

PART I - FRIENDS HISTORY, BELIEF AND PRACTICE

CHAPTER I -- HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Beginning of Friends. Friends, also called Quakers, had their origin in seventeenth-century England. As a young man, George Fox longed for a genuine faith which he did not find in the cold, legalistic church of his time. He looked in vain for human help, and studied the Bible so thoroughly that he learned much of it by memory. After four years of searching, he found inner peace through trusting Jesus Christ as his Savior. Soon he began to tell others about the Gospel of Christ as God's way to free people from sin. As Fox shared the reality he had found, others responded and joined him in spreading the good news of salvation. Thus a movement of Christian renewal was born in 1647 which was to become known in time as the Friends Church, or Society of Friends. A rapid period of growth began in June, 1652, in northern England.

The Message of Friends. Fox and early Quakers declared that salvation is a personal matter between the individual and God. No human mediator or outward ordinance is necessary. Therefore the Friends message with its clear, spiritual interpretation of the Gospel was a logical conclusion of the Protestant Reformation. With its emphasis on spiritual reality and without dependence on outward rites, Quakerism fulfilled the development of doctrine begun over a century earlier by Martin Luther.

Friends endeavored to rediscover New Testament doctrine in its threefold nature of knowing about Jesus Christ historically, knowing Him personally in religious experience, and following His pattern of life. They recognized the role of the Holy Spirit in revealing sin and leading people to new life in Christ. Rather than merely dispensing with all outward ordinances, they taught positively that true baptism is that of Christ's Spirit within, and real communion takes place in fellowship with the Bread of life.

Friends as a Church. The dynamic message of Friends attracted thousands of people, and the early Quaker movement grew rapidly; some have called it an "explosion". They are thought to have taken the name "Friends" from the statement of Jesus in John 15:14 that "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you". They also called themselves "Friends of Truth" or "Publishers of Truth". The term "Quaker" was originally a derisive nickname. For legal reasons it became necessary in England to use the name "Society of Friends" as English law recognized only one established Church.

Many consider the word "church" belongs to the total invisible body of believers. Therefore some Friends hesitate to use the word to refer to any one part of the body of Christ (as a certain denomination) or to the building used as a place of worship. In a spiritual sense Fox and his followers did use "church" freely when referring to the group of believers to whom they ministered. Today, many Friends congregations call themselves the Friends Church. Others are careful to use the term "meeting" for a group of believers and "meetinghouse" for the place of worship. Our legal name is Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting.

The Living Witness of Friends. The beliefs of early Friends led them into practical action. Among ethical testimonies held by Friends were these: religious freedom, opposition to slavery and civil bondage, just treatment of minorities (especially American Indians), humane and remedial treatment of offenders, prison reform, compassionate care of the mentally ill, and aid to war victims and others in physical need. Friends taught and practiced peace as opposed to war, calling upon Christians to arm themselves with the Spirit rather than the weapons of this world. According to Christ's command, they emphasized a single standard for truth. Consequently, many countries now accept the affirmation in place of a legal oath.

Because of the testimonies of early Friends there is more civil and religious liberty in the world. All have benefited greatly from the courage of Friends faithful to what they believed. They were often put in prison for refusing to comply with requirements which they felt were contrary to the Gospel of Christ. Some forfeited their property; others were beaten, or even killed, because they took a stand for justice and freedom.

Friends Around the World. Between 1654 and 1660 individual Friends from England had left a personal witness in more than 20 foreign countries. This antedated the modern missionary movement by more than a century. Outside of western Europe and the American colonies few, if any, Friends meetings continued from that era. In the latter half of the 19th century English and American Friends caught a vision of world need and since then have established missions in several lands. A number of those missions have now become indigenous churches. In 2000 the Friends World Committee reported there were organized groups of Friends in 43 countries, only 24 of which had more than 200 in their total membership. There are approximately 280,000 Friends in the world, but 90 percent of them live in the United States, Kenya, Bolivia, Guatemala, Great Britain, or Burundi.

Friends in America. The missionary vision of English Friends soon spread their witness in America. In 1661 New England Yearly Meeting was established in Rhode Island, where Friends were especially influential in government. Before 1700, other Yearly Meetings were set up in Baltimore, Virginia, Philadelphia, New York, and North Carolina for the English colonists. Overland travel was so difficult, separate Yearly Meetings were almost a necessity. William Penn's colony (Pennsylvania) was an example of what Friends today call "church extension". The numerical strength and influence of colonial Friends reached its peak about 1750. As more non-Quakers came to America, the peace testimony grew unpopular in the face of the French and Indian War. Also as Quietism increased among Friends, the Quaker influence diminished markedly during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

During the 19th century Friends experienced a quickening of spiritual life, and new Yearly Meetings were again set up. Baltimore established Ohio Yearly Meeting in 1813 for all Friends meetings west of the Allegheny Mountains. Growth was phenomenal and Ohio set up Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1821. Since then, twenty-six Yearly Meetings were formed in the remaining years of the 19th century, fourteen of which have ceased to exist or have merged with other Yearly Meetings. In the 20th century at least twelve new Yearly Meetings have been established.

Along with spiritual renewal came divisions among Friends. Due to disagreements in doctrine and church authority, and augmented by personality conflicts, the "Great Separation" took place in American Quakerism in 1827-28, with major splits occurring in four Yearly Meetings. Smaller divisions took place later in the century. Conferences about special concerns were held in Philadelphia in 1829, and in Baltimore in 1849. The first General Conference of the

Yearly Meetings was held at Richmond, Indiana, in 1887. It was attended by delegates from London and Dublin Yearly Meetings, as well as from all those in America except Philadelphia and it was represented unofficially.

Afterwards it was decided to hold similar conferences of the American Yearly Meetings every five years (changed to triennial sessions after 1960). In 1897 it was decided that a uniform book of discipline and a closer union of the Yearly Meetings would be desirable. The resulting Constitution and Discipline was adopted by New England, Wilmington, Indiana, and Kansas in 1900, by California, New York, Western, and Baltimore in 1901, and by Oregon, North Carolina, and Iowa in 1902. The new organization was called the Five Years Meeting (officially changed to Friends United Meeting in 1966). Nebraska joined when it was organized in 1908. Canada Yearly Meeting was received into the organization in 1907 with the privilege of adapting the Discipline to its own needs. Later, Cuba, Mexico, Jamaica, and East Africa Yearly Meetings also affiliated with the Five Years Meeting. In 1983 the East Africa Yearly Meeting divided into three groups; since then two others have emerged, as that area has the largest concentration of Quakerism in the world. In 1986 California Yearly Meeting changed its name to Southwest, and then changed affiliation to Evangelical Friends International in 1995.

The Friends General Conference, composed of the "Hicksite" branches of Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Ohio, and Indiana Yearly Meetings, together with Genesee and Illinois, was organized in 1900. Indiana has changed its name to Ohio Valley. Six new Yearly Meetings later became affiliated with this group, Southeastern chose affiliation also with Friends United Meeting. In 1945 New England Yearly Meetings were united after the Gurneyite-Wilburite divisions of 1845. In 1955 various bodies in Canada joined to form Canadian Yearly Meeting. The two New York groups also united that year, as did the two Philadelphia bodies. Baltimore was not united until 1966. All of these except Philadelphia are affiliated with both the FGC and FUM. The five Yearly Meetings with dual membership in 2000 comprise 15.4% of the Friends in the United States and Canada.

The earlier unity achieved in the Five Years Meeting was shattered by the modern fundamentalist issue in American Protestantism. Numerous Friends across the country became concerned about the growing influence of so-called modern thought. The Quaker emphasis tended to be on either evangelism or humanitarianism but not both. Oregon Yearly Meeting withdrew from the Five Years Meeting in 1926. That same year some dissatisfied members in Indiana and Western Yearly Meetings organized Central Yearly Meeting. In 1937 Kansas Yearly Meeting also withdrew from the Five Years Meeting. Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting was set up in 1957 by a majority of monthly meetings from Nebraska Yearly Meeting.

Recent scholarship has focused attention upon the evangelical nature of early Quakerism; this led to greater cooperation among groups of evangelical Friends. The Association of Evangelical Friends began meeting triennially in 1947 to encourage Christ-centered faith among Friends. That organization was terminated in 1970. Meanwhile in 1962 the formation of an Evangelical Friends Alliance was planned; in 1965 its constitution was approved by Ohio (now Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region), Oregon (now Northwest), Rocky Mountain, and Kansas (now Evangelical Friends Church - Mid-America) Yearly Meetings.

The purpose of EFA was to foster a clear evangelical witness, and to promote cooperation among evangelical Friends in Christian education, publications, youth work and missions. The Evangelical Friends Mission was initiated by it in 1978. Iowa and Alaska Yearly Meetings were

associate members of EFM, Iowa supports work in Mexico City, and Alaska was being helped in training workers for her own missionary outreach in the north.

In 1989 the EFA was reorganized to become Evangelical Friends International. The purpose of this organization is an international alliance of Friends Churches that officially accept and communicate the evangelical doctrines of the Christian Faith as defined by its statement of faith. It is organized by geographical regions: Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America. Evangelical Friends International – North America is composed of the following Yearly Meetings: Alaska, Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region, Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, Friends Church – Southwest, Northwest Yearly Meeting, and Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting.

Aside from the five with dual affiliation mentioned above, the number of affiliated Yearly Meetings and the percentage of their membership of total Friends in the United States and Canada in 2000 are as follows: Friends United Meeting (only) 6--30.7%; Evangelical Friends International – North America, 6--29.4%; Friends General Conference (only) 8—18.9%; Conservative, 3--1.6%; unaffiliated, 5—4.1%.

Various other efforts toward greater unity and growth are seen among American Friends, as well as on the world Quaker scene. The Friends United Meeting has begun a more aggressive church extension program. The Quaker Theological Discussion Group provides a forum for debate which seeks to help Friends find clarity in doctrine. Nearly all American Yearly Meetings were officially represented at the 1970 "Gathering of Concerned Friends" in St. Louis where significant sharing gave new hope for understanding and communication among Quakers. Since then there have been a number of conferences sponsored by various groups, including the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Some have been regional, as were those of the Faith and Life movement. National conferences include the Friends Ministers' Conferences, "Youthquakes" and meetings of the Yearly Meeting Superintendents. International conferences held include a series of World Conferences held in widely scattered places.

