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# **Faith and Practice**

The Book of Discipline

**Friends Ministry Center**

2018 W Maple St

Wichita, KS 67213

July 2022  
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## **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 powered by Fox's Pendle Hill Vision of many to be gathered in and the tireless efforts of Fox and members of the Valiant Sixty who spread the Gospel everywhere.

After the evangelistic fervor of the first century the second generation of Friends settled into a period known as Quietism and focused mostly on their own spiritual development. However, even in this time of quiet they were extremely involved in addressing social issues of their day.

**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 Native Americans), 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. 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. 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 in government 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. What was Indiana Yearly Meeting is now two separate Yearly Meetings— Indiana Yearly Meeting and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. 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 comprised 15.4% of the Friends in the United States and Canada. A new yearly meeting not affiliated with any larger Friends group; the Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting was formed of former Northwest Yearly Meeting churches in 2020.

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.

As mentioned above the yearly meetings with dual membership comprised 15.4% of the total Friends membership in 2000. In addition, the number of affiliated Yearly Meetings and the percentage of their membership of total Friends in the United States and Canada in 2000 were 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 either in Wichita or Haviland, Kansas. 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 refugee 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 Part V, Chapter II).

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, sports and recreation ministries, business, education, and psychology, and nursing. From 1996 to 2008 the college offered Home College Courses making available college level classes in Bible and ministry that could be completed at home. The college also operated 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. Both programs have been replaced by an online program now serving students around the world with most of the majors offered at the college. Barclay College has had a master's program since 2011.

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 multid 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 campgrounds, 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
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 visits 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
1845	Wilburite-Gurneyite (Conservative-Progressive) separation in New England
1827-1904	Further Conservative separations in Ohio, Iowa, 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, KS
  
- 1900 Organization of Friends General Conference
- 1902 Organization of Five Years Meeting; beginning of Friends Africa Mission in Kenya
- 1917 Beginning of American Friends Service Committee
- 1934 Beginning of Friends Africa Gospel Mission in Burundi
- 1937 Beginning of Friends World Committee for Consultation
- 1943 Beginning of 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 Evangelical Friends International 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 Gospel-centric New Testament doctrines are essential to Christianity. Fundamental truths considered as vital and life-giving are as follows: 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 following pages outline these beliefs. For a more complete statement on essential doctrines, refer to the historical documents (Part V, Chapter VI, Secs. I-II), or to books listed in the annotated bibliography, (Part V, Chapter I).

1. **The Bible-** The Holy Bible was given by the direct inspiration of God and is sufficient to inform people of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 20:31). The Bible is the written authority by which all guidance should be measured for truth (Psalm 19:7-14). God's Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scriptures, also interprets them, working through those yielded to Him within His Church (2 Peter 1:20-21). Genuine guidance from God is in accord with the Holy Scriptures (Acts 17:11).
2. **God-** There is one sovereign God who is revealed through the Bible in the person of His son, Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 6:4; Hebrews 1:3; John 1:18). God is the Maker and Preserver of all things; He alone is worthy of worship (Genesis 1-2; Nehemiah 9:6; Exodus 34:14; Colossians 1:16-17). 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 (Hebrews 1:3; John 1:18). He was divine and yet human, being conceived by God's Spirit and born of a virgin (Matthew 1:20). 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 (Hebrews 5:7-10; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Romans 3:24-26; 1 John 2:2). 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 (Mark 16:19; Hebrews 7:25). When Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will receive His Church and judge the world (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Romans 2:16).
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 (John 15:26; John. 16:13-15; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18). The Holy Spirit convinces people of their sin, gives life to penitent believers, and sanctifies the child of God (John 16:8; John 3:5; Acts 15:8-9; 1 Peter 1:2). He enables one to love God supremely and to give evidence of the Spirit's presence in their lives (Galatians 5:22-23). 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 (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

5. **People-** Created in the image of God, at first man and woman enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their Maker (Genesis 1:26, 3:8-9). By their disobedience they incurred the displeasure of God and the penalty of spiritual death (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6-24). Consequently, all are born with a sinful nature; there is no inherent principle which naturally leads people to salvation outside the atoning provision of Jesus Christ for all mankind (Ephesians 2:3). 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 (Isaiah 53:6; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 2:2).

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 (1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 4:16).

6. **Salvation-** Salvation is a personal matter between people and their Maker (Philippians 2:12-13). It consists of forgiveness for sins as well as sanctification or the cleansing of sinful human nature (Titus 3:7; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 1:18). People can be redeemed because of the atoning death of Jesus Christ and the direct work of the Spirit (1 Peter 3:18). The Holy Spirit restores people to fellowship with God the Father and enables them to love Him wholeheartedly (Hebrew 12:2-3; Ephesians 3:16-17). Salvation does not depend on outward ceremonies or symbols (John 4:21-24; Matthew 3:11).

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 (Isaiah 44:3; 1 Corinthians 6:11; John 14:15-17). The believer is thus empowered to witness to the living Christ (Acts 1:8). 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 (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 6:10-13).

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 (John 3:5). These persons make up the true Church of Jesus Christ which is spiritual in nature and universal in scope (Matthew 16:18). By His Spirit, Christ is present whenever two or three people meet together in His name (Matthew 18:20). 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 (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).

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 (Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 10:23-33).

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 (Romans 8:23). 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 (Revelation 19:11-20). The dead shall be resurrected, some to eternal life, others to everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2). All shall be judged by God and receive just recompense for their deeds (Hebrews 9:27). The blessed ones shall live forever in heaven, but the lost suffer eternally in hell (Matthew 25:31-46).

## Section II – Faith in Action

### *A – Testimonies Regarding Sacred Worship*

1. **Prayer-** No practice in Christian living is more often spoken of in the Scripture than prayer, both as duty and as privilege. The Bible gives examples of and instruction in this practice. 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 to God. Reading them, the Christian learns of the rich rewards from such a practice. Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our sure example in holy living often gave Himself to prayer. 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 (1 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 for Christians. 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.

Public worship not only helps Christians in their spiritual growth, but also serves as the focal point of the church's local ministry and is a testimony to the surrounding community of the importance of worshipping God. As such, our members should attend the services of their congregation regularly and faithfully. They should impress upon their children the same religious practice, believing that they will aid in leading their children to salvation, a growing faith, and to the worship of God.

From the beginning of His earthly life (Matthew 2:2) and throughout the ages of time (Revelation 4:1011), 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 nor 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 Sacraments-** True baptism is the inward receiving of God's Spirit by asking in faith for Him to become 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.

As Friends, we are compelled to grant liberty to one another in areas that are not essential to salvation, including the use (or non-use) of the physical elements in the observance of communion and baptism. Individuals and congregations throughout Evangelical Friend Church-North America should look to the example of Jesus Christ, search the Scriptures, and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in how they view and participate in the sacramental life of the Church, while demonstrating respect for how the Spirit of God may lead others on this issue. As Evangelical Friends we affirm: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

\*At the 2019 EFC-MAYM Ministry Conference, this topic was discussed in great detail, leading to the following minute: *Mid-America Friends continues to believe that communion and baptism are inward works of the Holy Spirit that can never be supplanted by the outward signs, but can be supported by them when practiced by Friends, both individually and collectively, as an act of Christ-centered, Spirit-led worship.*

### ***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, could potentially hinder their Christian growth and witness. Therefore, making right decisions about such matters will determine their growth in life and witness. Knowing that growing Christians have a 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 pastors and elders,

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 elders 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 reconciliation (1 Peter 1:22; Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 4:21; Matthew 5:23-25).

2. **Simplicity of Living-** Because the pressure to follow a style of life like that of the non-Christian society is so great upon Christians, Friends insist that our citizenship is not of this world. The New Testament command (Romans 12:2), "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.

- **Weddings.** Since the wedding ceremony is solemn and holy, Friends feel that it should be simple and reverent. 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.
- **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.
- **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 (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, C,1, A).

3. **Unwholesome Habits-** Friends should be especially watchful against being involved in unwholesome habits. Both 2 Corinthians 7:1, where we are instructed to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and 1 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 abuse of alcohol, drugs, and any other substance or behavior that might lead to addiction or dependance. 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. 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.

4. **Entertainment/Media/Social Media-** With the wide availability of entertainment and social media, Friends should carefully consider how they spend their interest, time, and money. These forms of amusement can and do have a large influence upon character and life.



Our members should avoid attending or being involved in movies, television programs, performances, and other forms of media of a demoralizing nature (Philippians 4:8-9; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:3). Members should avoid lotteries, wagering, or any kind of gambling. Friends should guard themselves from pornography in all forms. For those who struggle with these kinds of habits, the church should extend care and grace while supporting the recovery of those affected.

Social media platforms have become commonplace and, special attention should be given to how one represents themselves in these arenas. Our Christian witness can and should encompass all areas of life, which now extends to our digital footprint. Friends should refrain from unnecessary disputes, harsh words, or any forms of unwholesome talk (Ephesians 4:29). When possible, Friends should engage matters of importance in person rather than online.

### *C – Testimonies Regarding Christian Households*

1. **Marriage-** God designed marriage for humanity (Genesis 2:18-25). As first described in Genesis and later affirmed by Jesus, marriage is a God ordained, covenant relationship between a biologically born male and a biologically born female (Matthew 19:4-6). This lifelong, sexually exclusive relationship brings children into the world and thus sustains the stewardship of the earth (Hebrews 13:4; Genesis 1:28). Biblical marriage – marked by faithfulness, sacrificial love, and joy – displays the depth of the relationship between God and his people (Ephesians 5:31-32).

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 spouse, remembering the apostolic injunction, "do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14a). Parents should use watchful care to help their children find spouses of Christian character and commitment.

In some cases, physical abnormalities may arise during fetal development in-utero which can make individual biological sex indistinct at birth. In these rare cases, pastors and churches should use prayerful discernment when considering their advice and/or consent regarding marriage of such persons.

2. **The Family-** The family (nuclear, single-parent, blended, multi-generational, adopted, foster, etc.) is the basic unit of human relationship, and as such is also the foundation unit of society. The many biblical references to the family assure us of its divine origin and of God's concern for the family and the home (Ephesians 6:1-4; Psalm 127:3a; 1 Timothy 5:8).

3. **Singleness-** Just as marriage should display the depth of relationship between God and his people, singleness, vowed or dedicated, should display the breadth of God's relationship with his people. Because they are not limited by a vow to one person, single people have more freedom and time to express the love of Christ to a broad range of people (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). Single Friends choose to practice celibacy as long as they remain unmarried as part of their commitment to Christ (1 Corinthians 7:8; Matthew 19:12). Being single in no way minimizes the potential for ministry or influence a Friend has in the church, and the body benefits greatly from the perspectives that single people bring.

4. **Divorce-** The sanctity of the marriage covenant 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 (Ephesians 5:33; Matthew 19:6). 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 family (Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15; John 13:34).

When they are called upon to conduct weddings for divorced persons, we ask our ministers to consider the circumstances carefully in conjunction with scriptural admonitions (Mark 10:11-12; Matthew 19:89; 1 Corinthians 7:39), and 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 turn to God for wisdom and guidance in raising 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 (Ephesians 6:4).

Parents have great spiritual, as well as physical, material, and educational responsibility for their children (Deuteronomy 11:19-21; Proverbs 22:6; 1 Timothy 5:8). 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 (1 Timothy 3:4).

### ***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 (Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 1:8). All Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed, in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace (1 Peter 1:5-8; Colossians 4:5-6).

2. **Public Ministry-** Friends believe certain people 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 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.

3. **Leadership in Ministry-** Christ-centered Friends believe in the universal call to ministry that extends to all believers (Acts 2:17). In ministry leadership, Friends recognize that both men and women

are equal recipients of the divine call of God. As such, Friends' ecclesiology embraces a nonexclusionary view of public ministry (not as a concession to modernity but in obedience to the Bible and the Holy Spirit) that the Lord calls both women and men to serve as leaders and pastors in His church.

4. **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 (Malachi 3:10). Jesus commended sacrificial giving which exceeded this, implying that true giving extends beyond the tithe (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Time, money, talents, and strength belong to the Lord. As His stewards, Christians hold them in trust to be used for His glory (Matthew 25:14-30).

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.

5. **Use of Church Property-** Church properties are dedicated to the service of the kingdom of God and to the communication of the full Gospel to all people. As such, Friends believe that property should be treated with care and stewarded well. The way we use our resources is in direct relation to our communication of the Good News to those in our scope of influence and ministry. We encourage Friends to purchase, construct, and maintain their worship facilities with prayerful consideration of their function, remembering the moderation and simplicity which is the testimony of Friends and to the Church of Jesus Christ.

6. **Business Practices-** Friends should seek divine direction in all their business affairs. They should undertake endeavors only after prayer and seeking God's guidance (Matthew 6:33). While it is to be hoped that we will have adequate income, we must remember that the search for riches is a threat to Christian life (1 Timothy 6:10). 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 (Romans 13:1-7). 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 (Psalm 139:13-18; Psalm 8). Capital punishment, Friends feel, is a pre-emption of the authority of God, the righteous Judge, over life (James 4:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). The restraint of evil can be more effectively handled by other methods than the death penalty.

5. **Peace and War-** Friends feel that life is sacred, and that war and violence are not consistent with Christian principles (Matthew 5:38-48). 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. At the same time, we support and pray for individuals (and their families) serving in our Armed Forces.

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. **Organizational Alignments-** Many organizations make attractive appeals for membership and involvement. Friends must carefully study 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 organizations that present a diminished or distorted understanding of the Christian faith and those that keep their tenets shrouded in secrecy.

8. **Equality of Persons-** Friends have long been convinced of the equality of all persons and find that Scripture compels us to this view (James 2:1-12). 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 congregations regardless of these differences. We witness to the dignity and worth of all before God.

Further, Friends support and advocate for 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 (Genesis 1:28). 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. 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 (1 John 3:17). 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). We hold that abortion on demand or for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment, or economic advantage is morally wrong. 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-** Friends uphold a biblical view of sexuality and marriage (Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4). As such, Friends believe that homosexual acts go against our God-given sexual nature (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). This stance does not limit the ability or calling on Friends to love each person as one made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). We willingly stand in the gap and hold this tension as part of our mission to love our neighbors as ourselves.

### *F – Testimonies Regarding Certain 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 and will always lead in harmony with the Holy Scriptures. Growth and maturity come as the Spirit is allowed to lead in 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 (1 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 a 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 (1 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. To maintain unity despite our differences, we must practice mutual submission. 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 (1 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 1 Corinthians 14:26-28.

5. **Cults and Related Practices-** 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).

## **PART II – THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT**

### **CHAPTER I – The Denomination of Friends**

1. **The Bond of Union.** The denomination of the Friends is composed of Yearly Meetings with their subordinate branches around the world. The bond of union is maintained by correspondence among them; by issuing and receiving certificates of membership in cases of removal; by joint participation in religious and benevolent enterprises. Each Yearly Meeting is independent in the transaction of its business. However, Yearly Meetings can be connected by national and international denominational bodies (e.g., EFC-NA).
2. **The Form of Government.** Friends believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church and dwells in all believers. He enlightens and gives guidance so that believers may do His will. As the head of the Church, Jesus confers gifts upon members of the body which are to be used for the edification of the Church. Members have equal rights and privileges as they exercise their giftedness in faithfulness to Jesus, the head of the Church. Therefore, Friends practice both a theocratic and democratic form of government.
3. **A Friends Church.** A Friends Church is comprised of Christians freely united by faith in Jesus Christ and mutual concern to worship, to nurture one another and to maintain a public witness to their faith. A Friends church adheres to the *Faith and Practice*, participates in the mutual submission and joint labors of the Yearly Meeting, and attempts to model the Christian distinctives of the Friends movement. A congregation of members, fully established, is called a local church or local meeting of Friends (These two terms are synonymous and for the purposes of this document "local church" is used). A local church is under the supervision of its pastor and its Elders Board.
4. **Admission to Membership.** The Friends admit into membership all who make a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose lives testify to their union with Him, and who accept the teachings of the Gospel as held by the Friends (Part III, Chapter I).
5. **Positions of Leadership.** Positions in the organization result from official recognition of these gifts by the body. Each member has duties to perform and special responsibilities to meet, and the business of the organization is conducted in recognition of this equality of rank in the membership. There are no distinctions in the rights, privileges, or responsibilities of the members because of sex, color, or race.
6. **Transaction of Business.** Friends conduct their business in the framework of worship during announced meetings, called business sessions. All members are urged to participate in the business of the church. This organizational pattern is designed so that members will develop and exercise their gifts in personal ministry. The Elders Board is the church in interim, authorized to take any action that is necessary in the interest of the church (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, D, 1).

## CHAPTER II – The Organization of the Church

### Section I – The Local Church

#### *A – General Organization*

1. **Composition-** The local Friends church is an organization which consists of all of those persons recorded on its list of members. Each member has the right and obligation to participate in the business and work of the church.
2. **Regular Meetings-** It is expected that weekly or regular services of instruction, worship, and evangelism are held, in conformity with an adopted schedule. Business sessions are held at regular intervals to keep members informed and involved in major decisions. All major items should be brought to the business meeting for decisions. In all such sessions all members are encouraged to be present and to take part in reaching decisions.
3. **Called Sessions-** A special business session may be called when it seems necessary in the judgment of the presiding clerk and/or the pastor. Such a called session, or a session adjourned to meet at the call of the clerk, is announced in the regular Sunday morning service prior to the selected date of the session.
4. **Functions-** The local church is the general policy-making body. It is charged with the administration of the affairs of the church and has authority to call and contract pastoral services; to adopt the annual budget; to receive, transfer, and dismiss members; to deal with offenders and grant appeals; to consider and act upon all questions affecting the membership; to hold and administer real estate and other property in the name of the Yearly Meeting for the use of the church; and to consider, adopt, and carry out measures for the improvement of the spiritual interests of the church and of the community at large.
5. **Authority-** The local church is typically the final authority in matters of business. Elders and ministry teams should be careful to report actions to the business sessions through the Elders Board and not to assume authority that has not been granted. Notwithstanding the above, the local church is subordinate to the Yearly Meeting (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, A, 2).
6. **Communication-** Communication is very important for harmony within the church. It is strongly recommended that minutes of meetings and full treasurer's reports, with beginning and ending balances, be made public to the congregation by posting on the bulletin board or printing in a newsletter or bulletin insert.
7. **Incorporation-** Local churches are requested to take the necessary steps toward incorporation with their particular state governments. Such incorporation shall be in harmony with the book of *Faith and Practice* of the Yearly Meeting and state laws (For specific inclusions in a church's Articles of Incorporation see Part V, Chapter III).
8. **Representation in the Yearly Meeting Sessions-** The church shall annually appoint one representative and one alternate representative (both eligible for reappointment) to serve in the Yearly Meeting Representative Body. Churches with more than 100 participating members shall appoint one



representative and one alternate for each 100 additional participating members or major fraction thereof above the first 100. During the annual business sessions of the Yearly Meeting, the representatives serve their church as members of the Representative Body (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, C). Churches are encouraged to help defray the expenses involved in the exercise of the representative's duties.

