

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.