CHAPTER II -- FRIENDS IN EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH - MID AMERICA YEARLY MEETING

Establishment of Kansas Yearly Meeting. Friends first came to Kansas as missionaries to the Shawnee Indians who had been moved to northeast Kansas (part of Missouri Territory) from Ohio. The Friends Shawnee Indian Mission near Kansas City was opened in 1836, with a boarding school and meeting house. When Kansas Territory was opened for settlement in 1854, large numbers of Friends came. The first quarterly meeting in Kansas, known as Kansas Quarterly Meeting, was established in 1862 in northeast Kansas by Indiana Yearly Meeting. At Lawrence, Kansas Yearly Meeting officially came into being in 1872, made up at first of meetings in eastern Kansas and southwestern Missouri. Soon Friends formed other meetings in Kansas and Missouri, and some migrated far to the south and west where they established meetings in what are now the states of Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado. Since 1925 the annual sessions have been held in Wichita. The name "Kansas" was dropped in 1978 in favor of "Mid-America". The name was changed to "Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting" in 2000.

Friends and Missions. Besides their work among Indians in Kansas and Oklahoma, Kansas missionaries labored on Douglas Island, Alaska, from 1887-1911. Other Kansas Quakers went as missionaries to Japan, China, Cuba, India, Kenya, Mexico, Palestine, Jamaica, Central America and South America.

In the fall of 1933 Kansas Yearly Meeting (now Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting) commissioned Arthur and Edna Chilson, and their daughter Rachel, to open a new mission field in central Africa. In 1934 the Friends mission in Urundi (now Burundi), known as the Friends Africa Gospel Mission (FAGM), was started. FAGM was both evangelistic and service oriented, seeking to fulfill major goals of evangelizing, discipleship, and church planting, to serve the whole person through medicine, education, technical aid, agriculture, and community development. It cooperated closely with other Protestant missions in the Gitega Literature Center, Grace Memorial Press, Kibimba Normal School, and Mweya Bible Institute and Seminary and the school for missionary children. In 1959, the 25th anniversary year, Burundi Quarterly Meeting was established. Interim Yearly Meeting status was granted in 1979. In 1984, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the mission, the Burundi Friends Church became a full Yearly Meeting.

Friends in Burundi have faced extreme crises from time to time due to local political upheaval. Many of the finest and most highly trained leaders went to their death under persecution (1965 and 1972), giving brave testimony to their faith in Jesus Christ. After fourteen years of effective witness the voice of Radio CORDAC was stilled in 1977 when the Burundi government decided no longer to permit private radio stations. The last of the Friends missionaries were forced to leave in 1985 when the government denied them visas. In spite of the hardships and limitations put upon the churches there, they continued to grow. By 1987 there were 41 congregations with a membership of over 4,500, and they were also active in church extension beyond Burundi into Zaire.

Throughout the 1990's there has been an ongoing atmosphere of political instability and tribal warfare. This resulted in churches being closed for a period of time and some being taken over by the government to serve as refuge camps. The persecution and killing resulted in some

leaders having to flee the country for a time, and others were in hiding. As a result, the major thrust in the support of Burundi has been in the areas of reconstruction and leadership development. In spite of the persecution or perhaps because of it, the church continued to grow.

In January of 1998 there were approximately 14,000 church members in over 70 congregations. Dynamic growth continues through Sister Church projects and the strategy of planting “Hill Churches” in neighboring villages throughout the country. At the same time, with a new Peace School in 1999, and Christ’s heart for reconciliation, Friends sent out a call to peace with the love of Christ in a land of adversity. In August of 1999, Mid-America Yearly Meeting sent David and Mae Kellum back to Burundi for a two-year term to encourage the churches. The Great Lakes School of Theology was launched in Bujumbura in January of 2000 in order to train pastors and leaders to serve in Friends Churches. Sixteen students from the countries of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi, formed the first class. This program has since transitioned into the Great Lakes Leadership training program with each yearly meeting conducting courses independently with oversight by the Evangelical Friends Mission.

In 2006, since there were no longer any EFC Mid-America Yearly Meeting sponsored and supported missionaries on the Burundi field, the yearly meeting committed itself to form a deeper relationship with Evangelical Friends Mission. EFC - MAYM joins other Yearly Meetings in supporting the work in Mexico, the Philippines, Rwanda, North India (Friends of Garhwal), International Friends Ministry, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Ireland.

Friends and Education. Before the development of public schools it was customary among Friends to establish monthly meeting elementary schools to provide for their children's education. As early as 1856 there is record of a Friends elementary school in Leavenworth County, Kansas. By 1866 the monthly meeting schools were being attended by 152 Friends children. In 1872 the newly formed Yearly Meeting took as a major concern the provision of high school education for its youth. There was never one central high school for the Yearly Meeting, but during the years of 1877 to 1914, and scattered in four states, a total of 12 academies had been started by the quarterly meetings. The last of the academies to close was Haviland in 1968. (See the list in the Appendix, page 99).

In connection with the Haviland Academy, a Bible Training School was begun in 1917 for the purpose of teaching English Bible and training Christian workers. In subsequent years the school grew to include a 2-year junior college program and in 1948-1950 a 4-year curriculum. Since the closing of the Academy in 1968, the college (renamed Barclay College in the Spring of 1990) has developed a four year degree program with emphasis on pastoral and youth ministry along with majors in Bible/theology, missions, business, education, and psychology. Since 1996 the college has offered Home College Courses making available college level classes in Bible and ministry that can be completed at home. The college also operates a degree completion program—ADVANTAGE!—with majors in business, psychology, Christian ministry, and Bible/theology at a number of sites in Kansas, and several other states.

The doors of Friends University were opened in Wichita in September, 1898, with 53 students, a president, faculty and magnificent building--the gift of James M. and Anna T. Davis who had purchased the property of the defunct Garfield University. His requirements of Yearly Meeting interest and financial support were met, and in 1903 Friends University officially became the responsibility of Kansas Yearly Meeting. As the college grew, the percentage of Quaker students and alumni declined as did the percentage of financial support from Yearly Meeting churches. Although the Yearly Meeting continues to have close affiliation with the

college, changes in the structure of the University Board mean the Yearly Meeting no longer has control. As a liberal arts college, Friends University has trained thousands of men and women who have distinguished themselves in business, education, industry, and science and at the same time made valuable contributions to their churches and communities.

From 1964-1978 Friends Special School in San Antonio, Texas, helped to educate needy and emotionally disturbed children, prepare them for employment, and bring them under Christian influence and teaching. It had to close after state-level policies affected the funding program on which it was dependent.

The Houston Graduate School of Theology began holding classes in 1983, having developed its initial relationship with the Texas Area Friends Churches. It was a Friends seminary, which focuses its education opportunities on the wider Christian community. In 1988 the seminary was accorded a formal relationship as an educational ministry within Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting. In 2004 the seminary officially ended its designation as a Friends Seminary becoming a multi-denominational institution.

Youth of Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting. Young people are a vital part of Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting. In 1887 a Christian Fellowship Union was organized to provide opportunities for greater communication and fellowship among youth. The name Christian Endeavor was adopted in 1892 to coincide with the national organization of young people. An increased identity with other young people among Evangelical Friends prompted the new name of Friends Youth in 1964. A variety of conferences and retreats have contributed greatly to the spiritual growth and development of young Friends of Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting. In response to a concern for our own camp grounds, in 1950 Kansas Yearly Meeting opened Camp Quaker Haven near Arkansas City, Kansas. Quaker Haven provides excellent opportunities for camping with cabins, dining hall, chapel, the David E. Cox Memorial swimming pool, miniature golf, and other recreational facilities. It has the capacity to accommodate 300 people and is in constant use by Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting and other groups.

In 1979 the position of Superintendent of Youth was established for the purpose of coordination and administration of the youth programs of the Yearly Meeting. The Superintendent of Youth works closely with the youth leaders in EFC-MAYM churches to sense the needs of the youth and provide direction for the youth program. Through such activities as camping, summer ministries, short-term mission trips, Student Conferences, and sponsor-teacher training, also resource materials and program development, the Superintendent of Youth helps to provide for the needs of youth and the development of the youth program in the local church.

CHAPTER III -- A GLANCE AT QUAKER HISTORY*

- 1624 Birth of George Fox in Leicestershire, England
- 1647 Fox's discovery of Jesus Christ
- 1652 Fox's Pendle Hill vision; beginning of Quaker movement in Westmoreland
- 1661 Establishment in Rhode Island of "The Yearly Meeting for Friends in New England"
- 1672 George Fox and William Edmundson's visits among American Friends
- 1682 Arrival of William Penn in Pennsylvania; beginning of his "Holy Experiment" in government
- 1689 Toleration Act in England after the accession of William and Mary
- 1691 Death of George Fox
- 1746 John Woolman's visit in the Carolinas
- 1756 End of Quaker control in Pennsylvania Assembly
- 1776 Abolishment of slaveholding among Quakers
- 1813 Establishment of Ohio Yearly Meeting
- 1821 Establishment of Indiana Yearly Meeting
- 1827-1828 Hicksite-Orthodox Separations in Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Ohio, and Indiana Yearly Meetings
- 1845 Wilburite-Gurneyite (Conservative-Progressive) Separation in New England
- 1854-1904 Further Conservative Separations in Ohio, Iowa, Western, Kansas, Canada, and North Carolina Yearly Meetings
- 1857-1860 Visit of Friends Robert and Sarah Lindsey from Yorkshire, England, among Friends in Kansas, California, Oregon (and elsewhere)
- 1860 Establishment of Iowa Friends Boarding School (later Penn College, 1872)
- 1863 Establishment of Iowa Yearly Meeting
- 1869 President Grant's appointment of Quakers to supervise the Indian service in the Central and Northern Superintendencies and nine other agencies
- 1872 Establishment of Kansas Yearly Meeting
- 1887 Richmond Conference of Yearly Meetings
- 1892 Opening of Friends Haviland Academy (became Friends Bible College, 1917)
- 1893 Establishment of Oregon Yearly Meeting
- 1895 Establishment of California Yearly Meeting
- 1898 Establishment of Friends University, Wichita
- 1900 Organization of Friends General Conference
- 1902 Organization of the Five Years Meeting; beginning of Friends Africa Mission in Kenya
- 1917 Beginning of the American Friends Service Committee
- 1934 Beginning of Friends Africa Gospel Mission in Burundi
- 1937 Beginning of the Friends World Committee for Consultation
- 1943 Beginning of the Friends Committee on National Legislation
- 1945-1966 Union of separated groups within New England, Canada, Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore Yearly Meetings
- 1945-1970 Association of Evangelical Friends
- 1957 Establishment of Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting
- 1966 Five Years Meeting name change to Friends United Meeting; establishment of the Evangelical Friends Alliance

- 1970 St. Louis "Gathering of Concerned Friends"
- 1978 Name change to Mid-America Yearly Meeting; beginning of Evangelical Friends Mission
- 1983 Opening of Houston Graduate School of Theology
- 1984 Establishment of Burundi Yearly Meeting
- 1987 Legal status for Friends Church in Rwanda
- 1989 Evangelical Friends Alliance reorganized as Evangelical Friends International
- 1990 Friends Bible College renamed Barclay College
- 2000 MAYM Name change to Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting
- 2008 EFI name change to Evangelical Friends Church International

*Dates of special interest to American Friends, particularly to those in Evangelical Friends Church - Mid America Yearly Meeting.