9. **Representation in the Area-** Each church's representative shall serve as a member of the Area nominating committee (Part II, Chapter II, Section II, 4).

### ***B – Qualifications for Leadership***

1. **Qualifications-** All officers, elders, and trustees are to be participating members or affiliate members of the church (Part III, Chapter I, Sections I-II). The choice of elders is based upon moral character, exemplary lifestyle, and the possession of applicable spiritual gifts and qualifications, including biblical character qualities (I Timothy 3, Titus 1). They should have keen spiritual discernment for the proper performance of their duties, a good understanding of the Scriptures and the doctrines of the Christian religion, and of the position and purpose of the Friends Church. Designating elders should not prevent other members of marked spiritual discernment from obeying the Spirit as He asks them to encourage, assist, strengthen and counsel in spiritual matters.

### ***C – Officers***

1. **Clerks-** Each year the church appoints a presiding clerk and recording clerk.

A. **Presiding Clerk-** The presiding clerk presides over all business sessions, signs official documents on behalf of the church, and serves as the chairperson of the Elders Board (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, D, 1). Presiding clerks are chosen with reference to sound judgment, spiritual discernment, and ability to determine the will of the body as they conduct the business of the church.

Some of the duties of the presiding clerk include:

- 1) Conduct business sessions of the local church at regular intervals to keep members informed and involved in major decisions.
- 2) Conduct monthly sessions of the Elders Board and/or business meetings of the local church.
- 3) Call for the appointment of a nominating committee in the business session of the local church held no later than September or October; receive this committee's report at the church's last business session before January 1.
- 4) Among reports to be received annually are the statistical report and the report of the auditing committee.
- 5) The Queries (Checklist of *Faith and Practice*, Part III, Chapter V), are to be read at least once annually in a regular session of the local church.

B. **Recording Clerk-** The recording clerk keeps an accurate record of all business proceedings, both for business sessions and Elders Board meetings, and provides copies thereof to those authorized to request them. The recording clerk also serves as the statistical secretary and the correspondence secretary. A church may appoint assistant clerks to share in these duties.

- 1) **Instructions as to Statistics-** The statistical year, as well as the official year for various Yearly Meeting interests and activities, begins January 1 and ends December 31. The minutes of the local church during the intervening twelve months should furnish the source of information for making the statistical reports. Local churches are advised to revise carefully their membership reports and having done so to adopt such as the official roll of membership of the local church, inserting the entire list of names, preferably in alphabetical order, in their minute of adoption. They are directed to repeat this revision in January of each year, at which time the statistical blank is to be filled out and sent to the Yearly Meeting office in accordance with instructions provided.

Non-participating members are to be included in the totals and lists but are to be also reported under the heading, Non-participating Members, except when reported as members by an extension church (See Part III, Chapter I, Section I for classification of members and, Part III, Chapter I, Section II for the definition of non-participating members). Associate members are to be included in the totals and also reported under the separate heading, Associate Members. Extension churches are to make statistical reports similar to those made by local churches (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, H, 2).

2. **Other Officers-** The church also appoints a treasurer to handle the customary responsibilities. Regular financial statements should be submitted for general information to all members. The church may name such other personnel as it considers necessary.

### ***D – Elders***

1. **Elders Board-** The Elders Board consists of the pastor (ex officio), the presiding clerk, treasurer, Yearly Meeting representative and the elders of the areas of responsibility. The presiding clerk chairs the Elders Board. Others may be named to the Elders Board at the discretion of the church.

The Elders Board serves as the coordinating body for the responsibilities of the local church. Unless a church business meeting is held each month, the Elders Board meets each month, and additional sessions may be called if necessary. The schedule for Elders Board meetings shall be made public. It is an open meeting for any church member to attend, unless the chairperson announces that a closed executive session shall be called.

It has the responsibility to review pastoral leadership of the church and to recommend, after consultation with the Yearly Meeting General Superintendent, the candidate and his term of service (Part III, Chapter II, Section I, 1). It also recommends to the local church pastoral duties, assistants, and their salaries and vacations.

The Elders Board is the church in interim, authorized to take any action that is necessary in the interest of the church, especially to chart and implement its major goals. It reports its actions to the regular business sessions.

Feeling the weight of responsibilities resting upon them, elders will be prayerful in the active performance of their duties, which specifically include:

- 1) Cooperate with, encourage, and strengthen the pastoral ministers in all their duties, giving counsel and advice.
- 2) Assist the pastor as the spiritual needs of the membership and congregation may require.
- 3) Counsel members regarding their spiritual welfare.
- 4) Initiate disciplinary action when necessary (Part III, Chapter III).
- 5) Encourage those who give evidence of true spiritual gifts when taking part in public meetings for worship but restrain others who do not give such evidence.
- 6) Consider persons who may have a gift for ministry. If the person meets the qualifications, the procedure for recording may be initiated (Part III, Chapter VI, Section 1, A).

### ***E – Trustees***

1. **Trustees.** If a Stewards ministry team is appointed, three or more members of the Stewards ministry team shall be nominated by the nominating committee as trustees with terms expiring in alternating years. Otherwise, three or more members of the local church are nominated. The Trustees must be approved by the business meeting. They serve as the "duly elected" legal agents of the church with specific duties as follows:

- 1) Hold and care for all church properties.
- 2) Arrange custodial service.
- 3) Secure and maintain adequate insurance.
- 4) Establish policies relating to use of church facilities.
- 5) Provide for custody of all except current church records.
- 6) Receive and administer all proceeds of wills, endowments and other gifts as directed by the donors and the church.
- 7) Transact real estate purchases and sales as directed by the church.

### ***F – Structure***

Local churches are allowed to organize using the following guidelines for the purpose of developing the ministry of the church and its members. Smaller churches may organize with a minimum organization using either an Elders Board which meets each month or having a church business meeting each month. Larger churches may organize with an Elders Board and ministry teams for each area of responsibility. Churches are encouraged to organize to accomplish ministry. The structure should support ministry, not hinder it.

Areas of responsibility should be designated which reflect the ministry goals identified by the local church and area and should be administered by an elder. The areas of concern should include, but are not limited to spiritual life, outreach, education, and stewardship. The elders should see that the different areas of responsibility are given adequate emphasis in the local church. Annual Reports are to be completed as requested by the Yearly Meeting.

A nominating committee must also be appointed (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, F, 6). Other elders, ministry teams, or task forces may be appointed, to be charged with special responsibilities, serving on behalf of the elder or ministry team. However, caution should be taken not to name additional structures unnecessarily.

If ministry teams are used, they should be composed of three or more members, appointed for terms of three years with individual membership on the team expiring in rotation. Larger meetings may find it helpful to appoint six or more persons to each ministry team and/or to establish additional task forces. It is suggested that no member serve for more than two consecutive terms on the same ministry team. All officers, elders, and trustees must be participating or affiliate members of the church. Associate members and carefully selected non-members may serve as members of ministry teams or task forces.

1. **Spiritual Life-** This area may include, but should not be limited to the following responsibilities:

- 1) Have an active concern for the spiritual health of the members and attendees.
- 2) Coordinate and evaluate the areas of worship, evangelism, and spiritual leadership.
- 3) Encourage the use of gifts and talents, including music and other arts.
- 4) Promote Christian fellowship and spiritual communion through varied ministries and social functions.
- 5) Help prepare and recommend candidates for membership to the church business meeting.
- 6) Classify all adult members annually as either participating or non-participating, and review of the status of associate and affiliate members.
- 7) Make arrangements for special speakers and pulpit supply in consultation with the pastor.
- 8) Plan and direct special programs of evangelism, visitation, and public services.
- 9) Encourage in the formation and help develop the patterning of Bible study groups.
- 10) Identify and recruit prospective ministers and missionaries, encourage their continued growth, and help facilitate their training and growth.
- 11) Appoint and supervise ushers and greeters for all regular church services.
- 12) Prepare memorials for deceased members as needed, (Part I, Chapter IV, Section II, B, 2), and send typed copies to the Yearly Meeting office by July 1.
- 13) Provide for nursery and children's church; one or both of these may be delegated to education.

2. **Outreach-** This area may include, but should not be limited to the following responsibilities:

### **A. EFC-MAYM Mission Mobilizer Team**

- 1) Keep the church informed regarding Evangelical Friends Mission and encourage prayer support.
- 2) Cooperate with other churches (and with Friends Women if they so desire) in planning and conducting Area missions conferences.
- 3) Encourage systematic giving for missions.
- 4) Encourage those who show interest in missions.
- 5) Encourage correspondence with missionaries.
- 6) Present special mission projects.

### **B. Home Missions Board**

- 1) Encourage support for starting new churches by keeping the church informed of opportunities and progress.
- 2) Promote ways to encourage new churches; help in securing personnel for them (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, H).
- 3) Promote and support of Indian centers and missions.

### **C. Camp**

- 1) Promote the values of Christian camping as a ministry to people of the church and community.
- 2) Encourage support of Camp Quaker Haven with both workers and finances.
- 3) Encourage all ages to attend the camps provided at Camp Quaker Haven.
- 4) Delegate these responsibilities to education, if desired.

### **D. Service**

- 1) Identify the needs and concerns of all the diverse types of family units in the local community.
- 2) Plan and implement programs to develop and enrich those skills, values, and perspectives essential to Christian marriage and family life.
- 3) Provide resources for ministry to families.
- 4) Render assistance to those in need, both members and others.
- 5) Assist disaster relief agencies, including Friends Disaster Service.
- 6) Give instruction relative to the Friends testimony regarding peace and war.
- 7) Counsel about conscientious objection to military service.
- 8) Provide instruction and support legislation on current moral issues and principles.
- 9) Promote prison ministries, either individually or in cooperation with other churches of the Area.
- 10) Promote helpful interracial communications and activities.
- 11) Promote the work of Friends World Committee for Consultation and Friends Committee on National Legislation.

3. **Education-** This area includes the essential initiative and supervision on behalf of the children, youth, and adults in the areas of Sunday school, day school, Friends Youth, Vacation Bible School, clubs, camps, retreats, and the church library. Specific duties may include, but should not be limited to the following:

- 1) Coordinate all the education ministries listed, to avoid duplication and conflict either in schedule or in personnel.
- 2) Appoint all personnel involved in these ministries, including the Sunday school staff, library staff, directors, and counselors. The local church may choose to have its nominating committee make these appointments for approval.
- 3) Recommend the calling of a youth minister or director to the Elders Board and/or church business meeting.
- 4) Approve curricula for all educational activities.
- 5) Utilize approved Yearly Meeting and/or EFCI programs in these areas.
- 6) Provide opportunities for leadership training to members of the educational staff.
- 7) Recommend improvements in physical equipment for the program.
- 8) Encourage youth to attend a Friends college. Encourage those who attend secular schools to maintain a consistent Christian witness. Provide scholarships.
- 9) Encourage of support for Friends schools.
- 10) Promote participation by members in local school organizations.

4. **Stewardship-** The responsibilities of this area are finance, trustees, and promotion, including:

#### **A. Finance**

- 1) Prepare the annual budget in consultation with the elders and present to the church for approval at a business session.
- 2) Include applicable taxes and insurance premiums in the budget.
- 3) Administrate and supervise retirement coverage for pastors and staff.
- 4) Consider proposals for non-budget expenditures and special offerings.
- 5) Supervise the treasurer and the audit the books.

#### **B. Trustees** (See Part II, Chapter II, Section 1, E – Trustees)

#### **C. Promotion**

- 1) Educate the church about giving according to Scriptural methods.
- 2) Promote stewardship of one's time and talents.
- 3) Promote estate planning.
- 4) Distribute church publications, announcements, advertisement, and promotion.
- 5) Send newsworthy items of correspondence to the Yearly Meeting office for possible publication. This duty may be assigned to the meeting's recording clerk (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, B).

#### **5. Elders Board-** (See Chapter II, Section I, D – Elders)

**6. Nominating Committee-** This committee of three or six persons is appointed for a three-year term, one third being appointed each year, in the business session held no later than September or October.

At the church's last business session before January 1, the committee presents its nominations for all officers, elders, ministry teams (if these are to be used), and trustees. Upon approval all appointees begin service January 1st. In the selection of persons to serve, the committee should seek to discover the gifts and abilities of people in the congregation and try to match giftedness with the different realms of responsibility. The committee shall nominate persons to fill any vacancy that occurs during the year.

### ***G – Suggestions for the Conduct of Business***

The following are suggestions for the conduction for meetings of worship for business. These suggestions are primarily for use in the business sessions in new local churches where there are few who have had previous contact and background in a Friends church.

The same general procedure is applicable, however, in any meeting for business:

- 1) Devotional Period- Every meeting should begin with a devotional period, in which those present feel free to express themselves in prayer, testimony, exhortation, Scripture reading, or message. When all who will have taken part and all minds are free, it is appropriate to turn to the business of the occasion. Friends feel that the business of the church is a religious exercise, and one which should not be entered upon without appropriate waiting upon God.
- 2) The Opening Minute- The business is begun with the reading by the clerk (the recording clerk if there is one; otherwise by the presiding clerk) of the opening minute. It is worded somewhat as follows: "Pennville Friends Church met in regular session January 4, 20\_, at 7:30 p.m." Some churches wish to keep a continuing record of the age of the church, and accordingly will say that the church "met in its thirty-sixth regular session," for example. Thus, the session is opened and is ready to take up the business.
- 3) Reading of the Minutes- The minutes of the previous session should always be read. The clerk (or recording clerk) may formulate the minutes as the business goes forward, and it may be desirable to have them read at the close of the session and any needed corrections made. The minutes are then approved, and the reading after the opening of the next session is for the information of all who are then present. If the minutes were not read at the close of the previous session, this reading is for correction and approval.
- 4) Presentation of Business- As in other gatherings, old business, that is, matters which the minutes indicate need further consideration or final action, is taken up first. If a committee has been appointed for a special purpose, its report is called for and acted upon. If a matter has been discussed and action has been postponed for lack of full information, the church may be informed and then proceed to discuss further and to reach a conclusion. After the old business has been cared for, new business is in order. The reports of the officers of the church and of standing committees may be given and approved. Any other matter on which the consideration of the church is needed may be presented. Every member of the church has a right to

participate and therefore to introduce new business. It is customary among Friends to present matters of business in the form of a proposition or a suggestion rather than as a motion.

- 5) **Consideration of Business Matters-** Persons proposing action do so, not with the idea of championing the proposition or of attempting to bring the church to the member's own viewpoint, but with the desire that the suggestion be fully considered from all angles until it appears in a clear light. No member is qualified to determine this for the church. Accordingly, each one should freely speak to the proposition and express his or her mind. When this is done in humility and godly fear, it is frequently the case that the common thought of the people shifts to one or the other side of the matter. The objective of this method of business is to corporately discern the will of God. After allowing ample time for discussion of the issue the presiding clerk then announces what is discerned to be the sense of the meeting and asks for approval. Unless objections are raised, the recording clerk then formulates a minute embodying the proposition and the decision. It is very seldom necessary to take a vote in such cases or at any time in a Friends business session. Voting under all ordinary circumstances is discouraged.
- 6) **The Concluding Minute-** After all matters have been considered and there is no further business to be presented, the presiding clerk perceives that the minds of all are clear and reads (or has read) the concluding minute: "The session then adjourned, to meet April 6, 20."

### ***H – New Churches***

1. **Starting a New Church-** A new congregation (See definition, Part V, Chapter VI) may be started by the leaders of a local church, by several churches, by an Area, or by the EFC- MAYM Home Missions Board (HMB). When a person or a group desires to initiate a work, the authorization of one of these bodies should first be secured and a plan established with appropriate supervision. The new work may begin as a type of small group, or as a focal point of ministry if its purposes include, but are not necessarily limited to, worship, edification, and evangelism. It may begin meeting in a home or any other convenient facility. Very little local organization is required, since all of its affairs are administered by the body under whose leadership it has been initiated. If there are those who are ready for church membership at this point, they become members of the sponsoring local church as provided in this *Faith and Practice* (Part III, Chapter I).
2. **Extension Churches-** When a new congregation has developed sufficiently so that in the judgment of the initiating body it could become a local church, its sponsoring group petitions HMB to organize it as an extension church. The Board at its discretion may grant this request by guiding the congregation into a simple but functional organization, appointing one or more persons to handle local affairs. Leadership of the extension church may be handled by members of the congregation, or representatives from the sponsoring body, or a combination of leaders from both the church and sponsoring group.
3. **Organization and Membership of Extension Churches-** The sponsoring body, or HMB as needed, after consultation with the new congregation and the General Superintendent, will select and secure pastoral leadership, as well as provide general supervision of the extension church. The



leadership of the sponsoring body will guide the extension church in developing organizational structure and establishing church members.

- a. The Elders Board of the sponsoring body, along with the church planting pastor, and if deemed advisable, leaders of the extension church who are members of the sponsoring local church, shall interview applicants and recommend to the sponsoring church those who are prepared for church membership. The same qualifications for membership and procedures for the transfer of members shall be followed as outlined in this *Faith and Practice* (Part III, Chapter I).
- b. When an adequate number of applications for membership have been approved, the above-named group shall select a nominating committee of three or six members (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, F, 6). The nominating committee shall select for nomination the names of persons, in addition to the pastor (Ex Officio), to serve as an Elders Board. The positions to be nominated include a presiding clerk, recording clerk, Yearly Meeting representative, and an elder for each of the four areas of responsibility (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, C). A treasurer shall also be nominated.

2. **Financial Responsibilities of Extension Churches-** An extension church is responsible for contributing toward the financial support of the Yearly Meeting programs (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, I, 5). Its proportionate share of support will begin at the full participation level. New extension churches will be committed to becoming churches that from their beginnings will become reproducing churches and will fully participate in the ministries of EFC- MAYM.

- a. A standard statistical report should be prepared annually and forwarded to the new congregation, the sponsoring body, and the Yearly Meeting.

3. **Property and Building Rights-** All property rights involved in connection with an extension church are vested in the Yearly Meeting through its trustees, or, at the discretion of EFC-MAYM, in some incorporated Friends Church within the same state. Projects for buying, building, and remodeling are to be submitted to the sponsoring body and their approval secured before action is taken (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, A, 2, a).

4. **New Local Churches-** An extension church may request the sponsoring body to take proper steps toward its establishment as a new local church. Likewise, the sponsoring church may take the initiative, making sure to secure the concurrence of the extension church. When such action has been approved by the local church, it sends its proposition to the Yearly Meeting Board Home Missions Board, stating when and where the business sessions of the new church are to be held. An extension church may be organized as a local church when it has a strong, active membership and when, in the judgment of the HMB, it is able to meet all financial obligations and is otherwise ready for full local church status. Upon approval by HMB Board, the new church is so notified, and upon receiving this notification is authorized to proceed with full organization as a local church (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, A), thus coming under the counsel of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board rather than the sponsoring body (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, D).

