draft as a resource for future discernment in the revision of the 1988 Faith and Practice (Y2013-56 and 57).

By 2016, it was recognized that the charge of the Faith and Practice Revision Committee was unclear, so that it was difficult to find members to serve on the Committee. At Tenth Month 2016 Interim Meeting, an ad hoc Faith and Practice Process Clarification Committee was established to offer changes to the Manual of Procedure and provide more detailed guidance to the Faith and Practice Revision Committee on how to approach its work.

“Advice and Guidance for Faith and Practice Committee” prepared by the ad hoc Committee was presented at 2017 Annual Sessions and is attached to the Minutes (Attachment Y2017-19). At 2018 Annual Session, five members were appointed to a new Faith and Practice Committee that took the place of the previous Faith and Practice Revision Committee.

Implementing the Advice and Guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee

The five members of the Faith and Practice Committee first met at Tenth Month 2018 Interim Meeting and have had monthly conference calls since then. An important part of our early work has been to understand and discuss the advice and guidance provided by the ad hoc committee. The Advice and Guidance of the ad hoc committee suggested that the F&P committee could

--consider the 2013 Faith and Practice as a resource;

--propose changes, additions or deletions to the 1988 Faith and Practice in sections, showing how they differ from the approved *1988 Faith and Practice*;

--identify and focus first on sections of Faith and Practice that are out-of-date, no longer reflecting current practices, or are unclear or incomplete;

--establish points of contact with groups that may season and propose changes to Faith and Practice;

--engage in ongoing dialog with all BYM groups about faith and practice and *Faith and Practice*.

Early Standing Committee Work

As a brand new committee, with brand new members, we have needed to work out how BYM committees do business, and Wayne Finegar (Associate General Secretary) has been very helpful to us as we try to figure that out.

We also realize that because this is a standing committee, we are not being asked to revise the entire document, but to bring changes to the body of the yearly meeting periodically. We intend to update our progress to you through interim and Annual session, the Interchange, and other means. We will occasionally ask for approval of certain sections bringing them to Interim Meeting for first reading and Annual Session for second reading. When a portion of the 2013 Resource or other suggested language is deemed by us to be ready for inclusion in the current *Faith and Practice*, we will bring it to the body.

One early committee task has been to make the *1988 Faith and Practice* and the 2013 Draft more widely available. BYM does not now have printed copies of either document available for sale, and we are working with Wayne to have copies printed. Electronic versions of the 1988 and the 2013 documents can now be downloaded from the BYM website.

Over the last several months, we have devoted considerable time to studying the *1988 Faith and Practice* and the 2013 draft to better understand what each document contains, and how they compare to each other. Together, the two documents total well over four hundred pages.

As noted previously, the ad hoc committee strongly encouraged us to reach out to all parts of BYM as we revise *Faith and Practice*. Our Manual of Procedure entry says that the Faith and Practice Committee is expected to be in close communication with other committees, particularly the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee. We hope that our presentation today can be a first step in building close communication with other BYM committees. We plan to have regular communication via the *Interchange* and an interest group at Annual Session.

Title Change

For the sake of clarity and to be consistent with our decision in 2013, we suggest that the 2013 draft be re-titled: "The 2013 Resource for Faith and Practice" so as to distinguish it from the *1988 Faith and Practice*.