CHAPTER IV -- BELIEFS

SECTION I -- BASIC BELIEFS

Friends believe that apostolic (New Testament) doctrines are essentials of Christianity. Fundamental truths considered as vital and life-giving are: the Fatherhood of God; the deity and humanity of Jesus the Son; the ministry of the Holy Spirit; Christ's atonement which reconciles believers to God; the resurrection of Jesus Christ which assures true believers of life after death; the high priesthood of Christ who gives access to the Father by forgiving sins; and the individual priesthood of believers who may approach God directly without human intervention.

While Friends do not stress a formal written creed, they do state the primary principles of their faith in order to make their doctrinal position clear. Not wishing to be dogmatic, they record certain beliefs which are held as basic to their faith. The statement of faith of evangelical Friends may be summarized as follows:

The Bible is the inspired rule of faith and subject to the Holy Spirit's interpretation.

God is sovereign.

Jesus Christ offers vicarious atonement through His death and resurrection.

The Holy Spirit brings people to experience salvation.

People are sinful, but redeemable.

Salvation comprises both forgiveness and sanctification.

The Church is the visible expression of Christ; it will be fulfilled in the final resurrection and judgment.

Inner communion and the baptism with the Holy Spirit are spiritual realities beyond outward symbols.

Christian witness is given through word and deed both in general and specific ministries.

The following pages amplify the subjects mentioned above; for more complete statements on fundamental doctrines, refer to the historical documents on pages 22-39, or to books listed in the annotated bibliography, on pages 95-98.

1. **The Bible.** The Holy Bible was given by the direct inspiration of God. It is sufficient to inform people of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible is the written authority by which all guidance should be measured for truth. God's Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scriptures, also interprets them, working through those yielded to Him within His Church. Genuine guidance from God is in accord with the Holy Scriptures.

2. **God.** There is one sovereign God who is revealed through the Bible in the person of His son, Jesus Christ. God is the Maker and Preserver of all things; He alone is worthy of worship. In the unity of the Godhead exist three equal and distinct, yet inseparable, persons: the Father, the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

3. **Jesus Christ.** Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the second person of the Trinity and is God's revelation of Himself to the world. He was divine and yet human, being conceived by God's Spirit and born of a virgin. Through the blood He shed dying on the cross, Jesus Christ became the atonement for sin, thus providing direct access to God by His

priesthood. Upon His resurrection from the dead, He ascended again to the right hand of His Father, assuming the role of Intercessor and drawing people to God by His Spirit. When Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will receive His Church and judge the world.

4. **The Holy Spirit.** The third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, proceeds from the Father and the Son but is equal with Them. The Holy Spirit convinces people of their sin, gives life to penitent believers, and sanctifies the child of God. He enables one to love God supremely and to give evidence of the Spirit's presence in their lives. The Holy Spirit works through individual lives as well as in corporate groups of the Church, enabling people to serve in various ways as the Spirit chooses.

5. **People.** Created in the image of God, at first man and woman enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their Maker. By their disobedience they incurred the displeasure of God and the penalty of spiritual death. Consequently, all are born in a sinful state; there is no inherent principle which naturally leads people to salvation outside the atoning provision of Jesus Christ for all mankind. While people are sinful by nature, they can be redeemed from sin's penalty, which is eternal death, because Christ paid this penalty in full.

Through His sacrificial death, Jesus Christ destroyed the wall separating all persons from God. By the individual priesthood of believers, everyone stands equal before God and may approach Him directly.

6. **Salvation.** Salvation is a personal matter between people and their Maker. It consists of forgiveness for sins as well as sanctification or the cleansing of sinful human nature. People can be redeemed because of the atoning death of Jesus Christ and the direct work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit restores people to fellowship with God the Father and enables them to love Him wholeheartedly. Salvation does not depend on outward ceremonies or symbols.

Sanctification is the work of God which is accomplished through the baptism with the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer who is yielded totally to God. The believer is thus empowered to witness to the living Christ. Sanctification is both an act in which one's heart is cleansed and a process in which the life is continuously disciplined to God's holy standards.

7. **The Church.** Those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are born again into His kingdom by His Spirit. These persons make up the true Church of Jesus Christ which is spiritual in nature and universal in scope. By His Spirit, Christ is present whenever two or three meet together in His name. Such a meeting is a local church which is a visible manifestation of the Church universal. Every believer should be related to a local visible part of Christ's universal Body in order to worship, witness, and work more effectively for the glory of God. Every believer is committed to be involved in the stewardship of God's Kingdom through the Church until the Lord returns.

8. **Liberty.** Christian liberty is to be granted in all areas not essential to one's final salvation. Due to human imperfection there are differences of faith and practice among God's children, but they anticipate a time of greater unity in the faith. Until that time there must be unity in essentials but liberty in non-essentials, with love in all things.

9. **The Lord's Return.** We have experienced the coming of the Living Christ in and among us, the foretaste of God's glorious reign and basis of our hope. At His second coming, Jesus

Christ will return in power as King of kings to consummate His rule over individuals and nations by the final triumph over Satan. The dead shall be resurrected, some to eternal life, others to everlasting punishment. All shall be judged by God and receive just recompense for their deeds. The blessed ones shall live forever in heaven, but the lost suffer eternally in hell.

SECTION II -- FAITH IN ACTION

A. TESTIMONIES REGARDING SACRED WORSHIP

1. **Prayer and Praise.** No practice in Christian living is more often spoken of in the Scripture than prayer and praise both as duty and as privilege. The Bible gives examples of and instruction in these practices. In the Old Testament Daniel is an outstanding example, because he faithfully and openly prayed to God three times a day, in spite of the King's decree to the contrary. The Psalms are filled with prayer and praise to God. Reading them, the Christian learns of the rich rewards from such practices. Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our sure example in holy living often gave Himself to prayer and praise. He also often instructed His disciples, and thus Christians of all generations, to pray faithfully and to expect God's answer. (Matthew 7:7; John 16:23; James 5:16b)

A sense of need is a sufficient call to prayer. Hence the burdened sinner may come boldly to the throne of grace and find a welcoming Father from Whom forgiveness can be obtained. Similarly, burdened Christians can find in prayer the assurance of God's love and relief from their burdens as they cast all their care on the Lord. (I Peter 5:7)

Prayer is the life breath of Christian living and gives the Christian unbroken access to his Heavenly Father. It is thus essential to the maintenance and development of the Christian life. We believe that it should be the daily exercise of individual Christians within our fellowship; that our families should set apart a time for collective prayer, Bible reading, and praise; and that in our public services of worship we should give importance to prayer and praise.

2. **Christian Worship.** Worship is a privilege of the Christian. It is a spiritual experience in which believers give themselves to communion and fellowship with the Heavenly Father, a time when they consciously feel and give adoration and love and gratitude to God. It is a time of reverent coming before the Almighty God as a child of His by grace.

The first preparation for profitable worship is a humble spirit which recognizes the grace of God in giving us this privilege. Equally important is a contrite spirit which is submissive to His Lordship and superior will for our daily living. When these attitudes prevail, worship is full of meaning and reward. (Psalm 51:17)

Worship may be silent or vocal, taking various forms; it does not depend on certain ceremonies or traditions. Worship is a natural outgrowth of union with Christ and should be directed by His Spirit.

The service of worship will usually include times of prayer, praise, and preaching. During public worship services we should also allow sufficient time for reflection, meditation, and decision.

Inasmuch as public worship aids Christians in their growth in grace, is the focal point of the church's local ministry, and is a testimony to the surrounding community of the importance of

worshipping God, our members should attend the services of their congregation regularly and faithfully. They should impress upon their children the same religious practice, believing that thus they will aid in leading their children to salvation and to the worship of God.

From the beginning of His earthly life (Matthew 2:2) and throughout the ages of time (Revelation 4:10-11), the Lord Jesus Christ has been, is, and will be the object of worship. We make Him the center of our worship and delight in collectively and personally giving Him praise and adoration as God. Without His presence through the Holy Spirit our worship would have neither meaning or depth.

Believers are committed to the work of God, not only to manifest personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but also to share their faith. All Christians are called upon to witness by word and deed, in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace. Certain ones are called and ordained by God for a special service of leadership in His Church; their service may be that of teaching, evangelizing, pastoring, or administration. The church should recognize such special gifts among its members and encourage their use.

3. The Ordinances. (See also pages 28-30) True baptism is the inward receiving of God's Spirit by asking in faith for Him to become the Lord of one's life. Communion is the continuing fellowship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Both baptism and communion are spiritual realities beyond the mere physical, outward ordinances.

Friends, impressed with the abuse which substituted the outward ceremony for the inner spiritual reality, placed their emphasis upon the spiritual content and let the outward symbols fall into disuse.

Communion, the observance of remembering Jesus' last supper and His instruction to partake together in remembrance of Him, is practiced often in worship. This is done in various ways depending on the Spirit's leading within the individual worshiper. It can be in quiet waiting before the Lord, in verbal witness, through prayer, sharing of the Holy Spirit's witness in one's life, or in the expression of needs or concerns. Although it is rooted in the historical act of Christ's body being broken and His blood shed, communion depends upon obedience to Him.

As a testimony or outward sign of inviting and accepting Jesus as Lord, the new believer is encouraged to publicly acknowledge that decision and commitment.

B. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN LIVING

Early in their religious lives Christians learn that it is necessary to make many decisions about behavior. They discover some practices which, though common in society about them, will seriously hinder their Christian growth and witness. Hence making right decisions about such matters will determine their growth in life and witness. Knowing that it is growing Christians who have greater delight in their own lives, Friends hold the following testimonies as guidelines toward Christian growth which we understand to be taught in the Bible. It is our desire that Christians within our fellowship experience speedy and rich progress toward the attainment of fullness in Christ.