5. **Nomenclature-** The word "Friends" is to be included in the naming of a work in any phase (for example, Pennville Friends Church).

6. **New Areas-** Local churches have authority to petition the Yearly Meeting to establish, discontinue, divide, or redefine an Area, or to unite two or more Areas (Part II, Section II, 2). They may also request transfer of Area affiliation.

7. **New Yearly Meetings-** When one or more Areas wish to be set off and established as a new Yearly Meeting, they inform the Yearly Meeting of their desire and of their concurrence in the proposal. The Yearly Meeting then considers the advisability of such action and renders a decision in view of all the facts involved. If action is favorable and a new Yearly Meeting is to be established, the Yearly Meeting appoints a committee, not to exceed ten in number, to attend the opening of such Yearly Meeting with the minute of the Yearly Meeting establishing it; this committee inaugurates sessions in accordance with the form of organization of the existing Yearly Meeting.

### *I – Mergers and Closing Churches*

1. **Change of Church Status-** If a local church is substantially weakened and no longer functioning properly, action may be initiated by either the Yearly Meeting Elders Board, the Area Elders Board, or the local church to consider the advisability of coming under the supervision of another local church, the Area Elders Board or the Home Missions Board. In such a case the Yearly Meeting Elders Board appoints a committee to assess, in cooperation with the local church or a committee appointed by it, the total situation as it affects the proposition under consideration. If, by common agreement and official action of the local church, the change appears to be in order, the sponsoring body then assumes supervision of the church as outlined above (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, H). The new status continues until action to reverse the status) is again appropriate. However, if a common agreement cannot be reached, the Yearly Meeting Elders Board may proceed with the above action.

2. **Merger of Churches-** When it is proposed that two or more local churches merge to form one new local church, the proposal is given full and careful consideration by the churches involved. When, after consultation with the General Superintendent, each of them has taken official action to approve the union, the General Superintendent carries their request to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. The Elders Board will then carry the request to the Representative Body. If one or both churches is a new church, the Elders Board should obtain the concurrence of the sponsoring body. When approval has been secured from the Representative Body, the churches proceed to unify their business sessions, their officers and ministry teams, their services, and their holdings at the time and in the manner which seems best to them in their situation. They consult with the Yearly Meeting trustees regarding proper adjustment or disposal of real estate and other assets. The merged church chooses the site and facilities best adapted to its need, and the name by which it is officially to be known. Membership of the churches merging is transferred *en masse* to the new merged church. If the constituent churches were in different Yearly Meeting Areas, the new church petitions the Yearly Meeting for affiliation with the Area of its choice.

- a. A merger with another local church in EFC-MAYM is not considered a closure, and the assets remain with the merged congregation. However, a merger with a church

outside of Friends, or with a church desiring then to become independent, is considered a closure.

### 3. Discontinuance of Churches

- a. **Yearly Meeting Initiated-** The Yearly Meeting Elders Board has authority, when cases of irregularity of procedure or deterioration of status appear in the affairs of a local church, to make careful investigation through its officers or an appointed committee. It advises in cases of difficulty, endeavoring to help the church to maintain its active relationship with the Yearly Meeting and with its community. When such a church is judged by the board to be no longer effective or to be so irregular in its cooperation with Yearly Meeting programs that continuance is unwarranted, this board has the authority to a) advise the local church that its relationship with the Yearly Meeting is being terminated, b) dissolve or discontinue the local church, or c) effect its union with another church. The final determination regarding the relationship of the church to the Yearly Meeting, as well as the disposition of the property and assets, will be made through agreements among the local church, the Trustee Board, the Elders Board and the Representative Body of the Yearly Meeting.
- b. **Local Church Initiated-** In the event a local church decides to discontinue or disaffiliate with the Yearly Meeting, it shall inform the General Superintendent in writing of its decision. The General Superintendent, after consultation with the church leadership, shall pass along the request to the Elders Board. The Board will appoint members to consult with the church for the purposes of continued relationships and/or reconciliation with the Yearly Meeting. If the church desires to continue its stated course of action, the church and the Elders Board will carry its concerns to the Representative Body. The final determination regarding the relationship of the church to the Yearly Meeting, as well as the disposition of the property and assets, will be made through agreements among the local church, the Trustee Board, the Elders Board and the Representative Body of the Yearly Meeting.

## Section II – Areas

### *Organization and Functions*

1. **Purpose and Mission-** The general purpose of Yearly Meeting Areas is fellowship, cooperation, and accountability amongst Friends churches located within a geographical area. However, each Area will have the freedom to determine its own specific mission and purpose according to the needs of the Area within the framework of Evangelical Friends.
2. **Formation-** The Yearly Meeting, through a selected agency or upon its recommendation, groups the existing local churches with their sponsored extension churches and mission points into administrative entities known as Areas. Division is made, normally, based on geographical proximity or accessibility, provided that the reasonable request of any local church is to be given due consideration.

A new local church is assigned by the Yearly Meeting to a specific Area, with the understanding that the church may express its preferences for such assignment. For a current listing of Areas and churches, consult the most recent edition of the Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting minutes.

3. **Membership-** An Area consists of all of the local and new churches, with all of their listed members, both individually and collectively, which are located within its limits.

4. **Nominating Committee-** This committee is composed of all Yearly Meeting representatives from local churches within the Area. Their duties are to nominate the superintendent, assistant superintendent(s) (if needed), treasurer, and recording clerk. The committee shall also nominate three caretakers for the Yearly Meeting sessions for a one-year term. The caretakers shall not be representatives. Upon approval by the Area Elders Board, these officers begin service on January 1 of each year.

5. **Elders Board-** The Elders Board is charged with overseeing the mission and ministry efforts of the Area. It also appoints one elder, with spiritual gifts, to serve on the Yearly Meeting Elders Board for a three-year term, who becomes a member of the Area Elders Board. Areas are encouraged to appoint persons who are not active pastors for the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. They also appoint one person to serve on each of the Yearly Meeting Boards (EFC-MAYM Mission Mobilizer Team, Home Missions Board, Stewards Board, and Camp Board) for three- year terms. The Elders Board is comprised of the Area superintendent, all Area pastors, the member of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board, and the recording clerk. Other individuals may be appointed as needed. The Elders Board should be involved in vision-casting both for the Area and the local churches. They should facilitate training and ministry of local churches by prayerful support and resource supply. They should plan and prepare for Area rallies.

6. **Area Superintendent-** The Area Superintendent should make regular contacts with churches and pastors of the Area for mentoring and encouragement. The Area superintendent is responsible and accountable to the Area Elders Board and is to keep the general superintendent informed of the activities of the Area. He/she should attend and participate in all Area Elders Board meetings.

7. **Rallies-** Each Area should determine the number and type of Area rallies which will be held. This schedule is to be reported to the Yearly Meeting office so that the schedule may be published in the EFC - MAYM Minutes.

8. **General Vision and Responsibility-** Each Area should design a functional structure, using ministry teams and task forces, that best meets the needs and mission of the Area. The following are some of the responsibilities of the Area:

- 1) Develop and manage the Area budget.
- 2) Provide a link between the local churches and the Yearly Meeting.
- 3) Provide mentors for individuals in the recording process and recommend candidates to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board for final recording of gifts and celebration (Part III, Chapter VI, 1, A, 6).

- 4) Facilitate fellowship, leadership retreats, inspirational gatherings, and workshops to train local church leaders such as: clerks, pastors, stewards, treasurers, youth workers, worship leaders, and Sunday school teachers.
- 5) Provide leadership for the following areas of ministry: spiritual life, youth ministry, Christian education, missions, church planting, stewardship, leadership development, support of Camp Quaker Haven, evangelism, and compassionate ministries.
- 6) Areas are encouraged to network with other Areas or churches in neighboring Areas when it would facilitate ministry, training, and fellowship.

9. **Recording of Ministers-** The Area Elders Board will have the responsibility for the recording of ministers, under the guidance of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. The following are guidelines in this process: (Procedures are detailed in Part III, Chapter VI, 1, A).

- 1) The local church will recommend a candidate to the Area Elders Board.
- 2) The candidate and the Area Elders Board will meet to agree upon a qualified mentor who will meet with the candidate on a regular basis, to give instruction and guidance, and shepherd him/her through the recording process.
- 3) With the mentor's help and supervision, the candidate will work to define or refine his/her statement of faith and philosophy of ministry.
- 4) The candidate may be asked to undergo psychological evaluations.
- 5) At the end of a two-year period, the candidate will be interviewed by the Area Elders Board, which will also solicit input from the mentor.
- 6) The Area Elders Board may ask the candidate to continue the mentoring relationship for additional observation, development, and training.
- 7) If the Area Elders Board agrees the candidate is ready for recording, they will send the candidate's name to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board for approval.
- 8) If the Yearly Meeting Elders Board approves, the candidate's name is presented to the Yearly Meeting representatives for final approval.
- 9) The celebration and recording of gifts will take place during the Yearly Meeting sessions.

## **Section III – The Yearly Meeting**

### ***A – General Organization***

1. **Composition-** Friends, from earliest times, have sought to foster fellowship and cooperation in advancing the cause of Christ in the world. To this end, they have formed connectional bodies of churches which live in mutual subordination and accountability. These bodies were comprised of Friends churches national or geographical regions who gathered annually for worship and business. From this practice came name, “Yearly Meeting.” The term also came to be applied to the various regions, including both churches and members. Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting (EFC- MAYM or Yearly Meeting) consists of the members of its local churches. Every individual who joins a local Friends church automatically becomes a member of the denomination, the Yearly Meeting. The term Yearly Meeting may be used as an equivalent of EFC-MAYM.

2. **Powers-** The Yearly Meeting possesses complete legislative, judicial, and administrative authority. It has the power to counsel, to admonish, or to discipline its subordinate churches; to institute measures and provide means for the promotion of truth and righteousness; to inaugurate and to carry on departments of religious and philanthropic work. It may review the proceedings of any church, and it gives advice and instruction to the churches when these are requested or when they are thought necessary.

At the same time, each local church exercises considerable discretion in its organization and operation. Many are organized as separate nonprofit religious corporations with their own Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws within each individual state and must acknowledge their subordinate relationship to EFC-MAYM.

a. **Incorporation of Local Churches-** Since the Articles of Incorporation for churches must take various forms because of the differing corporation laws in the five states within Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting shall not propose the wording of the Articles in each instance other than to require the insertion of the following statements:

First, that somewhere in the paragraph on Purpose or Objective there be included the clause: "to conduct a local church in accordance with the provisions as set forth in the book of *Faith and Practice* of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, a non-profit corporation in the State of Kansas".

Second, under Dissolution and/or Disaffiliation, insert this paragraph: "Though intended to be perpetual, the corporation, in case of dissolution and/or disaffiliation, provides that the assets shall become the property of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, or its successors"

Third, under Membership, that "every person who has been admitted as a member of the \_Friends Church in accordance with the said book of *Faith and Practice* shall be a member of this corporation, and no other terms of admission into such corporation will be recognized or required".

Fourth, under Trustees, "The method of electing trustees and the duties of the trustees shall be in accord with the said book of *Faith and Practice* of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting".

In the event that the exact wording as stated above is inconsistent with the Statute of the State under which the Local Church is seeking incorporation, differing wording will be allowed provided that it states in essence the concepts delineated above, and that the suggested change is approved by the Yearly Meeting Superintendent.

3. **Function-** The main function of the Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting is to equip and enable our churches and people to do better together the things they cannot do as well

separately. Churches are banded together as a family because they believe they can fulfill the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment more effectively together than they can by themselves. EFC-MAYM will serve through its staff and volunteers who organize into boards, related organizations, task forces and any other ministries, programs, and efforts. Ministries include missions at home and around the world, new church development, camping, student ministries and much more. The funding comes from several sources: the suggested budget contribution from each local church which is determined by a stated percentage of that church's annual giving or a specified amount, additional gifts given by churches to specific ministries or projects and individual gifts and bequests. Local churches are expected to remit their budgeted percentage each year and are encouraged to do so in a timely manner.

4. **Purpose of the Annual Sessions-** The design of its annual assemblies is the general order and regulation of the affairs of the church in the service of God and the maintenance and promotion of Christian faith, love, unity, life, and practice throughout its subordinate churches.

### ***B – Yearly Meeting Sessions***

1. **Time and Place-** The annual sessions of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting are held at Wichita, Kansas; they open at such time as may be determined by the Yearly Meeting or its Elders Board. Sessions may be held elsewhere by adjournment or by action of the meeting. If the presiding clerk is absent, the assistant clerk opens the sessions. If the assistant clerk is also absent, the recording clerk opens the sessions and directs the Elders Board to nominate at once persons to fill such vacancies, either *pro tem* or permanently as the case may require.

2. **Caretakers-** The Caretakers, who are appointed by the Areas, shall serve during the Yearly Meeting Sessions as ushers, messengers, and in other appropriate ways to facilitate the dissemination of information, physical arrangements, and the comfort of those attending the sessions.

### ***C – The Representative Body***

1. **Composition and Meetings-** Each local church shall name and forward to the Yearly Meeting presiding clerk one representative and one alternate representative to serve on the Yearly Meeting representative body. Local churches with more than 100 participating members shall be entitled to one representative and one alternate representative for each 100 additional participating members or major fraction thereof above the first 100. The Yearly Meeting Elders Board members shall also serve on the representative body. In addition to the presiding clerk, the assistant presiding clerk, recording clerk and assistant recording clerk, reading clerk, and announcing clerk shall serve on the representative body.

2. **Duties of the Representative Body-** This body is the Yearly Meeting in session. Representatives are seated in a reserved section at the opening session of Yearly Meeting. Alternates are seated only in the event the named representative is absent. Throughout the Yearly Meeting business sessions, the respective representative or alternate shall occupy a seat in the reserved section. It is the responsibility of the local church to officially name a replacement for representative or alternate. This action should be received by the presiding clerk prior to the beginning of Yearly Meeting sessions.

All matters of business brought to the floor of Yearly Meeting are open for general discussion by all who are in attendance. The presiding clerk may, according to his discernment, limit discussions of business matters according to the sense of the representative body. The clerk shall determine the disposition of business as he or she senses the will of the meeting.

### ***D – Officers***

1. **Presiding Clerk-** The Elders Board selects one of their number to serve as presiding clerk who takes office at the close of the Yearly Meeting sessions. The presiding clerk serves as chairperson of the Elders Board, receives and answers official communications, and makes all necessary preparations for presenting the business to the Yearly Meeting at its next annual sessions. The presiding clerk signs official documents as the presiding officer of the Yearly Meeting. During the presiding clerk's term in office his or her interpretation of the book of *Faith and Practice* is final, unless it is overruled by action of the Yearly Meeting.

2. **Other Clerks-** The Elders Board will select one of their number to serve as assistant presiding clerk. They will appoint a secretary for their board who will also serve as recording clerk of the Yearly Meeting. This person will come from the Yearly Meeting at large and will not be a member of the Elders Board. All other clerks, when nominated by the Elders Board or nominating committee and approved by the representative body, take office after the close of Yearly Meeting sessions. The assistant presiding clerk is kept informed on matters of importance in preparation for the annual sessions, in order that he or she may act in the absence of the presiding clerk or provide assistance. Reading clerks are responsible for verbally presenting various matters of business before the representative body, at the request of the presiding clerk. Recording clerks are responsible to record accurately and efficiently all matters of business conducted during Yearly Meeting sessions so that they may be permanently recorded in the annual Minutes. The announcing clerk is responsible for keeping members at Yearly Meeting sessions informed of time and places for special board or group meetings and other announcements.

3. **Treasurer-** The treasurer and assistant treasurer are appointed annually by the Elders Board. The treasurer receives money from all local churches and other sources for the Yearly Meeting's use, makes disbursements as directed by the Yearly Meeting, and submits an annual report. The treasurer is authorized to receive and to issue official receipts for all legacies and donations or other funds requiring formal legal acknowledgement. The treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Stewards Board.

4. **General Superintendent-** This person must be well qualified by maturity and experience and by executive ability to exercise care over all departments of work of the Yearly Meeting. A general superintendent should be one who motivates and inspires people and churches by example and ministry, a promoter of programs, a counselor, encourager, and a good communicator.

The implications and responsibilities of the office call for leadership and management, and the general superintendent is in a position of authority. It is expected that pastor and people shall grant the general superintendent the respect of office and comply cheerfully with the precept of Scripture to "obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them..." (Hebrews 13:17). At the same time the general superintendent shall exercise authority not as being a lord over God's heritage, but as being an example to the flock.



a. **Appointment-** The Elders Board makes recommendations to the Yearly Meeting representatives regarding the employment or dismissal of the general superintendent. If the appointment is not made at the annual Yearly Meeting sessions, local churches shall consider the nomination and send their Yearly Meeting representative(s) or alternate(s) to attend an official representative meeting called by the presiding clerk, to seek the mind of Christ in this matter. Churches unable to send a representative will be asked to send a written response, which will be read to the gathered representatives. When the representatives come to unity in support of the nominee, that person shall be considered appointed. If the representatives cannot come to unity, the Elders Board will call another meeting to consider the nomination or submit a new name to the local churches for consideration.

b. **Term-** The term of service is to be an indefinite term to be reviewed annually. The superintendent shall be notified in writing of the appointment and all other arrangements pertaining thereto such as salary, travel allocation, housing, vacation, retirement, sick leave and days off.

If the superintendent desires to be released, he/she shall notify the Elders Board no later than January 1 before leaving office on June 30. In like manner, if the Elders Board desires to terminate the term of service, or does not intend to extend another call, it shall notify the superintendent no later than January 1 prior to the termination of services on June 30.

c. **Duties-** A "job description" must necessarily be individually considered, depending on the superintendent's assignment, gifts, and abilities; however, the following is a general outline of duties or responsibilities.

- 1) The superintendent shall be directly responsible to the Elders Board of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting. No counsel from any other group or individual within the Yearly Meeting shall be considered official or mandatory unless it is ratified by the official action of the Yearly Meeting. The Elders Board serves as the Yearly Meeting in interim.
- 2) In consultation with the chairpersons of the various Yearly Meeting boards, the superintendent shall plan the overall strategy for the achievement of goals of the Yearly Meeting and shall present such goals and strategy to the Elders Board on a regular basis.
- 3) The superintendent shall supervise and delegate the work of the personnel in the Yearly Meeting office and shall arrange conditions satisfactory for an efficient accomplishment of the responsibilities of the office. The Elders Board shall provide ample assistance so that regular and normal office hours are kept. Normally the office will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays and approved holidays. Sufficient clerical help and equipment

- shall be provided so that the superintendent can concentrate time and energies on matters of greater importance.
- 4) The superintendent shall look to the Elders Board, and the Elders Board shall provide guidance and direction for all counsel that is requested. The Elders Board shall provide meetings of sufficient frequency to allow for a complete exchange of ideas and concerns. The general superintendent shall be a member of the Elders Board and shall make every effort to attend all meetings of the Elders Board, unless a meeting is specified to be an executive session.
  - 5) It is imperative that frank, but cordial communication be maintained between the Elders Board and the superintendent. The former body shall consider criticisms concerning the latter which may arise or come to its attention. When the Elders Board considers the complaints as justifiable it must share these with the superintendent openly in a spirit of love. It shall never consider any decisions on such matters final, however, until the superintendent has been consulted and has been allowed to present his or her case.
  - 6) The superintendent shall exercise general oversight over and coordinate the work of all departments of the Yearly Meeting. As such, the superintendent is an ex-officio member of each board and has the prerogative of making recommendations with regard to the board's policy and/or program. The superintendent is also to advise and consult with boards to help solve their problems and to promote their interests. The superintendent shall provide limited administrative service to their policies and programs. The priority of time and interest given by the superintendent to any board shall be determined by the superintendent, unless specifically instructed otherwise by the Elders Board. In this latter case, however, the superintendent should be consulted before unusual demands are made on his or her time and energies.
  - 7) The superintendent shall give immediate attention to difficulties arising in local churches. It shall be the superintendent's duty to respond and give counsel to pastors, churches, boards of elders, ministry teams, or any group in a congregation that may appeal to him or her in case of difficulties. Or, in case the superintendent knows of serious trouble in a church and no appeal is made to the Yearly Meeting office, the superintendent may enter such church and make whatever investigation or offer whatever counsel necessary. The superintendent may invite the assistance of appropriate body or Elders Board as desired. In all such cases the churches and members shall cooperate with the superintendent and give whatever information is required and show every courtesy due the office and position.
  - 8) The superintendent shall interpret doctrinal positions of the Yearly Meeting, as set forth in the *Faith and Practice*, but may also request assistance of others in such interpretation and communication to those involved.

- 9) The superintendent shall cooperate with the Stewards Board in organizing and supervising the financial resources of the church and in maintaining careful budgetary control.
- 10) Though the General Superintendent may exercise a pastoral influence in Area meetings and local churches, the superintendent will not always be expected to participate formally in the services attended. The superintendent in consultation with the Elders Board shall agree upon the number of routine contacts that shall be made throughout the year. However, a general report of the superintendent's work shall be presented to the Elders Board at its regular meetings.
- 11) The superintendent should be consulted in all arrangements for pastoral leadership. The superintendent shall be a pastor to pastors and give counsel and assistance to pastors and churches in times of special concern or difficulty.
- 12) The superintendent may serve on boards of trustees of Friends institutions of higher education in the manner of their choosing or designation and shall promote the cause of Christian higher education among the churches.
- 13) The superintendent shall keep the Yearly Meeting fully informed of needs, news and opportunities of the work of all boards, and promote giving for such ministries of the Yearly Meeting.
- 14) The Elders Board shall review the superintendent's official accounts each six months to ensure that they are adequate. Unforeseen surveys, trips, special ministries and related work may change the expense account requirements as the superintendent cares for various responsibilities. The superintendent may at times need to call in assistance that is not anticipated or to be surrounded with special advisors.

5. **Other Executive Staff-** The General Superintendent will make recommendations to the Elders Board regarding such other executive staff as may be required. The approval of the Elders Board shall be final. The responsibilities may be that of an assistant or they may be for designated board responsibilities. Persons so chosen should be well qualified by maturity and experience to carry out the appointed tasks. They shall work under the supervision of the general superintendent in any or all departments of work of the Yearly Meeting, familiarizing themselves with the activities of all boards and committees and attending their meetings at their request or at the suggestion of the general superintendent. In instances where the general superintendent may be incapacitated or give up the office, an assistant to the superintendent shall fill the office until the Elders Board is able to appoint a successor to complete the unexpired term.

6. **Other Officers-** Upon the request of the Elders Board other officers may be named by the representative body, through the Elders Board or nominating committee, in general sessions of the Yearly Meeting.

### ***E – The Elders Board***

1. **Composition-** The Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting consists of nine members who are appointed—one from each of the Areas of the Yearly Meeting. If the number of Areas is less than nine,

additional elders shall be nominated by the Yearly Meeting Elders Board or nominating committee. The Elders Board will select one of their number to serve as chairperson and also as presiding clerk of the Yearly Meeting. They will select one of their number to serve as the assistant presiding clerk. They will also appoint a secretary for their board who will also serve as the recording clerk of the Yearly Meeting. This person will come from the Yearly Meeting at large and will not be a member of the Elders Board and is there to record the business items. The general superintendent meets with this board but is not counted as one of the nine members. Each of the Areas nominates one person to serve three-year terms, one-third being nominated each year. The nominations are submitted to the representative body for their approval. The clerk's terms are the same as their terms of office. All member of the Elders Board must be active members in an EFC-MAYM church. The Elders Board is not a representative body, but rather a group of "weighty Friends" who seek to discern the Holy Spirit's direction and give godly counsel. Qualifications include but are not limited to biblical character qualities of spiritual giftedness, ministry effectiveness, wisdom, vision, and commitment to the Yearly Meeting.

2. **Meetings-** The Elders Board meets from time to time for the transaction of routine business. It may be called by its presiding officer, or at the request of three or more members, to meet at any time during the year. Called meetings shall be preceded by ten (10) days written notice to all members, with a statement of the particular business at hand. A quorum for taking official action is five (5) members.

3. **Duties and Functions-** The Elders Board attends to any business which the Yearly Meeting refers to it and is responsible for the following specific functions:

- 1) Act as the official body of the Yearly Meeting while the general sessions are in adjournment, to conduct all items of business requiring attention. All such proceedings are reported to the Yearly Meeting at the next session.
- 2) Seek the mind of Christ for the present and future of the Yearly Meeting, giving godly counsel to the superintendent within the guidelines of *Faith and Practice* and established policy, and guide in vision, direction, and emphasis as needed. The primary duty of the Elders Board is to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches and to obey God's Word.
- 3) Represent the Yearly Meeting in matters of inter-church relationships, in keeping with established policies. Resolutions, recommendations, or statements which might be construed to speak officially for the Yearly Meeting shall meet with the approval of the Elders Board or with the representatives if they are in session.
- 4) Make recommendations to the representatives regarding the employment or dismissal of the general superintendent. The general superintendent will make recommendations to the Elders Board regarding such other executive staff as may be required and the approval of the Board will be final.
- 5) Have direct supervision of the general superintendent, giving counsel and advice as they discern the Lord's will. It will conduct periodic performance reviews of the superintendent. Staff management responsibilities are delegated to the general superintendent. The Elders Board will serve as a personnel committee in the cases of appeal or grievance. In consultation with the Stewards Board, they shall make recommendations of salaries, expenses, medical coverage, retirement and any other benefits or working conditions.

- 6) Act as the final clearinghouse of the calendar, activities, programs and policies of the other boards and organizations and for the Yearly Meeting as a whole. Any conflicts in schedule or policy will be referred to the Elders Board for discussion, discernment, recommendation and, if appropriate, action. When deemed wise or necessary, recommendations for final action will go to the representatives.
- 7) Monitor and supervise the recording of ministers by the Area Elders Board to maintain a credible recording process as to quality and uniformity by the Areas, using guidelines from Friends doctrine and teaching. All candidates for recording must be approved by the Elders Board before being presented to the Yearly Meeting for final approval.
- 8) Appoint task forces or special committees for the good of the Yearly Meeting, namely those which are not clearly the responsibility of some other body.
- 9) Elicit reports from the Stewards Board, Camp Board, EFC-MAYM Mission Mobilizer Team, Home Missions Board, task forces, ministries and staff as needed. All Stewards Board reports are to be presented to the Elders Board for review and approval prior to presentation to the Yearly Meeting Representatives.
- 10) Keep a record of proceedings and present its actions and recommendations to the representatives.
- 11) Consider carefully any question of doctrine, organization, policy, or procedure which may be submitted to it by an officer or Yearly Meeting board, and to decide whether the matter should be placed before the Yearly Meeting in session for consideration and action.
- 12) Encourage, counsel, and challenge local churches in maintaining caring relationships within the congregation and community; to help local churches and pastors who are hurting or threatened; and to promote healthy outreach and ministry to their communities.
- 13) Appoint a Yearly Meeting treasurer and assistant treasurer annually. The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Stewards Board (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, D, 3).
- 14) Appoint members-at-large to Evangelical Friends International, North America Section, as requested by that body.
- 15) In consultation with the superintendent, the Elders Board shall arrange for and coordinate the non-business portions of the Yearly Meeting sessions, e.g., special speakers, workshops, memorial service, children's yearly meeting, housing, food services, printing of programs, registrations, etc.
- 16) Nominate, to the representative body, persons to serve in the following capacities. This may be delegated to an appointed nominating committee:
  - a. Reading clerk, recording clerk(s) and announcing clerk. Each clerk shall be named for a term of three years and approximately one-third of the terms shall expire each year.
  - b. Statistical secretary, appointed annually.
  - c. Five persons to be the Trustees of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, at least one of these shall be a member of the Stewards Board. They will also nominate one person to serve as chairperson. By virtue of their appointment, nominated by the Elders

Board and approved by the Yearly Meeting Representatives, they shall serve as the “duly elected” legal representatives of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting and are accountable to the Elders Board and the Yearly Meeting representative body.

- d. One person to serve as the chairperson of the caretakers for the coming year.
- e. One person to serve as coordinator of education ministries, who will have oversight of scholarships, children’s yearly meeting, and Sunday School curriculum.
- f. If the number of Areas is less than nine, additional elders to the Elders Board to bring the total to nine.
- g. If the number of Areas is less than nine, additional board members for stewards, camp, mission mobilizer team, and home missions to bring the total to nine.
- h. EFCI appointments as required by that body.
- i. Five persons to serve on FCNL on a three-year rotation.
- j. Three persons to serve on FWCC on a three-year rotation.
- k. One person to serve as the EFC - MAYM news correspondent.

### ***F – Trustees***

1. **Composition-** The Trustees of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting consists of five persons nominated by the Elders Board, or their appointed nominating committee, and approved by the Yearly Meeting representatives. At least one of these shall be a member of the Stewards Board. The Elders Board will also nominate for approval by the Yearly Meeting representatives, one of the trustees to serve as chairperson. By virtue of their appointment, they shall serve as the “duly elected” legal representatives of the Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting and are accountable to the Elders Board and the Yearly Meeting representative body.

2. **Duties-** The trustees are authorized to oversee legal matters as follows:

- 1) Sign all legal records, such as deeds, loans, etc.
- 2) Hold title to all real estate and other property held by the Yearly Meeting.
- 3) Administer trusts and/or estates in accordance with the statutes of the state(s) involved.
- 4) Hold in trust property for unincorporated local churches.
- 5) Invest all funds left with the Yearly Meeting in accordance with the stipulations made by the donor.
- 6) Be responsible for all board funds that are allotted to the trustees to manage. Disbursement of funds for loan or grant purposes are to be made only after an official request by the board of the Yearly Meeting, and approval of its terms and conditions by the trustees. Upon approval and disbursement, the trustees have no further management responsibility toward those funds unless a default exists.
- 7) Inspect, perfect, or cause to be perfected titles to property belonging to the Yearly Meeting.
- 8) Serve in advisory capacity to local and Area meetings.

- 9) Encourage charitable bequests to Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting and/or ministries.

### ***G – Yearly Meeting Boards***

1. **General Responsibility-** The different types of work carried on by the Yearly Meeting are grouped under the various boards, and a provision is made within the organization of each for necessary activity in all those realms of responsibility which may be designated to it. Any new type of work is cared for, if at all possible, by assignment to an existing board, rather than by the creation of a new board. Because most of the ministry of the Yearly Meeting will be done at the local and Area levels, the vision is to limit dependence on Yearly Meeting Boards. However, in some areas of ministry, combined efforts are more efficient and effective. These areas include stewards, camp, mission mobilize team, home missions in addition to the Elders Board.

### **2. General Regulations**

- A. Composition. Each board consists of 9 members, one person appointed from each Area of the Yearly Meeting. If the number of Areas is less than nine, additional board members shall be nominated by the Yearly Meeting Elders Board or nominating committee. All members must be active members of EFC - MAYM. These members will represent the Area in these areas of ministry. The boards are representative bodies. Members shall be “weighty Friends” who seek to discern the Holy Spirit’s direction and give godly counsel. Qualifications include, but are not limited to, Biblical character qualities of spiritual giftedness, ministry effectiveness, wisdom, vision, and commitment to EFC - MAYM. Each board is free to choose resource persons to meet with them as consultants on an annual basis.
- B. Guidelines for Board Membership
- 1) Terms of office. All board members serve for a three-year term. It is suggested that members serve for no more than two consecutive three-year terms. The terms of all board members shall begin at the board's organizational meeting listed on the Yearly Meeting program and shall normally terminate at the close of the Yearly Meeting sessions in the year in which their terms expire.
  - 2) Limitations on board membership. Realizing that the commitments of time, energy and money required to successfully discharge the duties of these positions are large, the individual member will find it impractical to fill dual positions including board memberships, clerks (presiding and recording) and treasurer.
- C. Organization. Each board is organized with chairperson and secretary, appointed by the board. The chairperson will serve as liaison to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board.
- D. Meetings of the boards. Each board is given the authority to meet as often as necessary to accomplish its mission and maintain accountability to the Elders Board. Care should be taken to give adequate notice to all members.
- E. Responsibility for annual reports. Each Yearly Meeting board shall submit an annual written report to the Yearly Meeting Representatives.

- F. Resignation or vacancy of the board chairperson occurring between Yearly Meeting sessions shall be filled by the board.

## ***H – Responsibilities of Boards***

### **1. Stewards Board**

- A. Composition. In addition to the members appointed by each Area, and if necessary additional members nominated by the Yearly Meeting Elders Board or nominating committee, the Yearly Meeting treasurer(s) will be a member by virtue of office. The bookkeeper and/or other executive staff appointed by the superintendent may meet with the board but are not counted in the nine members. The board is free to choose resource persons to meet with them as consultants on an annual basis.
- B. Duties
- 1) The Stewards Board recommends financial policies for the Yearly Meeting to the Elders Board. The stewards recommend policies for the ongoing management of EFC - MAYM finances. It will receive financial reports from the EFC - MAYM staff, review bookkeeping procedures, and implement the annual financial review/audit. This Board carries out financial policy decisions and other responsibilities as delegated to them by the Elders Board.
  - 2) The Stewards Board establishes the annual budget, taking into account the financial requirements, the resources of the Yearly Meeting, and the overall objectives of the Yearly Meeting. It recommends church apportionment policy and sets the apportionment budget. It consults with the Elders Board regarding the executive staff and Superintendent's salaries. It presents the financial program to the Yearly Meeting for its approval, and then to the local churches and their proportionate share of the total need. It will monitor the collection of church apportionments, including meeting with churches who need counsel regarding their payments.
  - 3) The Stewards Board considers the financial requests of the faith budgets of the missions and camp boards and presents these to the Yearly Meeting for its approval. It also considers any other special appeals made on behalf of these boards within the Yearly Meeting, which are above the budgeted programs of these boards.
  - 4) The Stewards Board recommends policies for investment of Yearly Meeting funds, manage endowments not controlled by faith boards or related organizations, and make investment decisions for the Yearly meeting as a whole.
  - 5) The Stewards Board will recommend policies and give counsel when any faith board goes into arrears. Any conflicts and unresolved issues are decided by the Elders Board.
  - 6) The Stewards Board shall coordinate the work of the Yearly Meeting treasurer and Yearly Meeting office personnel. They shall name auditor(s) to audit each financial record annually.
  - 7) Budget and administer funds as needed to assist retired ministers and missionaries.



- 8) Budget and disperse the Yearly Meeting matching funds to those qualified, in association with the Ministers Benefit Association.
- 9) The Stewards Board shall name archivists who are responsible for preserving records of meetings within Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting. These include minutes, membership books and other materials which contain pertinent information and data. The records are stored in steel cabinets in a locked room adjacent to the Quaker Collection in the Edmund Stanley Learning Resource Center on the campus of Friends University. Local and Area meetings are encouraged to store all their old records in the archives. The following guidelines have been established:
  - a) Documents are available from the archivist for use within the library. Photocopies may be made if the size and condition of the record book permits.
  - b) Documents may be checked out for church research upon presentation of a signed request from the church's presiding clerk or pastor, indicating what items are needed and when they will be returned.
  - c) Exceptions to b) above would require a minute from the local church and approval by any Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting trustee.
  - d) Where possible, because of their frailty, documents should be picked up in person, at which time the recipient will sign a receipt for them in duplicate.
  - e) Microfilm reels are available for many of the oldest records. These may be checked out by the provisions of 2) or 3) above.
  - f) When any of the original documents are mailed, they should be handled carefully and sent by certified or insured mail.
  - g) The archivists are responsible for the maintenance and preservation of the records in their keeping. At their discretion they may exempt documents from checkout procedure because of fragile condition.

## **2. Camp Board**

- 1) The Camp Board is responsible for the maintenance, operation, and future development of Camp Quaker Haven near Arkansas City, Kansas.
- 2) The Camp Board will serve as public relations liaisons between Camp Quaker Haven and the respective Areas of the Yearly Meeting.
- 3) The Camp Board will set camp policies and job description for the resident camp director. The Camp Board will also serve as the personnel committee responsible for hiring and firing the resident camp director.
- 4) The Camp Board will be responsible for establishing and monitoring the camp's budget each year, including its faith budget to the local churches.
- 5) The Camp Board will be responsible for any and all fund raising done by Camp Quaker Haven. All fundraising efforts must be submitted to the Stewards Board.
- 6) The Camp Board is responsible to the Stewards Board for all financial issues.
- 7) All items involving legal and property issues must be cleared by the Yearly Meeting trustees.

- 8) The board is free to choose resource persons to meet with them as consultants on an annual basis.

3. **EFC-MAYM Mission Mobilizer Team-** In obedience to Christ's call to follow His example, and His commission to "go into all the world," this board is responsible for world missions. The board is free to choose resource persons to meet with them as consultants on an annual basis. Retired missionaries may serve as honorary members of this board.

- 1) Recruit and enlist persons spiritually and technically qualified to serve as missionaries.
- 2) Arrange for special training, transportation, housing, and medical care for personnel under the care of this division.
- 3) Recommend two persons to serve on the Board of Evangelical Friends Mission.
- 4) Promote mission education for children, youth, and adults for both the support of missions and the encouragement of consideration of mission service.
- 5) Provide resources and communicate news and needs to churches for missions emphasis at the local level.
- 6) Establish and oversee a budget annually based on church commitments, with input from the Stewards Board and Yearly Meeting leadership.