1. Harmony in the Church. Harmony in the church family is essential to its good witness in the community and to its worship of and service to its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Watchful care should therefore be taken to maintain that harmony. The congregation, and especially the pastor and officers, should be concerned that nothing be permitted to bring disruption to the

peace and unity of their fellowship. They should be quick to discern conflicts among the members of the congregation. In the event that dissension or resentment does arise, the pastor and officers should admonish all parties of the serious threat involved in their attitudes and make every effort, especially following the pattern laid down by our Lord Himself in Matthew 18:15-20, to reach a speedy reconciliation. (I Peter 1:22; Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 4:21; Matthew 5:23-25).

2. **Simplicity of Living.** Because the pressures to follow a style of life like that of the non-Christian society are so great upon Christians, Friends insist that our citizenship is not of this world. The New Testament command, "Be not conformed to this world," reminds us that in all our living we must take care that our manner of dress be modest and decent in every way. We must also take care that we not be seduced by the attractions and abundance of earthly goods and thus fall into covetousness.

3. **Funerals.** Knowing that our bodies have been made of dust (Genesis 3:19) and shall return to dust, Friends ought to avoid extravagant and expensive funerals and memorial stones.

4. **Memorials.** When a congregation feels that it would be a fitting tribute and possible testimony to others, Friends may prepare a memorial statement of the exemplary life of the deceased member. The statement should be forwarded to the local Presiding Clerk, for possible presentation at the next business session. (See page 43, Part II, Chapter II, Section I, C. 1., L.).

5. **Unwholesome Habits.** Friends should be especially watchful against being involved in the unwholesome habits characteristic of this evil world. Both II Corinthians 7:1, where we are instructed to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and I Corinthians 3:17, where we are told that "if any man defile the temple of God (which temple is our bodies), him shall God destroy," serve as a basis for our testimony against such habits.

Unwholesome habits include the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs and gluttony. Abundant suffering has resulted to those who have been ensnared by these practices. Such suffering has included a waste of health, mind, money, the home, and often the very life of the one who indulges in such habits. In addition to the personal harm suffered, the Christian's godly example is also damaged.

Because of these grave considerations, Friends should avoid such habits and refrain from assisting in the manufacture or promotion of the use of such substances. If new Christians find it difficult to break any of these habits, loving care should be extended to them along with every assistance so that they may come to freedom from them.

6. **Amusements.** With the increase of leisure and the wide availability of entertainment of every kind, Friends should consider most carefully the recreation and amusements to which we give ourselves, our interest, our time, and our money. Amusements can and do have a large influence upon character and life.

Our members should avoid attending or being involved in movies and theatrical performances of a demoralizing nature, in dances, and in other activities that may be injurious to Christian growth. Members are not to be involved in lotteries, wagering, or any kind of gambling. Friends should take care to avoid pornographic publications and publications tending to undermine their faith in the authority of the Scriptures and to hinder their Christian growth.

Though acknowledging certain benefits and the potential for Christian ministry in radio and television, Friends must also recognize and avoid programs which are unwholesome or demoralizing in music, language, or action portrayed.

C. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN FAMILY

1. The Family. The family is the basic unit of human relationship, and as such is also the foundation unit of society and of the church. The many Biblical references to the family assure us of its divine origin and of God's concern for the family and the home.

2. Marriage. Marriage is the union of a man and woman into a oneness which no other human relationship can provide. Made before God and others, the marriage vow unites a couple so fully that they "become one flesh". Marriage also, even more importantly, involves mental, emotional, and spiritual union. Friends should therefore enter into marriage under the full persuasion that it is a life-long commitment and union.

A union so solemn is to be entered into only after much forethought, planning, and prayer. Friends should seek earnestly the will of our Lord concerning their choice of a mate, remembering the apostolic injunction, "do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers". (II Corinthians 6:14a). Parents should use watchful care to help their children find mates of Christian character and commitment.

3. Weddings. Since the wedding ceremony is solemn and holy, Friends feel that it should be simple and reverent. While wishing it to be an occasion to be remembered for its beauty, we should nevertheless avoid ostentation and extravagance. We should take care to make the entire ceremony one of Christian celebration, watching in the choice of music and all other parts of the service that it be an occasion of seeking God's blessing on the union and His guidance in the establishment of the home.

4. Divorce. Since the only clear Biblical allowance for divorce is adultery, Friends discourage seeking a divorce on any other grounds. (Matthew 5:31,32). The sanctity of the marriage vows requires Friends to seek earnestly to nurture their relationship, to prevent serious marital discord, to seek Christian counseling when needed, and to make every effort toward a happy, harmonious, and holy marriage.

The break-up of many marriages in our day lays great responsibility upon the congregation to be sensitive to the needs of those becoming involved in such crises and to be quick in loving concern for them. If divorce occurs, the church should offer a redemptive ministry to all members of the broken family.

When they are called upon to conduct weddings for divorced persons, we ask our ministers to consider the circumstances carefully, perhaps in consultation with the leaders of their congregations, before deciding whether to perform the ceremony.

Persons who have been divorced and are living consistent Christian lives should not be hindered from being members of the church nor from working in it.

5. Parents and Children. The responsibility of parenthood is given by God. (Psalm 127:3). The Scriptures often speak of this responsibility and give guidance for bearing it.

Parents should early and continually turn to God for wisdom and guidance in the rearing of their children.

The Bible commands, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1), and throughout its pages examples clearly support its teaching that obedience is the right attitude of children to parents. On their part, parents should be sensitive to the concerns and needs of their children so that they can freely speak their hearts to each other.

Parents have great spiritual, as well as physical, material, and educational responsibility for their children. Knowing that their children face the pressures of temptation from all sides, particularly in their schools, Christian parents have a great responsibility to guide them into a real understanding of what they believe and what they should do in the face of such temptation. Parents should from the beginning have a concern that their children come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This concern will move them to pray faithfully with and for their children, to try to build a home atmosphere that will draw them to God, to encourage them in regular attendance of services of worship and in Christian service, and to provide them with Christian instruction in the home.

D. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

1. General Ministry. Believers are committed to the work of God, not only to manifest personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but also to share their faith. All Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed, in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace

2. The Public Ministry. Friends believe certain men and women are called to be ministers of the Gospel; for the edifying and equipping of the church, the Holy Spirit confers on them the gifts of ministry (Ephesians 4:11). This calling to the ministry will be evidenced in the life and work of the public minister. While there will be those who also have administrative ability or unusual insight into the Scriptures, it is this distinctive call of God which sets apart a person to serve in the Gospel ministry. Freely received, this call and gift should be freely and devotedly given in service to God and the Church.

. We want to be especially clear regarding the role of women in leadership. From our very beginnings, we have found no significant scriptural basis for limiting certain leadership and ministry roles to men. Today, we continue to affirm, not as a concession to modernity but in obedience to the Bible and the Holy Spirit that the Lord is calling both women and men to serve as leaders and pastors in His church.

3. Stewardship. Friends believe that the Old Testament practice of bringing one-tenth (the tithe) of the increase of one's labor to the temple as God's storehouse is the most satisfactory basis for Christian Stewardship. Jesus commended sacrificial giving which exceeded this, implying that true giving extends beyond the tithe. Time, money, talents, and strength belong to the Lord. As His stewards, Christians hold them in trust to be used for His glory.

It is recommended that Friends should make their wills while in health and strength of judgment so that distribution of their estates may be done in justice and wisdom, to the satisfaction of their own minds. They are urged to consider financial needs of the various ministries of the local church and the Yearly Meeting and, where possible, remember them with suitable bequests.

4. **Use of Church Buildings.** Because church buildings have been dedicated to the service of God, and especially as places for His worship, Friends believe that they should be treated with care and respect. At times parts of these buildings may be used as meeting places for fellowship, but even at these times the buildings should be remembered as dedicated to the service of God. The primary purpose of the buildings should always be the worship of God, instruction in the Christian faith, development of Christian fellowship, and Christian service to the community. We encourage Friends to construct and maintain their worship facilities with prayerful consideration of their function, remembering the moderation and simplicity which is becoming to the testimony of Friends and to the Church of Jesus Christ.

5. **Business Practices.** Friends should seek divine direction in all their business affairs. They should undertake endeavors only after prayer and seeking God's guidance. While it is to be hoped that we will have adequate income, we must nevertheless remember that the search for riches is a threat to Christian life. Careful attention should be given to all our dealings in order not to bring dishonor to our testimony or to the church. Friends should be especially careful to pay debts and to fulfill all commitments. If business failures occur, we must do everything possible to fulfill all obligations.

E. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

1. **The Poor.** The Christian virtue of love should characterize Friends in caring for the material needs of the poor within our membership. Also, as means are available, such care should be extended to others' needs, remembering that we are admonished to do good to all, especially those of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10).

2. **Schools.** Friends should take real interest in the educational programs affecting their children and all children of our communities. We should work for the election of suitable members of the boards of education, the employment of teachers of Christian character and example, and the development of educational programs which consider the influence of their contents and activities on the children involved.

3. **Civil Government.** Friends are convinced that the New Testament requires the Christian to hold the government and its leaders in respect, and that the basic principles of government can be directly traced to the Scriptures. Therefore, it is necessary that we obey the laws of the nation insofar as they are not in conflict with our obedience to God. When it becomes necessary for Friends to disagree with the practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of concern for the promotion of righteousness and not out of delight in controversy or strife.

Friends should use the ballot, with prayer and guidance, to vote for candidates and measures which will promote righteousness, giving much consideration to the personal and spiritual qualifications of candidates regardless of political affiliation.

4. **Capital Punishment.** The Bible emphasizes the sacredness of human life and the worth of each person before God. Capital punishment, Friends feel, is a pre-emption of the authority of

God, the righteous Judge, over life. The restraint of evil can be more effectively handled by other methods than the death penalty.

5. **Peace and War.** The teaching of Jesus, the whole spirit of His gospel, and the provisions of His grace call people to live at peace with one another. During the first 300 years of the Christian church, its members abstained from military service as being a violation of the teachings of Christ. This attitude changed only when Constantine made Christianity the state religion and introduced the notion that it was right to fight in support of an officially Christian government. Since that time there has been division in the practice of Christians as to the support of war.

Friends renewed the testimony of the primitive church against war. George Fox said that he "lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars" and with eleven other Friends in 1660 declared publicly to King Charles II that "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever; and this is our testimony to the whole world--that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into truth, will never move us to fight and war, neither for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world--therefore, we cannot learn war any more." Standing upon this conviction, many Friends suffered imprisonment, cruelty, and death rather than violate their conscience.