4. **Home Missions Board-** In obedience to Christ's call to follow His example and His Commission to "go into all the world," this board is responsible for outreach and church planting through home missions. The board is free to choose resource persons to meet with them as consultants on an annual basis.

- 1) Analyze and recommend locations for new churches within or adjacent to the boundaries of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting.
- 2) Develop plans and methods for the financing of new churches.
- 3) Provide care for new church groups and extension churches, as well as small churches at the request of the Elders Board. This includes evaluation for future options, leadership, facilities, and financial resources (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, H & I).
- 4) Promote church planting and cross-cultural missions at all age levels.
- 5) Recruit, train, and support church planting and cross-cultural ministers.
- 6) Promote missions among native American Indians and appoint representatives to the Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs and receive their reports.
- 7) Encourage, support, and facilitate leadership training and discipleship opportunities which will produce better equipped leaders now and in the future for EFC - MAYM ministries and missions.
- 8) Partner with other Yearly Meeting home ministries in supportive ways as needed and as resources are available.
- 9) Establish and oversee a faith budget annually based on church commitments, with input from the Stewards Board and Yearly Meeting leadership.
- 10)

### ***I – The Yearly Meeting Financial Program***

1. **Objective-** The financial program is designed to include all funds used either directly or indirectly for carrying on the essential programs, activities, and services of the Yearly Meeting.
2. **Budget Format-** The budgets and treasurer's reports are categorized in accordance with the functions and administration.
3. **Budgeting Process-** All Yearly Meeting financial requests are submitted to the Stewards Board. This board carefully analyzes the total budget requests in keeping with the Yearly Meeting financial stability and presents a balanced budget annually to the Elders Board and the Yearly Meeting (Part II, Chapter II, Section III, H, 1, B, 2).
4. **Adjustment of the Requests-** The Elders Board may review the recommendation submitted by the Stewards Board. It considers the financial requirements of the plan and the resources of the Yearly Meeting. If adjustments are considered necessary, these are submitted back to the Stewards Board for consideration and changes.
5. **Proportionate Sharing-** The method of supporting the financial program is by a proportionate assessment and voluntary contributions from each local church. The apportionment is determined by the Stewards Board in a manner which is most equitable to all churches. Upon approval of the proposed budget by the Elders Board and the Yearly Meeting, it is submitted to each local church along with that church's apportioned amount. Through each church's representative, the representative body takes final action on the financial program during the annual Yearly Meeting sessions.
6. **Promotion-** All promotional activities are designed to bring the budget needs before the churches. Special designated funds must be applied as designated but proceeds from promotional activities are channeled through the Yearly Meeting financial program.

### ***J – THE YEARLY MEETING IN SESSION***

1. **The Opening Session-** The Yearly Meeting sessions are opened at the appointed time and place by the clerk appointed at the last annual meeting. In the event of the clerk's absence, this place is filled as provided in Part II, Chapter II, Section III, D, 2.
2. **Presentation of Business-** Only business that has to do with the Yearly Meeting and cannot be done at Area meetings or in local churches will be discussed at the sessions. Since business sessions can be brief, more emphasis can be given to excellent speakers, quality musicians, training workshops, fellowship, missionary guests, and the Great Commission Banquet. Any business being introduced shall be submitted to the presiding clerk whose responsibility it is to coordinate the agenda for presentation. Matters of business may be originated by local churches or by Areas. An individual or a group of individuals may submit matters of concern with the consent of the presiding clerk. The presiding clerk shall determine whether matters of business should be presented first to the Elders Board. Upon presentation to the Yearly Meeting representatives during business sessions, the subject at hand may be approved, rejected, tabled or referred to an appropriate board. The input and counsel of the General Superintendent should be sought during periods of discussion and discernment. The presiding clerk shall determine the disposition of business by the sense of the will of the meeting.

3. **Cases of Appeal-** The Yearly Meeting receives and decides all cases of appeal regularly brought before it (See procedures in Part III, Chapter III, Section III, 3).
4. **Amendments to the Book of *Faith and Practice*-** To become final, a proposition must be approved during two separate sessions held for business. After the first action, an announcement shall then be made as to which session will later consider the proposition. Immediately upon the second approval, it is an amendment to the book of *Faith and Practice*.

### ***K – YEARLY MEETING SUBSIDIARY ORGANIZATIONS***

A number of organizations closely related to the work of the Yearly Meeting may be organized and governed by their own organization, subject to the approval of the Yearly Meeting. Among them are:

1. **Friends Youth-** An organization which provides programs and activities for the youth of EFC-MAYM.
2. **Friends Men-** An organization which provides opportunities for service, projects, programs, and an annual Father-Son Retreat for the Men of EFC-MAYM.
3. **Ministers' Benefit Association-** A voluntary organization of Friends Ministers which provides for each member to make a contribution at the time of the death of a member to help with final expenses. For those who are in active service, or retired from active service in EFC- MAYM, an additional contribution is made by EFC-MAYM.
4. **EFC-MAYM Friends Ministers-** An organization which provides for an annual Ministers Conference and other programs for the ministers of EFC-MAYM
5. **Friends Women-** An organization which provides opportunities for service, projects, programs, and an annual retreat for the women of EFC-MAYM.
6. **Friends Disaster Service-** An organization which offers practical assistance to persons impacted by natural disasters, such as tornadoes, floods, etc.

## **PART III – PRACTICES OF GOVERNMENT**

### **CHAPTER I – Membership**

#### **Section I – Participating Membership**

1. **Qualification and Definition-** A participating member of the Friends Church is a person— adult, young adult, or advanced adolescent—who has made a credible profession of faith, and who, either on that profession or by certificate from another Friends church, has been admitted to full membership by the church. Participating members are those who show an active interest in the local church by giving it a major part of their attendance and support. Such members make the church what it is by their ready

participation in its activities and services, their genuine interest in its objectives, and their faithful and loyal material support in tithes and offerings (Part II, Chapter I, 4).

2. **Application for Membership-** A person desiring to be united with a local church may make application in writing or in person to the local or extension church through the pastor, or other members of the Elders Board or Leadership Team.

3. **Report and Official Action-** It is the duty of the Elders Board or Leadership Team, before presenting the name of an applicant for membership, to ascertain whether the person makes a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, the applicant's sincerity being attested by manner of life, whether the applicant accepts the teachings of Christian religion as held by Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, whether the person will conform to these Practices of Government. Its judgment on these matters is passed on to the local or extension church, which acts to accept or reject the applicant. The clerk notifies the applicant as to the action of the church.

4. **Public Reception-** Announcement of the reception of new members may be made publicly in a meeting for worship, that all the members may extend to them are welcome.

## **Section II – Non-Participating Membership**

Those persons who have been participating members of the church, but who currently do not show an active interest in the local church by attendance, financial assistance, correspondence, prayers, or in other ways may be listed as non-participating members.

The Elders Board or Leadership Team should contact individuals personally or by letter, seeking to encourage them to become active, both before and after they are listed as non- participating members. Non-participating members are to be listed on the annual statistical report, except those who are members of an extension church (Part II, Chapter II, Section I, H, 4, a)

## **Section III – Associate Membership**

1. **Qualification and Definition-** Children born or adopted into the homes of members are, with the consent of the parents, enrolled as associate members. Children of those applying for membership may be so enrolled on their request and with the consent of the parents.

2. **From Associate to Participating Membership-** Persons enrolled as associate members are enrolled as participating members when they have made a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord and have accepted the teachings of the Gospel as held by Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting. If an associate member does not make such a profession of faith by the time, he or she reaches the age of 21, upon recommendation by the Elders Board or Leadership Team, and approval by the church, the name is then removed from the list of members.

## Section IV – Affiliate Membership

In situations where persons not Friends (or Friends temporarily located) are actively interested and engaged in the work of a church, such may be admitted to affiliate membership without severing their relations with another denomination or home church. Affiliate members recognize and fulfill the obligation of regular attendance in the services, active moral support of the church and its work, and giving toward its financial program. They may hold offices in the church, subject to the discretion of the local church (Part II, Chapter II, Section 1, B). They are not counted in the annual reports of membership but may be reported separately if desired. Children of such members may become affiliate members also, or at the request or by the consent of their parents, they may become associate members of the church. Affiliate members may be received into full membership when they so desire.

## Section V – Transfer by Certificate or Letter

1. **Among Friends-** When members, or associate members, desire to unite with another meeting, they request their church to issue a certificate of membership. Such a transfer of membership may be initiated by the local church when it deems best to do so. Transfer of membership is not complete until the church accepting the certificate has informed the church which issued it.
2. **With Other Denominations-** When an applicant for membership produces a letter of recommendation from another denomination, the church may receive the applicant on this recommendation or on the person's own profession of faith or may reject the applicant as is judged best. If a member wishes to unite with some other body of Christians, the church may grant to the church of the member's choice a letter stating the member's Christian standing; thereupon the person's membership with Friends terminates.
3. **Transfer of Ministers-** (See Part III, Chapter VI, 3).
4. **Record of Transfers-** The acceptance and issuance of all certificates are to be recorded in the minutes of the churches, and the lists of members corrected accordingly.

(NOTE: Sample membership forms are included in Part V, Chapter V of this *Faith and Practice*.)

## Section VI – Resignation and Forfeiture

1. **Resignation-** Resignation of membership may be submitted in writing to the presiding clerk of the church. The church may then exercise its discretion as to accepting it.
2. **Uniting with Another Denomination-** When a member has united with another religious body which functions as a denomination, information concerning the fact authorizes the church to remove that person's name from the list of members; the church should inform the person of its action.
3. **Forfeiture-** Members who move away from any Friends church should correspond with their churches through their Elders Board or Leadership Team. In case no communication has been received from a non-participating member for a period of three years, the church, having made reasonable effort

to get in touch with the member, at its discretion, may instruct the recording clerk to remove the person's name from the list of members.

## **CHAPTER II – Pastors and Other Christian Workers**

### **Section I – Duties and Privileges of Pastors**

1. **Initiation of Pastoral Service-** The initiative in arrangements for the pastoral ministry is taken by the local Elders Board or Leadership Team (Part II, Chapter II, D), which, after due consultation with the General Superintendent, reports to the local church for its action. The local church, when satisfied with the report (to include an agreement on terms of financial support), extends the call. It is suggested that the local church formulate a written understanding with the pastor regarding the length of service, whether it is for one year, for a specified term of years, or for an indefinite time. It is of mutual benefit for churches and pastors to plan for longer terms of service. When a call has been accepted, the clerk of the local church shall so notify the General Superintendent.

When a new pastor comes from another Friends Yearly Meeting and when the person's membership and ministerial standing have been accepted, the church should request the Yearly Meeting leadership to issue a minister's certificate.

2. **Pastoral Care-** Pastors must carry on their labor in harmony with the principles of the denomination and agreeable to the provisions of this book of *Faith and Practice*, taking care that opportunity be afforded in all meetings for worship for the free exercise by members of the congregation of any gifts for service which the Lord may have conferred.

The pastor and the Elders Board or Leadership Team share the responsibility for the spiritual care of the flock. The pastor may fulfill his or her part by carrying on, in addition to pulpit ministry, a program of systematic calling in the homes of members and other attenders, by individual counseling, by giving attention to the sick and bereaved, and by helping the needy in the name of the church. A pastor should, moreover, endeavor to encourage the departments of the church, such as the Sunday School and the Friends Youth, by presence and counsel. The pastor is an advisory member of all the committees appointed by the church and exercises necessary supervision over their activities, lending incentive and encouragement when needed and giving advice and instruction for the proper functioning of these agencies. The pastor may assist them further by presenting special messages (or giving way for an invited speaker to do so) on the special phases of their work. Pastors should not in any sense dominate the work of the church but should strive to bring every officer, committee, and team to full activity and efficiency, with each reaching and maintaining complete responsibility for the performance of its duties.

3. **Unrecorded Pastors-** In cases where it seems advisable for a church to employ as pastor a person who has not yet been recorded, or for the Yearly Meeting Elders Board to approve such a person for a special ministry, the presiding clerk of the Yearly Meeting, upon recommendation by the Chairperson of the Elders Board and the General Superintendent, issues to such pastor year by year an Annual

Certificate. This certificate authorizes the pastor to fulfill the usual functions of a minister, including the performing of wedding ceremonies when proper arrangements have been made with the civil authorities.

4. **Performance of Marriage Ceremonies-** One who has been recorded as a minister of the Gospel has all the rights and responsibilities usually pertaining thereto including the performing of wedding ceremonies. The minister should exercise discretion in using the powers of performing wedding ceremonies, giving adequate counseling to those being married. In the use of such authority, and any other which involves legal procedure regulated by civil law, pastors must be careful to observe strictly all demands of such law.

5. **Annual Report of Pastoral Activities-** Every pastor employed within the Yearly Meeting sends an annual report, on a blank provided for the purpose, to the General Superintendent. Pastors make all the required statements concerning their work and activities.

6. **Continuation or Termination of Pastoral Service-** The pastor may be called for another year or term of service at the discretion of the local church; this should be done not less than three months before the close of the pastoral year.

When possible, termination should coincide with the close of the pastoral year. Pastors feeling that their work is done may terminate this relationship by written notice at least three months in advance. If the local church feels dissatisfied with the pastoral relationship, the Elders Board should meet with the pastor to discuss grievances. At their discretion, the pastor may be asked to be absent while the final decision is being reached. If a pastor's services are no longer required, the pastor should be given written notice at least three months in advance.

In certain situations, an immediate removal of a pastor may be required, due to failures in morals, spiritual values, or integrity. In such instances the local Elders Board or Leadership Team and/or the Yearly Meeting Elders Board may take such action for the good of the local church and all parties involved. Care should be given to provide a redemptive ministry to the pastor involved and to care for finances for a reasonable period of time to allow for adjustments to be made.

## **Section II – Other Christian Workers**

1. **Appointment-** The Elders Board or Leadership Team may from time to time recommend, and the local church may appoint if it sees fit, members who are not ministers to perform some special types of service for the church. These may include assistant pastors, parish workers, musical directors, vocal or instrumental musicians, youth workers, or helpers for any other service which contributes to the spiritual programs of the church.

2. **Liberation and Recommendation-** When a Christian worker as defined above feels led, and an opportunity has been offered, to perform some special type of service temporarily outside his/her own local church, the worker presents the concern to the Elders Board or Leadership Team. If this board unites in the concern, it recommends to the church that a certificate of its unity and approval be granted.



If the church concurs, it may grant the certificate, affirming the worker's good standing and usefulness in the church and commending that person to the fellowship of those among whom he or she will labor.

3. **Special Speakers-** Local meetings should exercise care in allowing persons to speak in their meetings, even though they may represent themselves as being involved in some form of ministry. Care should be taken to make certain that those who are members of other meetings or Yearly Meetings are in good standing with their meetings. In relation to those who are not Friends, care should be exercised to determine if these have the approval of the proper authorities of their own church. A special caution should be noted in relation to persons who denounce the church or teach contrary to Friends' belief and practice.

## **CHAPTER III – Dealing with Offenders**

Under normal conditions problems arising from dealing with offenders are handled originally on the local level by the appropriate committee. Care should be taken to examine thoroughly all facets of the problem in a spirit of Christian love. Where local conditions make such action necessary, the Superintendent should be called upon for counsel in dealing with any disorder or insubordination which may arise. The Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting, with the assistance of the Superintendent, are authorized to take action as necessary. The following sections explain the manner in which appeals may be made.

### **Section I – Ministers**

1. **Grounds for Investigation-** When there is evidence that a minister has lost the gift in the ministry or usefulness in his or her station, or no longer represents Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting in the ministry or is not in harmony with the doctrines and practices of Friends as stated in this book of *Faith and Practice*, a person's right to retain recognition as a minister is brought into question.

2. **Initiation of Action-** Action requesting that a minister be investigated may originate in the local Elders Board or Leadership Team, Area Elders Board, by the General Superintendent or the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. Action originating in the local body is forwarded to the Yearly Meeting board.

3. **Investigation and Final Action-** The Yearly Meeting Elders Board, or a committee appointed by them, then investigates the case and reports its findings at the earliest opportunity. If the Elders Board and the General Superintendent, after laboring with the minister in question with love and prayer, find the charges are sustained, the Yearly Meeting Elders Board approves the person's deposition from the ministry. The Certificate of Recording is immediately and indefinitely suspended and surrendered. A record of the action is filed in the Yearly Meeting Elders Board minutes, and the person's name deleted from the list of recorded ministers without further action. The action shall be reported to the Yearly Meeting. Appeals may be made before the Elders Board or before the Yearly Meeting as outlined in Section III below.

## **Section II – Erring Members**

1. **Causes for Action and Preliminary Measures-** Any member who fails to live a consistent moral life, who is guilty of disorder or of conduct unbecoming to a Christian, who habitually neglects attendance of meetings for worship without reasonable excuse, or who denies the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, is dealt with in love and prayer by the local Elders Board or Leadership Team. It is the local church leadership's responsibility to take the initiative in such a case.
2. **Formal Complaints and Further Dealings-** When the board has exercised proper care without avail, it lodges with the church a formal complaint in writing against the erring member. It must be evident that the board members have conferred with the member in love to seek to show the error and to lead the erring member to repentance and confession, that he or she may be reclaimed from their erring way and restored to fellowship with the church.
3. **Final Action-** If the exercise of due care and forbearance proves to be without avail, the offender maintaining a willful course or continuing to neglect meetings for worship (the latter for a space of three years), the church executes a minute of disownment, and the clerk furnishes the offender a copy thereof and reports to the next business session of the church that this has been done.

## **Section III – Appeals**

1. **Filing an Appeal-** When a member who has been under discipline as an offender is dissatisfied with the decision of the church, the member may file with the local church at its next regular session or the one succeeding it, an appeal to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board for a review of the case. The church enters the same upon its minutes, sends a copy to the Elders Board, and appoints a committee of three to represent it in the case before the board.
2. **Procedure Setting Aside the Judgment of the Local Church-** If it is found that the offense has not been correctly adjudged, or that the charge has not been sufficiently sustained, or that by any irregularity in the proceedings the rights of the appellant have been infringed, the board sets aside the judgment of the local church. The ground of the decision is entered upon its minutes, and the local church affected is informed thereof. If the grounds be one of irregularity of procedure only, the local church is at liberty to take up the case again by regular action.
3. **Appeal to the Yearly Meeting-** Should the appellant be dissatisfied with the decision of the Elders Board, he or she may file with the next session or the one succeeding it (but not later), an appeal to the Yearly Meeting for its review of the case. The board enters the same upon its minutes, informs the Yearly Meeting thereof, and appoints a committee of three or more to represent it in the case before the Yearly Meeting or a committee of that body.
4. **Yearly Meeting Action-** The Yearly Meeting appoints a committee, which examines into and adjudges the nature of the offense and the proceedings in the case. It considers fully the statement of the case by the appellant and the testimony of the respondents (the local Elders Board or Leadership Team) and examines also the minutes of the church recording the case. It then reports its judgment to the

Yearly Meeting, and the decision of the Yearly Meeting is final. The clerk notifies the appellant of this action in writing and reports the performance of this duty to the next session of the Yearly Meeting.

5. **Appeal by the Local Church-** The local church may appeal to the Yearly Meeting in a case where it may feel aggrieved by the decision of the Elders Board. The procedure is the same as given in paragraph 4 above.

6. **Rights of Appellant-** The appellant has the right to be present during the appointment of the Yearly Meeting committee in the case, and to object to any persons nominated for this committee. The objections are adjudged by the meeting.

7. **Notification of Subordinate Churches-** Every decision on case of appeal is recorded in the minutes of the Yearly Meeting, and the clerk of that meeting forwards a transcript thereof to the church from whence it came, with instructions to enter the same in its own minutes.

## **CHAPTER IV – Marriage**

1. **Its Spiritual Nature-** Since God instituted marriage, His will should be sought prayerfully by those who consider marriage. Minors are to get the consent of parents or guardians prior to marriage. Those who plan to marry should know each other well and realize the responsibility involved in setting up a new home. If marriage is entered properly, it can be a happy, beautiful relationship beyond one's anticipation.

2. **Legal Requirements-** Those who unite in marriage and the ministers who officiate in the ceremonies shall be careful to meet all legal requirements of the state in which they reside, such as the registration of the minister, the securing of the marriage license, the authorization of the ceremony by the minister, the minister's certification of it to those who are wed, and the minister's report to the proper civil officers.

3. **Forms of Ceremony-** Those who wish to unite in marriage may do so according to the traditional Friends custom or in any other way which they may prefer. It is urged that a religious ceremony be chosen above a civil ceremony and that needless ostentation and expense be avoided. The traditional Friends ceremony is as follows:

- A. Parties desiring to unite in marriage according to the long-standing custom of the Friends should inform the local church of which one or both of them are members that they intend marriage with each other, which church shall enter the proposal on its minutes; and, if either party is a minor, consent of parents or guardians must be given to the church.
- B. If either party be a member of another local church, the local church where the proposition is introduced should have information thereof, so that the name of the local church may be entered on the record.
- C. When any one of the members desires to join in marriage with one who is not a member of a Friends church, the same procedure is recommended as when both are members, the local church noting the fact of non-membership on its records.
- D. If any objections have been presented to the local Elders Board or Leadership Team, which they shall judge reasonable, they should inform the local church, and a committee

- should be appointed to investigate and report, when the meeting may dismiss the case or proceed with it, as shall appear right.
- E. If no objection appears, the parties shall be left at liberty to accomplish their marriage according to the Practices of Government.
  - F. A committee of two men and two women shall be appointed to attend the marriage, to see that it is properly conducted and make report to the local church.
  - G. Local churches shall not, in any case, recognize marriage proceedings under circumstances which would violate the laws of the state in which the marriage is solemnized.
  - H. Marriages under the Practices of Government shall be solemnized in a regular weekday meeting, or in a meeting appointed by the local church.
  - I. At a suitable time in the meeting the parties should stand up and, taking each other by the right hand, declare to the following effect, the man first: "In the presence of the Lord and before these witnesses, I take thee, D.E., to be my wife, promising with divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband, as long as we both shall live." And the woman in like manner: "In the presence of the Lord and before these witnesses, I take thee, A.B., to be my husband, promising with divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful wife, as long as we both shall live."
  - J. A certificate is then to be signed by the parties and then it is to be audibly read by some proper person. At the conclusion of the meeting, it should be signed by others as witnesses.

## **CHAPTER V – The Queries**

(Checklist of *Faith and Practice*)

These Queries, with the related passages of Scripture, are intended to serve as a reminder of Friends standards of moral and spiritual life. They should be read at least once a year in the local business sessions. Their use can help individuals examine themselves to see if their lives are consistent with Christian principles. Serious consideration of these questions should tend to promote the spiritual welfare of the church as a whole as well as that of individuals.

1. Do you earnestly seek to maintain a life in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you practice the daily reading of the Scriptures in your families, giving time for waiting upon the Lord? Are you watchful not to be unduly absorbed by temporal affairs? Are you careful to avoid places and activities inconsistent with a Christian character? "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30 NIV)
2. Do you love one another as becomes the followers of Christ? Are you careful of the reputation of others? When differences arise do you make earnest efforts to end them speedily? "A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35 NIV)
3. Do you attend regularly the services of your church and participate in them actively? Do you prayerfully endeavor to minister, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in humble dependence upon Christ, the spiritual gifts with which you have been entrusted? "Let us not give up meeting together, as

some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25 NIV)

4. Do you provide for the suitable Christian education and recreation of your children and those under your care, and endeavor to train them for upright and useful lives? Are you thoughtful and careful to supervise their social activities and to guard them against harmful reading and associates? Do you encourage them to read and study the Scriptures? Do you prayerfully seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your efforts for their conversion and growth in grace? "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4 NIV)

5. Do you abstain from the abuse of alcohol, drugs, and any other substance or behavior that might lead to addiction or dependance? Do you intelligently and lovingly use your influence to minister to those already damaged by such abuses? "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV)

6. Do you consistently practice Jesus' spirit and teaching of love and goodwill to all people? Do you support every Christian movement to do away with war and preparation for war? Do you endeavor to make clear to all whom you can influence and especially our own youth, that war is utterly un-Christian and cannot be reconciled with the spirit of Christ? "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy, without holiness no one shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14 NIV)

7. Do you try to observe simplicity in your manner of living? Do you frequently inspect your affairs and settle your accounts? Are you careful to live within your income and avoid involving yourselves in business beyond your ability to manage? Are you just in your dealings, punctual to your promises, prompt in the payment of your debts, and free from defrauding the public revenue? "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness." (Matthew 6:33 NIV)

8. Do you make diligent effort to acquaint yourselves and those under your care with the spiritual and material needs of the world? Do you support by prayer and systematic giving those who are laboring to extend Christ's kingdom, and do you make evident your loving sympathy with them and their service? "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth." (1 John 3:17-18 NIV)

9. Do you exercise your rights and duties as a citizen to vote, to fulfill jury duty, and in other ways to bring Christian influence in all levels of government? "Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." (Romans 13:7 NIV)

10. Do you uphold the doctrinal beliefs of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting and support its ministries? "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them." (1 Timothy 4:16a NIV)

## **CHAPTER VI – Ministerial Procedures**

Friends believe that only God ordains a minister. His people recognize God's ordination and record those called and gifted for public ministry. For legal purposes and tax requirements, the term Recording is interchangeable with the term "ordination."

Friends also believe that ministers may be called by God in a single instant, but they develop over time. They need Godly character, biblical knowledge, and ministry skills to maximize their effectiveness. The local church and its leaders play a significant role in discerning God's gifting, equipping for ministry and encouraging those called to lifelong calling.

### **1. Procedures for Recording of Ministers, Certification for Ministers in Training, and Liberation for Special Ministries**

#### **A. Recording of Ministers-**

- 1) Recognizing the Gift: When a member, man or woman, has spoken in the public ministry to the edification and spiritual help of the congregation, the local Elders Board or Leadership Team shall carefully consider whether the person has received from the Head of the Church a gift for ministry. Persons may occasionally speak, even fluently, to edification, or engage in exhortation, or give testimony to their experience, or offer vocal prayer with evidence of spiritual power without having received, necessarily, a gift for ministry. The following guidelines are suggested to help in determining who should be recommended for recording:
  - a) The person should have a clear sense of Divine call upon his or her life.
  - b) The person must have demonstrated gifts in public ministry, such as teaching, preaching, pastoring, evangelism, administration, counseling, and/or other similar gifts.
  - c) These public gifts should have been demonstrated over a sufficient period of time to indicate stability.
  - d) The person must be of consistent moral and spiritual character.
  - e) The person must have emotional stability.
  - f) The person must be showing evidence of developing maturity.
- 2) Encouraging its exercise: If its decision is affirmative, the local Elders Board or Leadership Team then endeavors to encourage the member in the exercise of the gift and to release that person into active service in the ministry.
- 3) Consultation with the Yearly Meeting Superintendent: When the local Elders Board or Leadership Team is thoroughly satisfied that the person under consideration (hereafter called the candidate) has a gift for ministry, it shall consult the Superintendent regarding the significance and process of recording.
- 4) Report to the church: If the local Elders Board or Leadership Team judges that the candidate has a gift for ministry that is worthy of recording, the clerk presents

a recommendation to the local business meeting recommending that the recording process be initiated.

- 5) Action of the church: If the church acts favorably, the clerk sends a copy of the recommendation and a written report to the Area Superintendent and the Area Elders Board. A copy shall also be sent to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board.
- 6) Action of the Area Elders Board: The Area Superintendent, upon receiving the information for recording of a ministerial candidate, immediately requests a copy of the candidate's informational questionnaire from the Yearly Meeting office. The Area Superintendent will arrange for a meeting of the Area Elders Board with the candidate to select a qualified mentor who will meet with the candidate on a regular basis, to give instruction and guidance to the candidate, and shepherd him/her through the recording process. With the mentor's help and supervision, the candidate will work to define or refine his/her statement of faith and philosophy of ministry. He/she will be asked to prepare a written statement of belief in the fundamental and distinctive doctrines of Friends and view of Friends testimonies as recorded in this book of *Faith and Practice*. The Area Superintendent shall request that the candidate have college and seminary transcripts sent to the Yearly Meeting office. The Area Superintendent may also arrange for psychological assessments for the candidate and secure appraisals from those named as references in the informational questionnaire. When all these documents have been received, the Area Superintendent will present the information secured to the Area Elders Board. The Area Elders Board then considers carefully the previous actions of the local Elders Board or Leadership Team and church and all documents submitted, giving attention to character and personality traits, the evidence of a gift and divine call, the candidate's beliefs in Friends doctrines and views on Friends testimonies, the adequacy of the candidate's formal and/or informal education, and the record of service previously and currently being rendered. The Area Elders Board then determines whether or not to bring the candidate under its care by scheduling a personal interview with the candidate. If the Area Elders Board determines that recording is appropriate for the candidate, it will instruct the candidate about the course of action that is needed to proceed (If it determines that recording is not appropriate, it will communicate the reasons for this determination to the local church). The Area Elders Board shall give instruction and guidance to the candidate under its care for a minimum of two years. For a mature person with a proven record of ministerial service, this two-year requirement may be waived with the concurrence of the local Elders Board or Leadership Team, Area Elders Board, and Yearly Meeting Elders Board. At the end of two years, the candidate will be interviewed by the Area Elders Board, who will also solicit input from the mentor. The Board may ask the candidate to continue the mentoring relationship for additional observation, development, and training. If the Board is fully satisfied that the candidate is qualified to be recorded as a minister of the Gospel by the authority of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, it then recommends the candidate to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board.

- 7) Action of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board: This board, upon receiving the recommendation from the Area Elders Board, has the recommendation and any other necessary documentation read in the face of a regular board session. If it approves the board's action it recommends the candidate for recording to the Yearly Meeting in session.
- 8) Final Act of Recording: The Yearly Meeting, no obstacle appearing, takes action in accordance with the favorable report of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board to record the candidate as a minister of the Gospel. It authorizes the presiding clerk to issue a certificate of recording and to notify the local church involved as to this action.
- 9) Recognition: The Yearly Meeting Elders Board, in cooperation with the General Superintendent, arranges a recognition service for newly recorded ministers as an integral part of the Yearly Meeting sessions. The local church may also wish to recognize its newly recorded pastor.
- 10) The Recorded Ministry: A minister is entitled to the privilege of exercising his or her gift in the ministry, of whatever type it may be, in pastoral, evangelistic, and other fields. A minister may answer a call to such types of service when it has come through proper channels.

**B. Certification for Ministers in Training-** The local Elders Board or Leadership Team may, at times, find it advisable to assist a young person whose gift and call it has recognized, in order that the person may continue preparing for ministerial service without interruption. This may be done, provided the circumstances as described below are such as to apply, by recommending the person to the Chairperson of the Yearly Meeting Elders Board, who is the Presiding Clerk, for issuance of a certificate as a minister in training. Such a certificate is valid only if the member holding it is engaged in schoolwork, theological or other, which contributes specifically toward preparation for the work the person is called to do or is receiving training in service by acting as assistant pastor of an established church, or as assistant pastor in charge of work in a new work supervised by a Friends church, or any combination of these. The certificate is issued for a period of one year but may be renewed at the request of the local Elders Board or Leadership Team, provided the conditions which made it valid are still in effect. When such a person has been employed as a regular pastor and has been recorded as prescribed, or when final action of recording has taken place in accordance with this book of *Faith and Practice*, the certificate as a minister in training is terminated.

Care is exercised by the local Elders Board or Leadership Team to bestow this recognition only upon those who have shown a vital interest and taken part actively in the work of the church and who give evidence of sincerity in regard to the call of God to service.

**C. Liberating for Special Ministries-** When a minister feels called of God to perform ministerial service outside of his or her own area, the following course is to be pursued:

- 1) Presenting the Concern: The minister brings the concern before the local Elders Board or Leadership Team. If this body unites in the concern, it recommends to the church that a certificate of its unity and concurrence be granted.



- 2) Service Within the Yearly Meeting: If the proposed service lies within the limits of the Yearly Meeting, the church may grant the certificate, defining the nature and the field of service, and commending the minister to the fellowship of the Friends to whom he or she may minister. In case the time of the local business session is too far distant for convenience, the local Elders Board or Leadership Team, through its Chairperson, who is the clerk of the local church, issues a certificate liberating the minister on behalf of the church; the clerk reports the same at the next regular business session. Special service may be undertaken under the direction of the Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting without the securing of a certificate.
- 3) Service in Another Yearly Meeting: If the proposed service lies within the limits of another American Yearly Meeting and the local church approves, it transmits its certificate of unity and concurrence to the Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting. If the board approves, it endorses the certificate of the local church and liberates the minister for the service in prospect.
- 4) Service Beyond the American Yearly Meetings: If the proposed service lies beyond the limits of the American Yearly Meetings, the local church transmits its certificate of unity and concurrence to the Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting, indicating its own concurrence by endorsement. If the Yearly Meeting also concurs in the service, its clerks add their endorsement and present the certificate to the minister requesting it; the minister then is free to pursue the performance of the service. When a certificate has been duly endorsed by the board and time does not permit consideration by the Yearly Meeting, the certificate is forwarded to the clerk of the Yearly Meeting. If the clerk endorses the certificate, the minister is free to enter upon the service. He/she informs the Elders Board of his/her action in their next session, reporting also the attendant circumstances.
- 5) Power of Endorsement: In every case where a certificate for ministerial service is regularly granted, the presiding and recording officers of those bodies which take action to concur endorse the certificate. In cases of emergency, the signatures of the presiding officers are sufficient.
- 6) Extended Service: When a minister desires to engage in special and extended pastoral or evangelistic service within the limits of another Yearly Meeting, the minister lays the matter before the local Elders Board as for other service. If this committee and the church concur and a certificate is granted, the minister submits it to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. If, after due consideration, the Board is satisfied that the minister's standing and qualifications offer no hindrance to entering upon the proposed service, the chairperson of the board endorses the certificate, and the minister is free to go. In the performance of this service, he or she must work in harmony with the authorities entrusted with such matters in the Yearly Meeting where the service is performed. In case such service is extended until it becomes indeterminate in length, a transfer of membership is recommended. When the local Elders Board being served becomes satisfied that the minister's services are no longer profitable, it notifies the church of its judgment. If it concurs, the minister is obliged to discontinue all service in that locality. Information of this action is forwarded to the church of which the minister is a member. When a church has enjoyed and profited by the ministry of a liberated minister, a returning minute should be granted, and the certificate

returned to the church which granted it. Similar certificates for service by Christian workers (as chaplains and missionaries) may be issued by the appropriate boards.

**2. Annual Report of Ministers-** Every recorded minister who is not a pastor, and whose membership rests within the Yearly Meeting, regardless of place of residence, makes an annual report to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board and to the General Superintendent. He or she indicates location and occupation and the exercise during the year of his or her gift in the ministry. If engaged as an evangelist, the minister recounts indications of success in gospel labors and efforts for self- improvement for greater usefulness. All reports are sent to the Yearly Meeting Elders Board and to the General Superintendent in the month before the Yearly Meeting convenes or earlier. The Elders Board examines carefully and individually each report. If any of the reports are unsatisfactory or if no report is sent, the Board or a committee may investigate or take action. The board does as it deems best in each case.

**3. Transfer of Ministers-** Recorded ministers who transfer their memberships between churches within the Yearly Meeting automatically keep their status as recorded minister (this will be noted on their “Transfer of Membership Certificate”). However, a recorded minister who transfers from another Yearly Meeting is received by an EFC-MAYM church only as a member (even if called by the church to be their pastor) until the person’s ministerial credentials can be forwarded to Yearly Meeting Elders Board for consideration. Until official approval has been communicated from the Yearly Meeting to the church, the person shall not be listed as a recorded minister. Once approval has been granted, the person shall be listed as a recorded minister in the local church, quarterly meeting, and Yearly Meeting records.

The procedure for approving credentials of ministerial transfers (from outside MAYM)

- A. The minister shall request a transfer of membership certificate/letter from their home church, along with any ministerial credentials from their home Yearly Meeting offices.
- B. Once the minister’s new home church has received the transfer of membership certificate, and the membership transfer process has been completed, the minister can request a recommendation letter from the leadership team or elder board (it is up to the discernment/discretion as to the length of time of membership before granting this). This recommendation, along with the membership documents and ministerial credentials, should be sent by the clerk to the Chairperson of the Elders Board of EFC-MAYM.
- C. The Yearly Meeting Elders Board and the General Superintendent will review the documents and approve or deny the transfer of ministry credentials. The decision will be communicated to the clerk of the local church.

- D. The clerk, upon receipt of a decision from the Yearly Meeting Elders Board, will present to the church in business session the ministerial status for official action. Upon favorable action, the minister is then officially recognized as a recorded minister of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting.
- E. Notification of this action is sent to the church which sent the transfer of membership and ministerial credentials in order that the minister's name may be removed from its list.

Ministers who transfer their membership to another denomination are entitled to a letter containing a statement of their position in the Friends church. One who transfers and later returns to membership among Friends is not listed as a minister until the full process of recording has been repeated on his or her behalf. A minister of another denomination who becomes a Friend is not received as a minister but may, if the local Elders Board sees fit to initiate action, be recorded.

**4. Voluntary Surrender of Position as a Minister-** Ministers, whether pastors or others, who come to feel that they have fulfilled their call and discharged all responsibilities connected with it, are urged to take steps on their own volition to adjust their relationship to the Yearly Meeting accordingly. This may be done by notifying the local Elders Board or Leadership Team of their conclusion and returning their certificate of recording. The local Elders Board notifies the Yearly Meeting Elders Board. This board reports the entire procedure to the Yearly Meeting; the person's name is then removed from all official lists of ministers.