Friends feel that life is sacred and that war and violence are not consistent with Christian principles. It is our firm conviction that war is wrong as a method of settling disputes, destructive of our highest values, and productive of the seeds of future wars. We, therefore, as a church, unequivocally support young Friends who as conscientious objectors to war refuse military service. And we are concerned to find alternative solutions based upon justice and righteousness for all peoples, and are deeply moved to participate in the new calls to peacemaking which are being sounded in our day. (See also pages 32-33).

6. **Oaths.** Friends seek to evidence Christian holiness by conducting their personal, family, business, and civic responsibilities with honesty. Personal integrity includes consistency of speech. In allegiance to Christ and obedience to His clear commands, Friends refrain from profanity of speech and from swearing to legal oaths. (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12). One should tell the truth whether under oath or not. A form of affirmation is given in the following paragraph.

("You do most solemnly and sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that the testimony you will give in the cause now in hearing will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and this you do under the pains and penalties of perjury.")

We are grateful that the civil authorities have long granted us, and all others of like mind, the right to this practice.

7. **Secret Societies.** Many organizations make attractive appeals for membership and involvement. Friends must study carefully such organizations--the time, commitment, and money required, as well as the likely influence of the organization upon them. Especially, we will then avoid affiliation with secret societies, which base their rituals on a distorted understanding of the Bible and directly or indirectly give Jesus Christ less than divine nature, even though they may appear to have spiritual value. The oathbound character of such societies seems not only unnecessary, but also likely to prove harmful to honesty.

8. Equality of Persons. Friends have long been convinced of the equality of all persons and find that Scripture compels us to this view. We are, therefore, concerned for those who are underprivileged, neglected, and victimized by injustice and persecution. Friends repudiate discrimination on the basis of sex, race, social class, or nationality. In all their dealings they seek to bind up the hurts of those who are injured, to be just, respectful, sensitive, and moved by the love of Christ. Any person should find freedom to worship and participate in the life of our congregation regardless of these differences. We witness to the dignity and worth of all before God.

In regard to racial intermarriage, Friends recognize the social problems involved and would counsel their youth accordingly. However, by Christian fellowship, they seek to allay the burden society often lays on interracial families.

Friends support the right of every person to enjoy access to public accommodations, employment on merit alone, use of qualified leadership, and suitable housing. Friends should support such concerns in all ways that are non-violent and that maintain respect for authority and law.

9. Stewardship of the Earth and its Resources. Friends believe that when God in the beginning gave man and woman dominion over the earth He did not grant them license to do whatever they might wish with its riches, but that rather He made them the stewards of what was and remains God's by creation and rulership. We, therefore, are permitted the use of the earth and its resources, but as stewards must use them wisely, carefully, and as under the eye of their owner. Unplanned increase of population and wasteful and destructive use of the earth's resources, Friends believe, are foreign to good stewardship. Moreover, the use of natural resources to support an extravagant style of life while others must exist in poverty and squalor is contrary to the Scriptures: "Whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (I John 3.17 NASB). Consequently, both in our own practice and in what we urge upon the governments of the world, Friends should be conscientious examples of acceptable stewardship.

10. Abortion. Friends believe that all life is a gift of God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4); therefore, when the matter of an abortion is being considered, neither the life of the mother nor of the unborn child is to be lightly treated. We hold that abortion on demand or for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment, or economic advantage is morally wrong.

We believe it may be employed therapeutically to safeguard the health or life of the mother, but only after spiritual, medical, and psychological counseling have been obtained.

Friends believe an appropriate and morally acceptable alternative to abortion is to arrange for immediate adoption upon birth. They believe that married couples have the right to exercise their preferences as to means of preventing or avoiding conception.

11. Homosexuality. Authoritatively, the Word of God declares that homosexuality is not God's will for His children. We are told in I Corinthians 6:9-10 that homosexuals shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The cause and downward progression of homosexuality is traced in Romans 1:21-32. It begins with failing to worship God and being unthankful and ends with encouraging others to

participate in evil. We believe we must stand against this evil and that God's judgment will come against those who practice and encourage such activity.

We are assured in I Corinthians 6:11 that the homosexual can be cleansed, set apart for the Lord's work, and made right in the sight of God. Through the blood of Christ, many such have been transformed and all such can be. Although we oppose homosexuality as a violation of our God-given sexual nature, we wish to make it known that we do not reject the homosexual as a person. We believe they are redeemable people for whom Christ died.

F. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CERTIAN ISSUES

1. **Security of the Believer.** Friends believe that the security of the believer, even for eternity, is indicated in God's Word and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit to the individual, but we do not hold this security to be unconditional. As repentance and faith are the human condition of acceptance of God's free offer of salvation, so obedience and faith are necessary to continuance in that salvation. (Hebrews 5:9, 1 John 2:4).

2. **Healing.** We believe that God provides divine healing in response to believing prayer, in ways which must be considered miraculous. There are also times when God does not heal. Though we do not understand this, the apparent lack of healing does not necessarily result from individual sin or lack of faith. (John 9:2-3). Despite this mystery we are deeply confident of the love and power of God and urge Friends to continue to pray for the healing of the sick. We also caution against teachings which are divisive and do not build the kingdom of God in love. We do not accept the view that a person is guaranteed to be divinely healed in this life as a part of the atonement.

3. **Gifts.** The Holy Spirit is the indwelling agent of leadership for each Christian. He always leads in harmony with the Holy Scriptures. Growth and maturity come as the Spirit is allowed to control the individual life, producing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Gifts, or abilities, are also given by the Spirit to be used to encourage and strengthen each other. (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4). While each gift is Spirit-given, Friends emphasize seeking the Giver of those gifts.

Those who claim any of the gifts should avoid the snare of assuming exalted spiritual power or authority. Such "holier than thou" attitudes are not in keeping with the true fruit of the Spirit.

As believers receive gifts, love will provide the motivation for the best use of each one; however, no one gift is given to all believers. (I Corinthians 12:11, 29-30). The evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life is the fruit resulting from His control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

4. **Glossolalia (Speaking in Tongues).** There are differences (among our members as among other Christians) of interpretation of the Scriptures which speak of glossolalia as to whether the term refers to actual languages or to ecstatic utterances and whether this is a valid gift for our time. Nevertheless, we agree on the following points:

- a. The will of God as revealed in the Scriptures is our conformity to His holy character as manifested in a holy life. All spiritual experiences, gifts, and fruit of the Spirit are means to that end. (Romans 8:29).

- b. Speaking in other tongues does not constitute the essential sign of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-31). The evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit, and especially divine love, emanating from a truly transformed life.
- c. "Speaking in tongues" should not be made an occasion of division or strife among us. (Galatians 5:22).
- d. In order to maintain unity in spite of our differences, we must practice mutual submission. In order to avoid becoming divisive, we should voluntarily refrain from certain freedoms, the practice of which may become a stumbling block to those for whom Christ died. (I Corinthians 8). We acknowledge that some use the gift of tongues in private devotion. However, it is our decision that we voluntarily refrain from the use of tongues in public services. If individuals, or churches are led by the Holy Spirit to use tongues in public services, we point to the explicit guidelines set forth in I Corinthians 14:26-28.

5. Cults and Related Practices. Friends believe that the numerous cults, such as Transcendental Meditation, the Hare Krishna movement, and the Unification Church led by Sun Myung Moon, preach other gospels than that of Jesus Christ and offer other saviors than Him. Some are based more or less openly on non-Christian religions such as Hinduism. We also repudiate the false interpretation of Scriptures put forth by such groups as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints), Unity and Christian Science. We, therefore, upon authority of Scripture (Matthew 24:4-5; Galatians 1:8-9), take our stand against all such false teachings.

Friends believe that all access to God is through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and that therefore the use of mediums, clairvoyants, fortune tellers, astrologers, and any other alleged means of extraordinary knowledge or help is contrary to the will of God.

We oppose all dabbling in spiritism, spirit possession and worship, and Satanism, as well as the denial of the reality of Satan. Rather, we believe in the existence of the Evil One, "that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan," (Revelation 20:2) who tempted our first parents to sin, and through their disobedience brought about the fall of our race, with all its attendant degeneracy, unhappiness, and misery. We believe that Satan has revealed this evil character and purpose in his mighty opposition to Christ in the temptations in the wilderness and to His reign in all ages. But we also believe that his power is limited, and that in God's own time he will be chained and finally cast into the lake of fire. (Genesis 3; Matthew 4:1; Job 1:6; Revelation 20:10).

CHAPTER V -- HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

SECTION I -- EXTRACT FROM GEORGE FOX'S LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS, 1671

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, the Creator of all things both in heaven and in earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise, and thanksgiving, both now and forevermore.

And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only-begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe that there is no other foundation to be laid than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who tasted death for every man, shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Savior, even the captain of our salvation, who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works; He is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification, and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. He is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:22,23).

He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." He rules in our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life, but of Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace, and peace; the author and finisher of our faith. This Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; He whom the high-priest raged against and

said, He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach a horrible lie, namely, "That his disciples came and stole him away by night whilst they slept." After He was arisen from the dead, the history of the acts of the apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

Concerning the Holy Scriptures we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy, Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who, as the Scripture itself declares, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:21). We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (He that fulfills them is Christ); and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," (II Timothy 3:16-17); and are able to make wise unto salvation, "through faith in Christ Jesus."

SECTION II -- DECLARATION OF FAITH

ISSUED BY THE RICHMOND CONFERENCE IN 1887

(N.B.: It should be understood that the quotations from Scripture are made from the King James Version unless stated to be from the American Standard Version.)

It is under a deep sense of what we owe to Him who has loved us that we feel called upon to offer a declaration of those fundamental doctrines of Christian truth that have always been professed by our branch of the Church of Christ.

Of God

We believe in one holy (Isaiah 6:3, 57:15), almighty (Genesis 17:1), all-wise (Romans 11:33, 16:27), and everlasting (Psalm 90:1,2) God the Father (Matthew 11:25-27), the Creator (Genesis 1:1) and Preserver (Job 7:20) of all things; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by whom all things are made (John 1:3), and by whom all things consist (Colossians 1:17); and in one Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son (John 15:26, 16:7), the Reprover (John 16:8) of the world, the Witness for Christ (John 15:26), and the Teacher (John 14:26), Guide (John 16:13) and Sanctifier (2 Thessalonians 2:13) of the people of God; and that these three are one in the eternal Godhead (Matthew 28:19, John 10:30, 17:21), to whom be honor, praise, and thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ

It is with reverence and thanksgiving that we profess our unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18). In Him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:4). He is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world

(John 1:9), through whom the light of truth in all ages has proceeded from the Father of lights (James 1:17). He is the eternal Word (John 1:1) who was with God and was God, revealing Himself in infinite wisdom and love, both as man's Creator (Colossians 1:13-16) and Redeemer (Colossians 1:14); for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on the earth, visible and invisible. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20), born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23-25, Luke 1:35), the Word was made flesh (John 1:14), and dwelt amongst men. He came in the fulness (Galatians 4:4) of the appointed time, being verily foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20) that He might fulfill (Isaiah 11:1-5, 52:13-15) the eternal counsel of the righteousness and love of God for the redemption of man (Isaiah 53). In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, veiling in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7) the brightness of His glory, that through Him the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4) toward man might appear in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); for us He endured (Isaiah 53:4, Luke 12:50, 19:41, 22:44) sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness (John 4:6), pain, unutterable anguish (Luke 22:43-44) of body and of soul, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Thus humbling Himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven, sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them, leaving us the one perfect example (1 Peter 2:21) of all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) in self-sacrificing love.