The same course is urged upon any ministers who find themselves at variance with the doctrinal or ethical standards of the Yearly Meeting or are no longer able to meet the necessary conditions which would be required of one under consideration for recording as a minister.

## **PART IV – MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Friends University**

EFC-MAYM and Friends University remain mutually supportive of each other, due in part to the historic ties between the two. Friends University continues to build upon the Quaker heritage received from her beginning as an educational arm of the Yearly Meeting. Friends University is governed by the Friends University Board of Trustees, an independent board. However, Friends University maintains the provision in the Bylaws that in the event of dissolution of the University, the board of trustees shall dispose the net assets of the University exclusively to and for the benefit of the Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, if it would then qualify as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Friends University maintains its long history of Quaker representation on the Board of Trustees by the following provision in the University's Bylaws (which deals with the nomination of members to the University's Board of Trustees:

...the Committee on Trusteeship shall endeavor to make such recommendations so that approximately one-quarter of the board shall be composed of persons who are affiliated with or have a background in the Christian and Quaker tradition of the Society of Friends.

Friends University's name and Quaker heritage continues to influence the values and ethos of the campus. There is an informal, but reciprocal sharing of talented leaders by both organizations. Many Members of EFC-MAYM are graduates of Friends University and Friends University provides Christian liberal arts training to a segment of those affiliated with EFC- MAYM.

## **PART V – APPENDIX**

### **CHAPTER I – Annotated Bibliography**

(for further reference to Friends faith and practice)

Abbott, Margery Post A Certain Kind of Perfection (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1997) 305pp.  
An anthology of liberal and evangelical Quakers reflections on the call to holy living.

Anderson, Paul N. and Macy, Howard R., Eds. Truth's Bright Embrace (Newberg, OR: George Fox University Press, 1996) 356pp. Offers interpretive essays about Quaker faith and practice by a couple dozen Quaker leaders from across America.

Bacon, Margaret Hope. As the Way Opens (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1980) xiv, 132pp.  
The story of Quaker women in America, reflecting their equality with men before God and their contributions as pioneers in expressing themselves in public and in social reforms for more than three centuries.

Barbour, Hugh and Frost, J. William. The Quakers (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1988) 434pp. An interpretive history of the Quaker movement, with greatest emphasis upon developments within the United States. A biographical dictionary of former Friends leaders in the United States is a helpful feature.

Barbour, Hugh and Roberts, Arthur O., Eds. Early Quaker Writings (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973) Good source material from seventeenth century Quaker writers.

Barnett, Paul W. Why Am I a Quaker? (private printing, 1970) 118pp. A series of discourses on basic doctrinal teachings treated in the context of evangelical Friends concerns and substantiated by Scripture references.

Bond, John L., ed. Friends Search for Wholeness (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1978) xiv, 186pp. A compilation of articles by twelve authors who believe that Christian living demands both faith and works.

Brock, Peter. The Quaker Peace Testimony (London, U.K.: Sessions of England, 1990) A documentation of peace efforts between 1660 and 1914, written by a Canadian pacifist scholar.

- Cooper, Wilmer A. A Living Faith (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1990) 217pp. A historical study of Friends' beliefs through the eyes of a leading twentieth century scholar in the Conservative tradition, and the envisioning dean of Earlham School of Religion.
- Elliott, Errol T. Quakers on the American Frontier (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1969) 434pp. A carefully researched history of westward migrations, settlements, and developments of Friends on the American continent; includes 24 illustrations and 11 informative appendices.
- Freiday, Dean, ed. Barclay's Apology in Modern English (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1991, Fifth Printing, 1998) 465pp. A translation of Barclay's classic work into 20th century English.
- Hall, Francis B., ed. Friends in the Americas (Philadelphia, PA: Friends World Committee, 1976) 130pp. An updated edition of American Quakers Today, setting forth the history and basic concerns and activities of fourteen segments of Quakerism to be found in the Western Hemisphere.
- Hamm, Thomas D. The Transformation of American Quakerism (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1988) This is a study of the changes in worship and community among "Orthodox" Friends from 1800-1907.
- Hinshaw, Seth B. Walk Cheerfully, Friends (Greensboro, NC: North Carolina Yearly Meeting, 1978) viii, 152pp. The essential optimism of the Quaker faith as seen by Quaker willingness to move a "step or two ahead" for the sake of consistency in living out their convictions; includes anecdotes of a humorous nature.
- Ingle, H. Larry. First Among Friends (London, U.K.: Oxford Press, 1994) This biographical study seeks to put George Fox into the context of his times, using historical rather than theological analysis.
- Jones, T. Candy, Ed. The Power of the Lord is Over All: The Pastoral Letters of George Fox (Richmond, IN: Friends United Meeting, 1989) 530pp. A collection of George Fox's epistles. A topical arrangement, with titles, helps make Fox's pastoral letters more accessible to the modern reader.
- Kelly, Charles M. A Little Apology (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1964) 81pp. A condensation of Barclay's Apology..., setting forth the gist of his fifteen doctrinal propositions.
- Kenworthy, Leonard S. Quakerism (Dublin, IN: Prinit Press, 1981) vi, 215pp. A study guide on the Religious Society of Friends, giving a historical review for each of four centuries, six chapters on distinctive features of Quakerism, and five chapters on other aspects of Quakerism.
- King, Lauren A. The Way You Believe (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1991) 82 pp. Thoughts on the nature of faith and how it correlates with reason, by a distinguished Quaker Professor at Malone College.
- Kingrey, David W. and Willcuts, Jack L. Team Ministry (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1980) xi, 128pp. A model for today's church, set forth in an exchange of letters between Dave and Jack,

based on their experiences at University Friends in Wichita, KS and Reedwood Friends in Portland, OR.

London Yearly Meeting. Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, Reprint, 1973—first printed in London, 1960, with minor corrections in reprints to 1972) n.p. Fifteen chapters, setting forth historical statements which are amplified by extracts—many non-British—totaling 677 in all.

Maack, Elaine A. Biblical Teachings of Evangelical Friends (Haviland, KS: Friends Bible College, 1980) vii, 138pp. A study book in Quaker doctrine, presenting those views held by evangelical, pastoral Friends; with Scripture references and numerous quotations from writers of the 17th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

Macy, Herman H. What About the Ordinances? (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1955) 40pp. A presentation of the positive teachings of Friends about the one baptism and spiritual communion, using Scriptural support.

Penn, William. No Cross No Crown (Richmond, IN: Friends United Meeting, 1981, 1989) 156pp. Edited by Ron Selleck. A classic of devotional thought from the founder of Pennsylvania.

Punshon, John. Portrait in Grey (London, U.K.: Quaker Home Service, 1984) A short and interpretive history of the Quakers by a leading British scholar, recently serving at Earlham School of Religion.

Roberts, Arthur O. Drawn by the Light (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1993) 241pp. Autobiographical reflections by a contemporary Quaker minister and college professor, offering insights about Christian faith and practice.

Roberts, Arthur O. Messengers of God (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1996) 197pp. The Sensuous Side of Spirituality. Helpful reflections upon contemporary culture and how to find Biblical faithfulness in loving God with body, soul, and mind.

Roberts, Arthur O. The People Called Quakers (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1997) 32pp. A useful summary of Friends beliefs and practices.

Russell, Elbert. The History of Quakerism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942) 586pp. A scholarly history of Friends in England and America.

Selleck, Linda B. Gentle Invaders (Richmond, IN: Friends United Meeting, 1995) 312pp. A sympathetically interpretive account of Quaker women educators and racial issues during the American Civil War and its reconstruction period.

Snarr, D. Neil and Smith-Christopher, Daniel L., Eds. (Richmond, IN: Friends United Meeting, 1994) 266 pp. Essays about Quaker faith and practice, by several Quaker leaders.

Trueblood, D. Elton. The People Called Quakers (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 298pp. A study of Quaker ideas and how they have developed in three centuries of Friends history.

----- What Future for Friends? (Philadelphia: Friends World Committee, 1970) A report of the St. Louis Conference, "a gathering of concerned Friends"; position papers by Everett Cattell, Dean Freiday, and Lorton G. Heusel and the reactions of six Quaker leaders, two to each paper.

Willcuts, Jack L. The Sense of the Meeting (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1992) 179pp. Edited by Susan Willcuts Kendall. A compilation of Jack Willcuts' editorials for 27 years as published in the Northwest Friend and the Evangelical Friend magazines.

Willcuts, Jack L. Why Friends Are Friends (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1984) 96pp. Some convictions that shape the lives of Friends.

Williams, Walter R. The Rich Heritage of Quakerism with Epilogue by Paul Anderson (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1987) 326pp. A picture of Quakerism from its beginnings to 1986; it stresses the principles of the Friends from an evangelical viewpoint, describing their contributions in many fields; includes 3 maps, 11 illustrations, 5 appendices.

## CHAPTER II – Academies in Kansas Yearly Meeting (EFC – MAYM)

Name	Years	Location (County)	Quarterly Meeting Served	Early Principals and Teachers
Grellet (a)	1878- 1895	Glen Elder (Mitchell)	Walnut Creek, Mt. Ayr, Pleasant View	Wm. P. Trueblood, Joseph Cosand
Tonganoxie (b)	1884- 1897	Tonganoxie (Leavenworth)	Springdale	Wm. P. Trueblood, Henry C. Fellow
Hesper (c)	1884- 1914	Hesper (Douglas)	Hesper	Irvin and Ruth Stanley, Henry H. Townser
Northbranc (d)	1889- 1935 1938- 1942	Northbranch (Jewell)	Walnut Creek	Henry H. Townsend Anna Townsend
Washington	1889- 1901	Washington	Pleasant View	Wm. C. Pidgeon, A.W. Jones
Lowell (f)	1891- 1905	Lowell (Cherokee)	Spring River, Grand River	Wm. B. Morgan, C.E. Cosand
Haviland (g)	1892- 1968	Haviland (Kiowa)	Haviland and others -	Albert F. Styles, Frank Clark, H. D. Crumley

Stella	1897-1921	N. Cherokee Stella (became Cherokee)		Henry C. Fellow, Melissa Fellow (Alfalfa) Okla.
Friendswood	1901-1928	Friendswood	Friendswood	Alfred T. White, Edna Goodwin
(i)	1937-1939	(Galveston)	Tex Monthly Meeting	Frank Clark
Laurence	1905-1918	N. Gate,	Gate	Maude Drake, Eva Blue,
(j)	1919-1924	(Beaver) Okla.		Thomas J. Perry, Alfred T. White
Fowler	1906-1914	Fowler (Meade)	Fowler	Henry & Anna Townsend, Mary Franklin
Richland (l)	1914-1917	N. Vilas, White (Baca) Colo.	-----	Alfred T.

### Special Notes

- a) Named for Stephen Grellet; main building (26x36) completed 1881 for \$1,400; burned in 1895. First tuition from .35 to .50 per week; had a boarding hall.
- b) Initial financial aid from English and eastern Friends; tuition from \$5 to \$8 for each of three 13-week terms. Closed because of indebtedness.
- c) Special bell cast in the east with name and date. Closed by small enrollment.
- d) Classes held in meetinghouse until 1906; benefited by \$25,000 endowment from D.H. Dillon will. Closed by depression of 30's and migration of many Friends.
- e) Enrollment 200 plus in 1900; offered college preparatory, Latin scientific, normal, and commercial courses; owned by corporation. "The Friends Association."
- f) Offered college preparatory, general academic, and business courses, also music and painting. Visions of a polytechnic institute using waterpower not realized.
- g) Began classes in vacant store building; \$1,500 subscribed by Philadelphia Friends. Academy Hall used for church services until 1905. (See Friends Bible College.)
- h) Named for Stella Howard, first teacher at subscription school. Began classes in tabernacle tent. College prep course: industrial department added in 1911.
- i) Built in shape of cross from pines felled by Galveston storm 9-8-1900. Southwest wing completed in 1902; assembly room also used for church services.
- j) Named for Laurence Kersey who donated land; building was 24x40; two dormitories built later. The Fellows stressed projects and temperance deputation.
- k) Fowler M M established to give school official connection; teachers, quarters on second floor; school rooms used for church services also.
- l) "Brainchild" of Nixon and Minnie Rich; closed because of World War I. Walsh Q M not set up in this area until 1929.



**CHAPTER III – Articles of Incorporation RESTATED ARTICLES OF  
INCORPORATION OF THE MID-AMERICA YEARLY MEETING OF THE  
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

**(Formerly the Kansas Yearly meeting of the Society of Friends)**

**WHEREAS**, the charter of The Kansas Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends was originally filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Kansas on November 6, 1873, and subsequently amended on diverse occasions; and

**WHEREAS**, said Society now desires to integrate into a single instrument all of the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation which are in effect and operative, to change its name, and to further amend its Articles of Incorporation.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, said corporation, acting pursuant to law, does hereby adopt these Restated Articles of Incorporation, to-wit:

**FIRST:** The name of this corporation shall be: MID-AMERICA YEARLY MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

**SECOND:** This corporation is organized not for profit, and the purposes for which it is formed are the promotion and support of the Christian Religion according to the methods and insights as originally taught by George Fox about 1647, and practiced since then by the Society of Friends, and its branches, and to this end:

- a) To establish and encourage constituent Local Meetings, or churches.
- b) To establish and maintain places for Christian missionary endeavors.
- c) To nurture in accordance with the principles of the Society of Friends the Friends University, an institution of learning which shall have all the powers usually exercised by universities, with full authority to confer degrees.
- d) To receive, administer and disburse funds and property of every description for such charitable, educational, missionary and religious organizations and purposes as will, in the judgment of the Trustees, further the charitable, educational, missionary and religious objectives of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.
- e) To accept donations including gifts conditional upon the payment of a life annuity based on the life or lives of one or more persons, and to accept transfers of property and funds from any source, and subject to any conditions, provided that such property and funds may be administered and disbursed only for such charitable, educational, missionary and religious organizations and purposes as will further the objectives of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends; and
- f) Insofar as consistent with the general charitable, educational, missionary and religious purposes of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, to do any act authorized by the laws of the State of Kansas (or of the state in which the member church is located) for corporations generally.\\

THIRD: The location of its registered office and principal place of business in this state is 2018 Maple Street, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas, 67213. The corporation itself shall be resident agent.

FOURTH: The term for which this corporation shall exist is perpetual.

FIFTH: The Trustees of this corporation shall be five in number and shall be elected or appointed in the manner provided in the book of *Faith and Practice* as adopted or amended by the MidAmerica Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. The Trustees shall have all powers conferred by law and shall be authorized:

- a) To administer, invest and disburse the funds and property of the Yearly Meeting in such manner as the Trustees deem best for the purposes set forth above.
- b) To invest funds of the Yearly Meeting in any property or securities which are legal investments for Trustees.
- c) To acquire, encumber, dispose of and otherwise handle real, personal and mixed property wherever located.
- d) To appoint any bank, trust company, or any other financial organization authorized by law to exercise corporate powers, to act as Trustee or agent for any funds or property in the hands of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends; and
- e) Insofar as consistent with the general purpose of the Yearly Meeting, to enter into contracts or other agreements, to pledge or obligate its funds and property, to borrow money and generally to do any and all things which in the discretion of the Trustees will further, either directly or indirectly, the purposes of the Mid America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.

SIXTH: The corporation shall not have authority to issue capital stock.

SEVENTH: The conditions of membership shall be as stated in the book of *Faith and Practice* of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.

EIGHTH: In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all real and personal property then owned by it or the cash proceeds from the sale of any such property sold prior to dissolution shall, except as hereinafter specified, be distributed in the following manner:

- a) The payment of all existing debts of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.
- b) After payment of such debts, all remaining assets and obligations shall be turned over to such qualified and tax-exempt charitable organizations as are recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as tax exempt charitable organizations and which are deemed by the Trustees as those through whom the charitable, educational, missionary and religious purposes of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of Friends could best be realized.
- c) Any interest of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends in any real or personal property which is terminable at the will of any party shall be distributed to any tax exempt Christian organization designated by the Trustees and for its continued use in meeting such charitable, educational, missionary and religious purposes as have been

hereinbefore defined as the purposes of the Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, provided, however, that such distribution shall have the approval of the other individual.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF**, and pursuant to direction of the general membership taken on the 11th day of August 1978, we have hereunto set our hands and affixed the seal of said corporation this 1st day of November 1979.

/s/ Robert L. Davis, President and Trustee  
/s/ Billy D. Warner, Secretary and Trustee  
/s/ Philip S. Whiteman, Trustee  
/s/ Leatha R. Hein, Trustee  
/s/ Ronald Ross, Trustee

Filed for Record, November 29,  
1978 Jack H. Brier,  
Secretary of State

### **CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT**

Name of corporation: Mid-America Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends

We, Edward C. Hutson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and William A. Wells, Secretary or Assistant Secretary, of the above corporation, having no capital stock, which not for profit corporation was created under the laws of the State of Kansas, do hereby certify that at a meeting of the governing body of the corporation a resolution was passed setting for the following amendment to the Articles of Incorporation and declaring its advisability:

Be It Resolved That: The name of the Corporation be changed to “Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting”.

We further certify that thereafter, pursuant to the resolution and in accordance with the bylaws of the corporation and the laws of the State of Kansas, the governing body, at a subsequent meeting held not earlier than 15 days and not later than 60 days following the date of the above meeting, considered the proposed amendment.

We further certify that at the meeting the governing body voted upon the amendment, and the majority of all members of the governing body of the corporation voted in favor of the proposed amendment.

We further certify that the amendment was duly adopted in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 17-6602, as amended.

In Testimony Whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September 2000.

/s/ Edward C. Hutson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees /s/  
William A. Wells, Secretary

Filed for Record, October 2, 2000 Ron  
Thornburg, Secretary of State

**(Copy of Original Certification from State of Kansas)**

**CHAPTER IV – Impropriety Guidelines**

(Approved July 28, 2000 By Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting)

As part of the body of Jesus Christ, Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting hereby recognizes that everyone is created in God's image and that all people should be treated with dignity and respect. More specifically, we recognize that harassment of any member on account of race, sex, national origin, or disability will not be tolerated. You have the right to be free from racial, sexual, ethnic or other types of demeaning slurs. You also have freedom from unwelcome sexual advances, sexual jokes, comments or innuendoes, sexually explicit pictures, or any other verbal or physical conduct which constitute harassment. Any definition of sexual harassment should include local laws.

In the case of violations of the above statement, or financial impropriety (this is, mismanagement of Church, Board, Yearly Meeting or auxiliary organization funds), or other forms of conduct unbecoming a Christian, or holding to views at variance with traditional Christian doctrines or the *Faith and Practice*, the following guidelines are offered.

The normal process for resolving offenses or grievances among Christians is based on the standard set by Matthew 18:15-22. This procedure is based on that process.