But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to His people. In Him is revealed, as true God and perfect man (Ephesians 4:13), a Redeemer, at once able to suffer and almighty to save. He became obedient (Philippians 2:8) unto death, even the death of the cross, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); in whom we have redemption through His blood (Ephesians 1:7) for the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. It is our joy to confess that the remission of sins which any partake of is only in and by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice and not otherwise. (Barclay's Apology, Propos. v. and vi. par. 15, p.141). He was buried and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:4) according to the Scriptures, becoming the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15:23) of them that sleep, and having shown Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3). He ascended into heaven, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 1:3, 9:24). With the apostles who beheld His ascension we rest in the assurance of the angelic messengers, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11, and see v. 7). With the apostle John, we would desire to unite in the words, "Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20). And now, whilst thus watching and waiting, we rejoice to believe that He is our King and Saviour. He is the only Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant (1 Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 11:15), who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and man offending (George Fox's Epistle to the Governor of Barbados); the great High Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable (Hebrews 4:14, 7:24). He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25). All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18). By Him the world shall be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:31); for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father (John 5:22,23). All that are in the tombs shall hear

His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28,29 ASV).

We reverently confess and believe that divine honor and worship are due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and His name to be called upon, as the primitive Christians did, because of the glorious oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer prayers and praises to God, nor receive from Him a gracious answer or blessing, but in and through his dear Son (Declaration of 1693, in Sewell's History, vol. 11, 379).

We would, with humble thanksgiving, bear an especial testimony to our Lord's perpetual dominion and power in His church. Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light, their forgiveness, and their joy. All are members of this church, by whatsoever name they may be called among men, who have been baptized by the one Spirit into the one body; who are builded as living stones upon Christ, the Eternal Foundation, and are united in faith and love in that fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Head (Ephesians 1:22). All its true members are made one in Him. They have washed their robes and made them white in His precious blood (Revelation 7:14), and He has made them priests unto God and His Father (Revelation 1:6). He dwells in their hearts by faith, and gives them of His peace. His will is their law, and in Him they enjoy the true liberty, a freedom from the bondage of sin.

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is, in the unity of the eternal Godhead, one with the Father and with the Son (Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14). He is the Comforter "Whom," saith Christ, "the Father will send in my name." (John 14:26). He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8). He testifies of and glorifies Jesus (John 16:14). It is the Holy Spirit who makes the evil manifest. He quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and opens the inward eye to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (Ephesians 2:1). Coming in the name and with the authority of the risen and ascended Saviour, He is the precious pledge of the continued love and care of our exalted King. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them, as a realized possession, to the believing soul (John 16:14). Dwelling in the hearts of believers (John 14:17), He opens their understandings that they may understand the Scriptures, and becomes, to the humbled and surrendered heart, the Guide, Comforter, Support, and Sanctifier.

We believe that the essential qualification for the Lord's service is bestowed upon His children through the reception and baptism of the Holy Ghost. This Holy Spirit is the seal of reconciliation to the believer in Jesus (Ephesians 1:13,14), the witness to his adoption into the family of the redeemed (Romans 8:15,16), the earnest and the foretaste of the full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

We own no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We believe in no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness but the influence of the Holy Spirit of God bestowed on mankind in various measures and degrees, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence, which, in an especial manner, gives man pre-eminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him, in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God, as a being not only intelligent but responsible, for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a joyful sound. The Holy Spirit must ever be

distinguished both from the conscience which He enlightens and from the natural faculty of reason, which when unsubjected to His holy influence, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is the conscience to our inner being, the organ by which we see; and as both light and life are essential to the eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. One with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit can never disown or dishonor our once crucified and now risen and glorified Redeemer. We disavow all professed illumination or spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem.

The Holy Scriptures

It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that, therefore, there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing ye might have life through His name." (John 20:31). The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound as Christians to accept and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions. No one can be required to believe, as an article of faith, any doctrine which is not contained in them; and whatsoever any one says or does, contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion. To the Christian the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. It is to be read in the light and completeness of the New; thus will its meaning be unveiled, and the humble disciple will be taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole and the many-sidedness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; His doctrine is learned in the doing of His will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper and richer experience of His truth and love.

Man's Creation and Fall

It pleased God, in His wisdom and goodness, to create man out of the dust of the earth, and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul; formed after the image and likeness of God, capable of fulfilling the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker (Genesis 2:7, 1:26,27). Being free to obey or to disobey, he fell into transgression, through unbelief, under the temptation of Satan (Genesis 3:1-7), and thereby lost that spiritual life of righteousness in which he was created; and so death passed upon him as the inevitable consequence of his sin (Romans 5:12). As the children of fallen Adam, all mankind bear his image. They partake of his nature and are involved in the consequences of his fall. To every member of every successive generation, the words of the Redeemer are alike applicable, "Ye must be born again." (John 3.7) But while we hold these views of the lost condition of man in the fall, we rejoice to believe that sin is not imputed to any until they transgress the divine law after sufficient capacity has been given to understand it; and that infants, though inheriting this fallen nature, are saved in the infinite mercy of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Justification and Sanctification

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). We believe that justification is of God's free grace, through which, upon repentance and faith, He pardons our sins and imparts to us a new life. It is received, not for any works or righteousness that we have done (Titus 3:5), but in the unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Through faith in Him and the shedding of His precious blood, the guilt of sin is taken away, and we stand reconciled to God. The offering up of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation the pardon of sin involves no abrogation or relaxation of the law of holiness. It is the vindication and establishment of that law (Romans 3:31), in virtue of the free and righteous submission of the Son of God Himself to all its requirements. He, the unchangeably just, proclaims Himself the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:26). From age to age, the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery and a rock of offense to the unbelief and pride of man's fallen nature; yet, to the humble penitent whose heart is broken under the convincing power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that death. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5), and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6), his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the exceeding sinfulness of sin for which the Saviour died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he will joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by Whom we have now received the atonement (Romans 5:11).

We believe that in connection with justification is regeneration; that they who come to this experience know that they are not their own (I Corinthians 6:19), that being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we are saved by His life (Romans 5:10); a new heart is given and new desires; old things are passed away, and we become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17) through faith in Christ Jesus. Our wills being surrendered to His holy will, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:21).

Sanctification is experienced in the acceptance of Christ in living faith for justification, insofar as the pardoned sinner, through faith in Christ, is clothed with a measure of His righteousness and receives the Spirit of promise; for, as saith the Apostle, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (I Corinthians 6:11). We rejoice to believe that the provisions of God's grace are sufficient to deliver from the power, as well as from the guilt, of sin and to enable His believing children always to triumph in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14). How full of encouragement is the declaration, "According to your faith be it unto you." (Matthew 9:29). Whosoever submits himself wholly to God, believing and appropriating His promises and exercising faith in Christ Jesus, will have his heart continually cleansed from all sin by His precious blood and, through the renewing, refining power of the Holy Spirit, be kept in conformity to the will of God, will love Him with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:2). Thus, in its full experience sanctification is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. To this we are everyone called that we may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life (Luke 1:74, 75). It was the prayer of the apostle for the believers, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that called you who also will do it." (I Thessalonians 5:23,24). Yet the most holy Christian is still

liable to temptation, is exposed to the subtle assaults of Satan, and can only continue to follow holiness as he humbly watches unto prayer and is kept in constant dependence upon his Saviour, walking in the light (1 John 1:7), in the loving obedience of faith.

The Resurrection and Final Judgment

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that there shall be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15), and that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ whom He hath ordained (Acts 17:31). For, as saith the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10).

We sincerely believe not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen and sinful state here but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with Him in glory, but that all the wicked, who live in rebellion against the light of grace and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. The soul of every man and woman shall be reserved in its own distinct and proper being and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:44); that being first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said, "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53), the change shall be such as will accord with the declaration, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." (1 Corinthians 15:50). We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality, and shall be the children of God, being the children of resurrection. (Luke 20:36) (See also Declaration of 1693, Sewell's History, vol. 11, 383-384.).

"Our citizenship is in heaven" (ASV), from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself (Philippians 3:20,21).

We believe that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; according to the declaration of our compassionate Redeemer, to whom the judgment is committed. "These shall go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life." (ASV, Matthew 25:46).

Baptism

We would express our continued conviction that our Lord appointed no outward rite or ceremony for observance in His church. We accept every command of our Lord, in what we believe to be its genuine import, as absolutely conclusive. The question of the use of outward ordinances is with us a question, not as to the authority of Christ but as to His real meaning.

We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is under the Christian dispensation but one baptism (Ephesians 4:4,5), even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body (I Corinthians 12:13. ASV). This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (1 Peter 3:21), but that inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the

experience of His love and power as the risen and ascended Saviour. No baptism in outward water can satisfy the description of the apostle of being buried with Christ by baptism unto death (Romans 6:4). It is with the Spirit alone that any can thus be baptized. In this experience the announcement of the forerunner of our Lord is fulfilled, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matthew 3:11). In this view we accept the commission of our blessed Lord as given in Matthew 28:18-20, ASV: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This commission, as we believe, was not designed to set up a new ritual under the new covenant, or to connect the initiation into a membership--in its nature essentially spiritual--with a mere ceremony of a typical character. Otherwise it was not possible for the Apostle Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (2 Corinthians 11:5), to have disclaimed that which would in that case have been of the essence of his commission when he wrote, "Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel." (1 Corinthians 1:17) Whenever an external ceremony is commanded, the particulars, the mode, and incidents of that ceremony become of its essence. There is an utter absence of these particulars in the text before us, which confirms our persuasion that the commission must be construed in connection with the spiritual power which the risen Lord promised should attend the witness of His apostles and of the church to Him and which, after Pentecost, so mightily accompanied their ministry of the word and prayer, that those to whom they were sent were introduced into an experience wherein they had a saving knowledge of, and living fellowship with, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Supper of the Lord

Intimately connected with the conviction already expressed is the view that we have ever maintained as to the true supper of the Lord. We are well aware that our Lord was pleased to make use of a variety of symbolical utterances, but He often gently upbraided His disciples for accepting literally what He had intended only in its spiritual meaning. His teaching, as in His parables or in the command to wash one another's feet, was often in symbols, and ought ever to be received in the light of His own emphatic declaration, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63). The old covenant was full of ceremonial symbols; the new covenant, to which our Saviour alluded at the last supper, is expressly declared by the prophet to be "not according to the old." (Jeremiah 31:32, Hebrews 8:9). We cannot believe that in setting up this new covenant the Lord Jesus intended an institution out of harmony with the spirit of this prophecy. The eating of His body and the drinking of His blood cannot be an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of their Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives to drink of the fullness that is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking that is the true supper of the Lord.