Initial investigation

If someone has evidence to support impropriety on the part of a person in service or leadership role, they are to contact the oversight person or body of the church office or organization. If no person or body gives oversight, then contact the Presiding Clerk of the Yearly Meeting.

The Clerk will inform the Elders Board that such claims have been made and will investigate such claims to determine their merit, including the involvement of the accused as the Clerk or Elders Board sees fit.

Formal Investigation

Once sufficient grounds have been discovered in the opinion of the Elders Board (or oversight committee) to warrant the formal investigation of the accusations, the Presiding Clerk of the Yearly Meeting (or local church) shall meet with the accused to inform him/her of the official investigation. The accused shall have the opportunity to officially respond to the claims of the Clerk and Elders Board. If the accused feels falsely accused and can produce evidence to support that, in a manner satisfactory with the Elders Board, the matter shall be dropped.

### Discipline, Restoration

If, however, the accused agrees that the claims are true, the Elders Board (or oversight body) shall recommend the course of action to be taken. If the charges are less serious, the Elders Board (or oversight body) shall work out a discipline/ restoration plan with the accused. This may include, but is not limited to probation, suspension with pay, or suspension without pay (if applicable).

If the charges are serious enough, the Elders Board (or oversight body) may recommend or order removal from position and decide on what type of severance package (if applicable), if any, may be offered. (Use vacation time? Paid for unused vacation time? Etc.)

If the basis for the action taken against the accused is for illegal and unlawful conduct, the matter shall immediately be turned over to the proper authorities for the appropriate action.

All official meetings of the Clerk and the Elders Board (or oversight body) with the accused is to be minuted in an appropriate manner. Final right of approval regarding the disciplinary action taken shall remain with the Business Meeting of the local church or Representative Body of the Yearly Meeting.

### Right of Appeal Regarding Disciplinary Action:

The accused have the right of appeal to the Elders Board for retention of employment status (if applicable) or removal of any restrictions placed on employment. The opportunity to appeal shall be conditioned on adherence to the direction of the Elders Board (or oversight body) during the appeal process.

The ultimate objective of discipline is not to punish the offender or exact retribution, but to restore fellowship between the believer and God. So once action has been taken and approved by the Yearly Meeting (or local meeting or other body), the accused may be referred to his local congregation for the process of spiritual restoration (if applicable).

The ultimate objective of this guideline is to protect the integrity, as well as the spiritual and moral authority of the position of ministry.

## **CHAPTER V – Membership Form**

The membership forms on the following pages are provided, so that copies may be made and used.

There is also an official membership folder and envelope that is available from the Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting office.

EFC-MAYM OFFICE

2018 Maple

Wichita, Kansas 67213

**REQUEST FOR**  
**MEMBERSHIP TRANSFER**

This is to certify that

\_\_\_\_\_  
who wishes to transfer to  
CHURCH AND ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
is a member in good standing with us, and we commend him/her  
to your Christian fellowship.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church,

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

and by official action on \_\_\_\_\_.

DATE

The transfer will be made upon official acknowledgment of this certificate.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

-----  
Acknowledge on \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_

PRESIDING OFFICER

DATE

of \_\_\_\_\_

## CHURCH

### Application for Membership in the Friends Church

Having accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and having experienced the new birth (John 3:5- 8) through faith in the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and having considered favorably the doctrines and practices of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting and desiring to be associated with those of like precious faith in Christian Fellowship – I hereby apply for church membership.

Appreciating the privileges and blessings Christians have in association with one another in the church of Jesus Christ to be sacred and precious, I recognize there is a hallowed fellowship and sacred association. I believe in the church that provides the affectionate care of pastors and elders, the teaching of God's Holy Word, and the helpful inspiration of group worship.

I understand that membership in the church implies an obligation on my part to support its interest by:

1. Living a consistent and godly life.
2. Attending the regular and announced services unless hindered by a reason I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master.
3. By systematically contributing to the budget of expense as the Lord shall prosper me.

I feel that I am in harmony with the doctrines of the Christian religion as held by the church, and, if at any time I find I can no longer conscientiously work in harmony and fellowship with the church, I shall quietly withdraw and request that my name be dropped from the membership.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Are you now a member of another church? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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### RECOMMENDATION TO THE BUSINESS MEETING

The Elders Board unites in accepting the above applicant and presents the same for membership to the Business Meeting to be held at

\_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the Elders Board

**CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP**

To \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church at

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME(S)

and minor children,

\_\_\_\_\_  
and associate members,

\_\_\_\_\_  
wishing membership transferred to your meeting. This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_  
member(s) in good standing with us, and we therefore commend \_\_\_\_\_  
to your Christian care and fellowship.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church, held at

\_\_\_\_\_. On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRANSFER**

To \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church:

This is to certify that we have received and have accepted the certificate of membership issued by you for

\_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church, held this  
\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk



## LETTER OF MEMBERSHIP

To \_\_\_\_\_:  
CHURCH

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### NAMES

informed us that \_\_ desire(s) to unite in membership with the \_\_\_\_\_  
denomination of Christians, and request(s) a letter stating \_\_ standing in our church.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT \_\_ member(s) of this church in good standing among us, and as  
such, we commend to your Christian care.

Please acknowledge \_\_ reception by returning to our Correspondent the annexed Certificate,  
properly filled out and signed. This letter will be void if not presented, within six months from the  
date of issue.

Signed by direction and on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church, held  
at \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
\_\_\_\_\_, Address

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To \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church,  
\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

THIS CERTIFIES THAT \_\_\_\_\_

Has/have been received into membership with \_\_\_\_\_ Church  
At \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Title or Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION TO FELLOWSHIP

To \_\_\_\_\_ Church:  
Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ :  
\_\_\_\_\_, member(s) in good standing, has (have) expressed a desire to be affiliated with your congregation, without the transfer of membership, and we hereby commend to your Christian fellowship and loving interest for that relation. This does not transfer membership. On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
\_\_\_\_\_, Address

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To \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church:

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

We have received the affiliate membership certificate issued by you on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ and accordingly have accepted \_\_\_\_\_ into affiliate membership. On behalf of  
\_\_\_\_\_ Church, held at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
\_\_\_\_\_, Address

## CERTIFICATE OF AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

Date\_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that\_\_\_\_\_, having declared\_faith in the fundamental doctrines of evangelical Christians, has been received as an affiliate member by\_\_\_\_Friends Church.

As such,\_is/are entitled, while retaining membership elsewhere in some evangelical denomination, to the privilege of participation in the business of this meeting, and to be appointed to any office therein.

It is understood that\_will recognize and fulfill, while this relationship remains in force, the obligation of regular attendance in the services, active moral support of the church and its work, and liberal giving toward its financial program. This membership may be terminated at discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

## **CERTIFICATE OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_ has been enrolled as an  
Associate Member of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends  
Church, a local church of Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, on  
\_\_\_\_\_20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_, Pastor

## CHAPTER VI – Historical Documents

### Section I – Excerpt 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 their 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 – The Richmond Declaration of Faith, 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.

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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 VII – Evangelical Friends Church International**

### **CONSTITUTION EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH INTERNATIONAL (Originally 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 I – 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.

## **Marriage and Sexuality**

God designed marriage for humanity. As first described in Genesis and later affirmed by Jesus, marriage is a God ordained, covenant relationship between a biologically born male and a biologically born female. This lifelong, sexually exclusive relationship brings children into the world and thus

sustains the stewardship of the earth. Biblical marriage - marked by faithfulness, sacrificial love and joy - displays the relationship between God and his 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 divine 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, 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** (See Addendum – Flow Chart) Membership shall be under a two-level system.

Level I – Membership in Evangelical Friends Church International by geographical region:

EFCI – AFRICA  
EFCI – ASIA  
EFCI – EUROPE  
EFCI – LATIN AMERICA  
EFCI – NORTH AMERICA

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. There shall be in addition an Executive Committee of each Regional Coordinating Council composed of the EFCI Yearly Meeting superintendents, along with their choice of an additional person from their Yearly Meeting. The additional persons could be, but would not have to be, a Presiding Clerk. Superintendents should measure the dynamics of their Yearly Meeting and choose the most effective and motivated representatives.

## **Article VII – Commissions**

Commissions (and or Task Forces) 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 (Task Force) shall organize from its own members, with a Chairman, vice-Chairman, and Secretary. Also, it may appoint a Treasurer if necessary. 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. Officers shall serve a three-year, renewable term.

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 (Task Force). 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.

Level II: 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 to 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/task force. 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 yearly meeting.

#### **Article XII - Amendments**

The power to amend the Constitution may be initiated by the Coordinating Council of any member

Region 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.

### **Addendum – EFCI-North America Approved Policies:**

EFCI-NA's unifying statement on the Sacraments: Evangelical Friends Church International-North America (EFCI-NA) exists as a family of evangelically minded Friends Regions/Yearly Meetings, in covenant relationship throughout North America, to advance a Spirit-led movement to fulfill the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment. This mission compels us to grant liberty to one another in areas that are not essential to salvation, including the use (or non-use) of the physical elements in the observance of communion and baptism. Individuals and congregations throughout EFC-NA should look to the example of Jesus Christ, search the Scriptures, and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in how they view and participate in the sacramental life of the Church, while demonstrating respect for how the Spirit of God may lead others on this issue. As Evangelical Friends we affirm: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." (Approved 11/29/18)

Dual Affiliation: In order to reinforce the unity of doctrine and church policy within EFCI-NA, and also to guard against any groups who might be tempted to use dual affiliation to confuse, disunite, and undermine from within, EFC-NA does not sanction dual affiliation/memberships with other Friends groups, Quaker organizations, or other denominations. (Approved 1/30/2019)

Financials: Purchase requests or reimbursements should include supporting documentation (receipts, etc.) and include the signature of the EFCI-NA Director. (Approved 11/05/2019)

Good Standing: Member yearly meetings shall remain under the Constitution and Statement of Faith of EFCI. Subsequently, local churches, leaders and members shall affirm the Faith and Practice of their respective EFCI-NA yearly meeting to remain in good standing. – Constitution, Articles III; V. (Approved 11/05/2019)

## **CHAPTER VIII – Glossary of Quaker Terms**

Academy - a secondary school under the supervision of a quarterly meeting or other church unit, especially common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

Affirmation - a solemn declaration of truth accepted by the courts in place of a legal oath

Appoint - to choose a church officer, board member, or committee member by vocal approval of nominations; decisions and elections are very rarely (if ever) determined by formal vote (See "sense of the meeting")

Area meeting - an organization of the local churches in a given geographic proximity replacing the Quarterly Meeting; a business session or rally for such an organization

Birthright membership - historically, a membership based solely on the fact of Friends parentage at the time of a person's birth, discontinued in 1902 by those Yearly Meetings that adopted the Uniform Discipline; now a term wrongly used by adults whose Friends parents enrolled them as associate members at birth

Camp Board - One of the boards (in EFC - MAYM) under which the activities of the church are organized; it operates Camp Quaker Haven at Arkansas City and promotes the values of camping

Certificate - an official card or paper granted to a minister or other Christian worker; it authenticates the minister's character or position and authorizes service among other Friends

Church - basically, the body of all born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ; a term also used to designate the particular local meeting or its meetinghouse

Clerk - a duly appointed officer for business meetings; usually designated by the duty performed, as presiding clerk, recording clerk, reading clerk

Concern - a God-given interest or sense of responsibility for initiating certain action relative to people or to business of the church; a "concerned Friend" is a member feeling the responsibility or interest

Convinced Friend - historically, any adult who became a Friend by personal choice, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit

Conservative Friends - (previously nicknamed Wilburites) the branch of Friends arising from separations between 1845 and 1904, basically orthodox in doctrine but conservative in manner of worship and methods of meeting activities

Discipline - a common name for the book of *Faith and Practice*, a constitution or manual for the conduct of Friends business meetings and a statement of faith for a particular Yearly Meeting

EEA - initials for Evangelical Friends Church (in French, Eglise Evangelique des Amis) of Burundi, which developed from the MEA (Mission Evangelique des Amis) of FAGM (Friends Africa Gospel Mission)

EFC-MAYM – Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting (formerly MAYM)

EFC-MAYM Mission Mobilizer Team - one of the boards under which the activities of the church are organized; it seeks to place an emphasis on world missions.

EFI – Evangelical Friends International. An international cooperation of Friends Yearly Meetings, composed of five sections: North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe

EFI-NA—Evangelical Friends International – North America Section. A cooperation of Yearly Meetings including Alaska Yearly Meeting, Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region, Evangelical Friends Church – Mid America Yearly Meeting, Friends Church Southwest, Northwest Yearly Meeting, and Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting.

EFM—Evangelical Friends Mission, a cooperative body under Evangelical Friends International who share resources and personnel for missions around the world.



Elder - an official position in the local church, Area, or Yearly Meeting held by members chosen for their spiritual gifts and qualifications to provide leadership to the body.

Elders Board—a local, Area, or Yearly Meeting board composed of persons chosen for their spiritual gifts and qualifications to provide leadership to the body.

Extension church - a new congregation of worshipers, usually under the sponsorship of a nearby local Friends church; when size and strength warrant it, the congregation may be organized into a local church

Friends General Conference - a cooperative group of certain Friends Yearly Meetings, emphasizing Quakerism as a way of life rather than accepted dogma; most are non-pastoral and have unprogrammed worship services

Friends United Meeting - a cooperative group of certain Friends Yearly Meetings (formerly the Five Years Meeting); many are orthodox in doctrine, have pastors for local churches and a programmed type of worship that yet allows individual ministry under the direct leading of the Holy Spirit

General Superintendent - the top administrative officer of a Yearly Meeting, but responsible to the Elders Board of the Yearly Meeting

Hicksite Friends - a nickname for the sympathizers with Elias Hicks after the Great Separation of 1827-1828 between orthodox and liberal elements; former Hicksite Yearly Meetings became members of the Friends General Conference, formed in 1900

Home Missions Board – one of the boards (in EFC-MAYM) under which the activities of the church are organized; it seeks to place an emphasis on cross-cultural ministries at home, church planting, and care for weak churches.

Inner Light - a misnomer for "Inward Light", the Light of Christ or illumination of the Holy Spirit as He reveals to people their sin and leads them to salvation; this Light never contradicts Holy Scripture

Local meeting - a term for a congregation of Friends assembling together frequently and regularly

MAYM – Mid-America Yearly Meeting, formerly Kansas Yearly Meeting, now EFC - MAYM Meeting - a general term for any group of Friends, their organization, their assemblies for fellowship or for business; they were usually designated further by their time of meeting (as mid-week meeting), frequency (as monthly meeting), purpose (as meeting for worship), or personnel (as meeting for ministry and oversight)

Meetinghouse - the historic term for the building in which Friends assembled for worship

Mid-week meeting - a regular meeting for worship, usually held on Wednesdays or Thursdays, also frequently called prayer meeting

Minister - historically, any member whose speaking in meeting has helped the hearers spiritually and been an evidence of having received a special gift for the ministry from the Holy Spirit, the gift later recognized by the local meeting and Yearly Meeting by the process of recording

Ministry Team – a group of persons chosen to work with an elder in the local church for one of the areas of concern.

Monthly meeting - historically, the term used for the smallest unit of organization among Friends, comprising one or more congregations; it might apply to the organization, to its members, or to the business meeting session held once each month. It is now referred to as the local meeting or local church

New Congregation (group, plant, work) - the first phase of a religious work, authorized and carried on by Friends leadership

Orthodox Friends - historically, that branch of American Friends after the Separation of 1827- 1828 that adhered to the Discipline, upheld the authority of the elders, and favored evangelical theology but adopted no formal creed. The orthodox group suffered later divisions between Progressives (Gurneyites) and Conservatives (Wilburites) on matters of method

Overseers - historically, an official position in the monthly meeting held by two or more members chosen to exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of consistent moral living by members of the meeting

Participating membership - in EFC - MAYM those members who show active interest through participation in and support of the local church services and activities; others in full membership are designated as non-participating members

Plain language - the practice of early Friends in consistently using the singular forms (thou, thee, thy) in place of the plural forms of "you" and "your" when addressing individuals of all social levels; also, the use of numbers in naming the days of the week or months of the year instead of their more common names most of which are derived from the names of pagan deities

Queries - a specified list of questions to be read periodically in business meetings as a reminder of the high standards of moral and spiritual life which Friends seek to uphold

Quietism - a form of mysticism, especially characteristic of Friends from about 1690 to 1825, in which they felt even regenerated human nature is unreliable, so that God can reveal Himself only when man's "creaturely" activities are quiet and suspended; it kept them aloof from the world, narrowed in their vision, and caused a loss of the aggressiveness which characterized first-generation Friends

Recording - the process of formal acknowledgement by the Yearly Meeting of certain gifts of ministry evidenced by a member; Friends believe that it is God who ordains, and the church simply records the evidence of ordination

Representative - an appointed delegate of a local meeting to the business sessions of a higher meeting; for the total composition and duties of the "Representative Body"

Sense of the meeting - the feeling of concurrence, or consensus, among those in attendance at a business meeting; detecting this, the presiding clerk states it is the action of the meeting, usually without a vote

Society of Friends - the legal name of the denomination in England, made necessary by the restrictions imposed by the established Church of England; the term is retained by many Yearly Meetings in America, but others are known legally as the Friends Church

Stewards Board - one of the boards (in EFC - MAYM) under which the activities of the church are organized; it has the responsibility of preparing and presenting the budgets, promoting stewardship education and being legal trustees of real estate, charitable legacies and trusts

Testimonies - historically, a term referring to the distinctive practices and attitudes adopted by Friends because of certain religious convictions, especially in the realms of social and religious practice; today, the term is used more frequently of public witness or sharing of a personal experience with God, or a statement of praise or of trust in Him.

Trustees (EFC-MAYM) - A group of five persons who are nominated by the Elders Board and approved by the Yearly Meeting Representatives to care for the legal responsibilities of the Yearly Meeting.

Trustees (Local Churches) - A group of three or more persons nominated by the local Nominating Committee and approved by the local Business Meeting to care for the legal responsibilities of the local church.

- United Yearly Meetings - one of the five Yearly Meetings who have united their divided branches caused by the 19th century separations; all but Philadelphia hold dual membership in the Friends United Meeting and Friends General Conference
- Unity - the willingness of everyone present to make decisions faithful to God's leading while maintaining sensitivity to everyone's understanding of God's will. Although some persons may not agree fully with a proposed course of action, they are willing to accept the decision of the group
- Unprogrammed meetings - non-pastoral Friends meetings whose worship services are held on the basis of holy obedience, usually characterized by prolonged periods of silence and meditation
- Weighty Friends – a historic Quaker term referring to persons who have exemplified leadership and sound judgement in church and spiritual matters.
- Yearly Meeting - the highest unit of authority in the structure of Friends business meetings, comprising all local churches within its jurisdiction; meetings for business, worship and fellowship are held annually, the sessions requiring several days