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." (John 14:16). Convincing of sin, testifying of Jesus, taking of the things of Christ, this blessed Comforter communicates to the believer and to the church in a gracious, abiding manifestation the REAL PRESENCE of the Lord. As the great remembrancer through whom the promise is fulfilled, He needs no ritual or

priestly intervention in bringing to the experience of the true commemoration and communion. "Behold," saith the risen Redeemer, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me." (Revelation 3:20). In an especial manner, when assembled for congregational worship, are believers invited to the festival of the Saviour's peace and, in a united act of faith and love, unfettered by any outward rite or ceremonial, to partake together of the body that was broken and of the blood that was shed for them without the gates of Jerusalem. In such a worship they are enabled to understand the words of the apostle as expressive of a sweet and most real experience: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (I Corinthians 10:16,17).

Public Worship

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms; it may be without words as well as with them, but it must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We recognize the value of silence, not as an end but as a means toward the attainment of the end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing but of holy expectation before the Lord. Having become His adopted children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our privilege to meet together and unite in the worship of Almighty God and to wait upon Him for the renewal of our strength, for communion one with another, for the edification of believers in the exercise of various spiritual gifts, and for the declaration of the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted who may gather with us. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ there is a church, and Christ, the living Head, in the midst of them. Through His mediation, without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality, is the Father to be approached and reverently worshipped. The Lord Jesus has forever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law by offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary and graciously provided spiritual offerings for the service of His temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song and melody of the heart (Ephesians 5:19), the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love--these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is pleased to prepare by His Spirit in the hearts of them that receive Him and to present with acceptance unto God.

By the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, He, as the Head of the church, alone selects and qualifies those who are to present His messages or engage in other service for Him; and hence, we cannot commit any formal arrangement to anyone in our regular meetings for worship. We are well aware that the Lord has provided a diversity of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6) for the needs both of the church and of the world, and we desire that the church may feel her responsibility, under the government of her Great Head, in doing her part to foster these gifts and in making arrangements for their proper exercise.

It is not for individual exaltation, but for mutual profit, that the gifts are bestowed (1 Corinthians 12:7); and every living church, abiding under the government of Christ, is humbly

and thankfully to receive and exercise them in subjection to her Holy Head. The church that quenches the Spirit and lives to itself alone must die.

We believe the preaching of the Gospel to be one of the chief means, divinely appointed, for the spreading of the glad tidings of life and salvation through our crucified Redeemer, for the awakening and conversion of sinners, and for the comfort and edification of believers. As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him; and that, as in the primitive church so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men, agreeably to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17). Respecting which the apostle declares, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39). As the gift is freely received, so it is to be freely exercised (Matthew 10:8; see also Acts 20:33-35), in simple obedience to the will of God.

Spiritual gifts, precious as they are, must not be mistaken for grace; they add to our responsibility, but do not raise the minister above his brethren or sisters. They must be exercised in continued dependence upon our Lord, and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and His grace exalted. "He that is greatest among you," said our Lord and Master, "let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth." (Luke 22:26,27).

While the church cannot confer spiritual gifts, it is its duty to recognize and foster them and to promote their efficiency by all means in its power. And while, on the one hand, the Gospel should never be preached for money (Acts 8:20, 20:33-35), on the other, it is the duty of the church to make such provision that it shall never be hindered for want of it.

The church, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) Knowing that it is the Spirit of God that can alone prepare and qualify the instruments who fulfill this command, the true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal, and when he hears the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me." (Isaiah 6:8).

Prayer and Praise

Prayer is the outcome of our sense of need and of our continual dependence upon God. He who uttered the invitation, "Ask and it shall be given you," (Matthew 7:7) is Himself the Mediator and High Priest who, by His Spirit, prompts the petition and presents it with acceptance before God. With such an invitation, prayer becomes the duty and privilege of all who are called by His name. Prayer is, in the awakened soul, the utterance of the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). and at every stage of the believer's course, prayer is essential to his spiritual life. A life without prayer is a life practically without God. The Christian's life is a continual asking. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies from Him who delights to bless. Prayer is not confined to the closet. When uttered in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it becomes an important part of public worship, and whenever the Lord's people meet together in His name, it is their privilege to wait upon Him for the spirit of grace and supplications (Zechariah 12:10).

A life of prayer cannot be other than a life of praise. As the peace of Christ reigns in the church, her living members accept all that they receive as from His pure bounty, and each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of His house, whether as individuals, in families, or in congregations, they will be still praising Him (Psalm 84:4), heart answering to heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Psalm 103:1).

Liberty of Conscience in Its Relation to Civil Government

That conscience should be free and that in matters of religious doctrine and worship man is accountable only to God are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament, and which are confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel and by the example of our Lord and His disciples. To rule over the conscience and to command the spiritual allegiance of his creature man are the high and sacred prerogatives of God alone. In religion every act ought to be free. A forced worship is plainly a contradiction in terms, under that dispensation in which the worship of the Father must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

We have ever maintained that it is the duty of Christians to obey the enactments of civil government, except those which interfere with our allegiance to God. We owe much to its blessings. Through it we enjoy liberty and protection in connection with law and order. Civil government is a divine ordinance (Romans 13:1, 1 Peter 2:13-16), instituted to promote the best welfare of man; hence magistrates are to be regarded as God's ministers who should be a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well. Therefore, it is with us a matter of conscience to render them respect and obedience in the exercise of their proper functions.

Marriage

Marriage is an institution graciously ordained by the Creator Himself for the help and continuance of the human family. It is not a mere civil contract and ought never to be entered upon without a reference to the sanction and blessing of Him who ordained it. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life (Matt. 19:5,6), designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmates to each other in things temporal and spiritual. To this end it should imply concurrence in spiritual as well as temporal concerns and should be entered upon discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of the Lord.

Peace

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Lawgiver and the whole spirit of His Gospel, and that no plea of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe to Him who hath said, "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27). In enjoining this love and the forgiveness of injuries, He who has bought us to Himself has not prescribed for man precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice, or of which the practice is to be postponed until all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent now, and that we have in the prophetic Scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application not only to individuals, but to nations also (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:1). When nations conform their laws to this divine teaching, wars must necessarily cease.

We would, in humility but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace in strict conformity with His command.

Oaths

We hold it to be the inalienable privilege of the disciple of the Lord Jesus that his statements concerning matters of fact within his knowledge should be accepted, under all circumstances, as expressing his belief as to the fact asserted. We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matt. 5:34); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well being. This command, in our persuasion, applies not to profane swearing only but to judicial oaths also. It abrogates any previous permission to the contrary, and is, for the Christian, absolutely conclusive.

The First Day of the Week

Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought to be at all times present with the Christian, we would express our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that He has been pleased to honor the setting apart of one day in seven for the purpose of holy rest, religious duties, and public worship; and we desire that all under our name may avail themselves of this great privilege as those who are called to be risen with Christ and to seek those things that are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1). May the release thus granted from other occupations be diligently improved. On this day of the week especially ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures and for waiting upon the Lord; and we trust that, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of the day may be so ordered as not to frustrate the gracious provision thus made for us by our Heavenly Father, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship or for private retirement and devotional reading.

* * * * *

In presenting this declaration of our Christian faith, we desire that all our members may be encouraged afresh, in humility and devotedness, to renewed faithfulness in fulfilling their part in the great mission of the church, and through the Church to the world around us in the name of our crucified Redeemer. Life from Christ, life in Christ, must ever be the basis of life for Christ. For this we have been created and redeemed, and by this alone can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied.

CHAPER VI -- EVANGELICAL FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL

CONSTITUTION OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL (Amended and Adopted November 2008)

Preamble

Arising out of a God-given concern to participate fully as Friends in seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness through the church, we herein set forth a constitution to serve as a guide for faith and action by Evangelical Friends Church International. In so doing, we declare our belief in the value of Christian unity for the spiritual welfare and for the advancement of the program of the Evangelical Friends Church worldwide.

Article – Name

The name of this organization shall be: Evangelical Friends Church International.

Article II – Purpose

The organization shall be an international alliance of Friends churches that officially accept and communicate the evangelical doctrines of the Christian faith as herein defined. This purpose of the alliance will be seen:

1. by working together under policies and arrangements herein stated,
2. by serving together in Christian ministries based upon Biblical principles,
3. by prayerfully investing both personal and material resources in order to fulfill the Great Commission,
4. by seeking continuously to discern both the call of God and the need of humanity as it is expressed in diverse cultures and respond appropriately in a Christian manner.

Article III – Objectives

1. Renewal. To motivate a renewed sensitivity to God's voice through scripture and contemporary needs by persistent waiting on the Lord and total availability to the Holy Spirit for living the life of Christ in and through us.
2. Evangelism. To share creative and effective methods of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world with those who have not received Him as Savior and Lord.
3. Fellowship. To stimulate genuine sharing of joys and burdens with one another in the family of Friends, locally, nationally and internationally.
4. Leadership. To develop individuals whose God-given call and vision, spiritual gifts and Christ-like lifestyles command respect as servant leaders among God's people.

Article IV – Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible:

We believe that the 66 books of the Holy Bible were given by the inspiration of God; that there can be no appeal from these Scriptures to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ; that the Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures must ever be its true interpreter as Christ works through the disciplined

and dedicated minds of those within His Church; that any professed guidance that is contrary to these Scriptures must be counted as a delusion.

God:

We believe in one God, revealed through the Holy Spirit in the person of Jesus Christ; that He is both the creator and preserver of all things visible and invisible; that He alone is worthy of worship, honor, glory, dominion, praise, and thanksgiving both now and forevermore; and that in the unity of the Godhead, there exists three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, inseparable in divinity, power, glory and eternity.

Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God; that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; that He is the express image of the invisible God; and that He combines within Himself both the nature of God and the nature of man in one perfect indivisible personality, the God-man.

We believe that He was crucified as a substitutionary atonement for us and for the sins of the whole world, making provision whereby each person may find the forgiveness of sins, the power for a new life, and be brought back into a perfect relationship with the Father.

We believe that He arose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, making intercession for us, and that He will come to earth again to receive His Church unto Himself and to judge the world in righteousness.

Holy Spirit:

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the Trinity, proceeding from both Father and Son, but equal with them in authority, power, and glory; that He convicts the world of sin, imparts life to the penitent believer, sanctifies the child of God, empowers the disciple for service to others, and enables each one by His indwelling presence to love God supremely.

People:

We believe that God created people as male and female in His own image; that they enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their maker and that their whole life centered in the person of God. We believe that people fell from this original state by an act of transgression; that in this fall they suffered the immediate loss of their perfect relationship to God, making self the center of their life; and that in this act they suffered immediate spiritual death. All people are born in this disposition to sin. We own no principle inherent naturally by which they may be saved, except by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as a provision for all people.

Salvation:

We believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, people can be recovered from their fallen state through diving enlightenment, forgiveness of sin, regeneration and sanctification of their affection, and the final glorification of their bodies; that in this life they can love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, that they can live in victory over known sin and enjoy unbroken fellowship with the Heavenly Father; and that once more their whole lives may center in and revolve around their Creator and Redeemer.

We believe the experience of sanctification is the work of God's grace by which affections are purified and exalted to a supreme love to God and others, and the believer is empowered to witness of the living Christ. This is accomplished by the filling with the Holy Spirit in the life of a dedicated and believing child of God; that this is both an act in which the heart is purified by faith and a process in which the life is continuously disciplined into paths of holiness. By submission and availability to Jesus Christ, people become channels for Christ to do His work in this present age.

The Church:

We believe that all those persons who repent of their sins, believe in and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, are born again into His kingdom by the Holy Spirit, and that these constitute the Church of Jesus Christ. This Church we believe to be spiritual in nature, universal in scope, holy in character, and redemptive in her life and purpose.

We believe that wherever two or three are gathered together regularly and faithfully in the name of Christ, He is truly present in the person of the Holy Spirit and that such an assembly is a local church, the visible expression of His body and the Church universal.

We believe that believers must relate themselves to the local and visible body of Christ being fitly framed together with others into a holy temple in the Lord and built together for a habitation of His Holy Spirit.

Christian Ministries:

We believe that in the church, the believer is committed to both the worship and the work of God; that this work involved not only personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but the ministry of evangelism and teaching; that in this commission of Christ every believer is involved in the stewardship of the kingdom, and that is fulfilled only the faithful service in and through the fellowship of His church; and that this work is continuous until Christ comes again calling the Church unto Himself. We believe that all Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed within a sinful world, not returning evil for evil, but in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace.

We believe that in the fellowship of His body, the Holy Spirit gives to every member a gift to be exercised for the mutual advantage of every member in the body, and for the influence of the Church upon those outside; the ministry is a special calling given to certain ones whom God ordains for a service of leadership in His Church; that this service may be that of pastoring, teaching, evangelizing, administration, or other kinds of service to humanity.

Liberty:

Regarding Christian liberty we recognize that among Evangelical Friends and among the larger body of evangelical Christians there are minor differences of faith and practice, due in part to historical and cultural differences and our imperfections. We look forward to the time when we shall all come into a greater unity of the faith. Until then, we believe that in biblical essentials there must be unity, that in nonessentials there must be liberty, but in all things there must be charity.

Spiritual Realities:

We believe that both Christian baptism and communion are spiritual realities which are not dependent upon physical and outward ordinances; that baptism is an inward receiving of the Holy Spirit in which He becomes Lord over all – guiding, cleansing, empowering, and in general, representing God to us in immediate experience; that communion is the daily receiving and realization of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; that this communion is dependent not only upon the condition of the believer walking daily in the light of Christ but also in the historic act of Christ on Calvary as His body was broken and blood shed once and for all for us; that Christ thus becomes a daily personal spiritual reality known immediately in Christian experience; and that through Him and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, God and divine realities are known experientially and immediately.

Resurrection and Judgment:

We believe in the second coming of Christ; that at His coming the dead shall be resurrected, some to everlasting glory and others to everlasting condemnation; that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive recompense for the things done in the body; that the judgment of the blessed shall be unto heaven, and the judgment of the lost shall be unto hell; that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; that this judgment is in the hands of our compassionate Redeemer, who does all things after the counsel of his wisdom, love and holiness.

Article V – Membership

Any Yearly Meeting of Friends, or any organized Friends group of churches, may apply for membership in Evangelical Friends Church International and will be accepted provided there is official agreement with the doctrines and policies of Evangelical Friends Church International and the Regional Coordinating Council of the respective region approves such application.

For a single international or regional event, a non-member yearly meeting or Friends group of churches who agrees with the Statement of Faith may participate on a temporary basis. Their financial support will be proportionate for this event. Planning and participation will last for this single event only.

Article VI – Organization

Membership shall be under a two level system.

Level I – Membership in Evangelical Friends Church International by geographical region, i.e.:

EFC – AFRICA

EFC – ASIA

EFC – LATIN AMERICA

EFC – NORTH AMERICA

EFC – EUROPE

It shall be directed by an International Council composed of the Director of each region, plus an International Director to be nominated by them and approved by each regional Coordinating Council.

Level II – Membership in respective regions as a yearly meeting or organized Friends group within any of the regions. It shall have a controlling body to be known as the Coordinating Council and is made up of representatives of member yearly meetings, as determined by each respective region.

There shall be in addition an Executive Committee of each Regional Coordinating Council composed of the general superintendents or their equivalent, and a member-at-large of each member yearly meeting, or any organized Friends group of churches.

Article VII – Commissions

Commissions may be established in a respective region by the Regional Coordinating Council to give impetus and direction to the special areas of concern. Specifically, such commissions shall follow the general departmental concerns of the member churches. Each commission shall organize from its own members, with a Chairman, vice-Chairman, and Secretary. Also, it may appoint a Treasurer.

All official minutes and actions of each commission shall be forwarded promptly to the Director of each Regional Coordinating Council for final disposition. There shall be a close cooperative working relationship between each commission and the Coordinating Council.

Any commission may also be open for participation by individuals with expertise from corresponding yearly meeting departments provided both the commission and the Executive Committee shall approve such affiliation, but without membership in the Regional Coordinating Council.

Each commission shall draw up guidelines or a constitution for its own use in providing stability and continuity to its work and program.

Article VIII – Officers

Level I – The International Council of Evangelical Friends Church International shall be composed of the Regional Directors and shall organize every three years by appointing the International Director. The other officers of Assistant International Director, Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed from among themselves. The officers shall be limited to not more than three years.

Level II – The Regional Coordinating Council shall organize annually by appointing the following officers: Regional Director, Assistant Regional Director, Secretary, and Treasurer, with the Regional Director as ex-officio member of each commission. These officers shall be nominated from the Executive Committee by a nominating committee of three named by the Regional coordinating Council and shall also serve as the officers of the Executive Committee.

As need may arise, the Coordinating Council may appoint, as stipulated under Article IX, Level II, paragraph 1 such administrative personnel as may be deemed advisable. Such persons shall be well qualified by natural ability, experience and Christian character, enabling them to act in the best interest for the entire cause of Evangelical Friends.

Article IX – Policies

The following policies are accepted as guides for Evangelical Friends Church International.

Level I:

- (1) The International Council shall be empowered to appoint task force members to plan a specific event that is to be international in scope. Otherwise, all organized gatherings shall be on regional levels and shall be planned and directed by the respective Regional Coordinating Council.
- (2) Funding for international events shall be raised from the entire membership of Evangelical Friends Church International.

The following policies are accepted as guides for the future development of a respective region;

- (1) The Regional Coordinating Council shall be empowered to take actions in areas of Christian concern that are delegated to it by the member yearly meetings, with the exception that action involving the appointment of administrative personnel, major policy changes, budgets, and amendments are subject to the approval of member groups.
- (2) All decisions made by the Regional Coordinating Council shall be in accordance with the Friends policy of seeking, through prayer and discussion, the mind of the Lord, which shall be discerned as the sense of the meeting by the one in charge. Those who disagree, after extended discussion and prayer, may stand aside from the decision allowing the others to move ahead. If those who disagree with an action want their opposition on record, they may register their concerns in the official minute, which must be reported.
- (3) Member churches shall be kept informed on financial needs in the operation of the respective region and may support the united program by whatever methods may be deemed advisable, whether by budgetary or freewill contributions. In cases where fixed expenses are involved, the requests for finances should be met on a proportionate basis. The Regional Coordinating Council shall be responsible for receiving and considering all financial needs and askings of the various commissions, and when approved it shall forward such appeals to the member churches through proper channels.

Article X – Budget

Level I – All budgets which have been approved by Evangelical Friends Church International for specific international events shall be underwritten by each member yearly meeting and organized Friends group on a formula basis that takes into consideration applicable factors, including (a) the membership of each one, and (b) ability to pay based on per capita gross national product for each country represented. These apportionments shall be paid into the treasurer of Evangelical Friends Church International.

Level II – Each region shall establish its own annual budget with approval by its Regional Coordinating Council which shall be underwritten by member yearly meetings and organized Friends groups in the region on a formula basis determined by yearly meeting memberships.

Article XI – Records

Official minutes of all actions taken shall be carefully kept and preserved by the International Council, each Regional Coordinating Council and the commissions. Careful records of receipts and expenditures of the Councils or commission shall be kept by their

respective treasurers, and the books audited annually. Audit reports shall be forwarded to each member church.

Article XII - Amendments

The power to amend the constitution may be initiated by the Coordinating Council of any regions at its regularly held meeting.

Amendments, upon approval by the recommending Regional Coordinating Council, shall then be presented to all other Regional Coordinating Councils for similar action.

Upon approval by each Regional Coordinating Council, amendments to this constitution shall be come final upon approval of the International Coordinating Council.

Article XIII – Bylaws

The International Coordinating Council is authorized to adopt bylaws and job descriptions.

Article XIV – Dissolution

If it s found desirable to dissolve Evangelical Friends Church International, it shall be done by approval of the Regional Councils and International Council. The International Council shall supervise the distribution of assets to member yearly meetings and groups of Friends Churches on a proportionate basis.