

CHAPTER 2

Monthly Meeting

Organization and Functions

Organization and Duties

1. A monthly meeting is a regular organization of one or more congregations and consists of all persons who are recorded upon its list of members.

A monthly meeting is duly organized for the transaction of business when it has been established by the Representative Body and has appointed a presiding clerk. It shall hold monthly sessions for the transaction of business. Each member has the right and obligation to participate in the deliberations and work of the meeting.

The monthly meeting is charged with the administration of the affairs of the meeting, and has authority to receive, transfer, and dismiss members; to deal with offenders, grant appeals; to consider and act upon all questions affecting the membership; to hold and administer real estate and other property for the use of the meeting, to adopt and carry out measures for the improvement of the spiritual life and work of the body. It shall make an annual evaluation of the state of society within its membership. This statement of its spiritual condition may include objectives and accomplishments which are indicative of the spiritual life of the meeting. The monthly meeting shall make an annual tabulation of its essential statistics and transmit a copy to the yearly meeting office along with such other reports as may be requested. It may transmit to the yearly meeting, the Representative Body, or the quarterly meeting any appropriate recommendations which the meeting is united in sending.

Special Sessions

2. Special sessions of the monthly meeting may be called by either the presiding clerk or the assistant presiding clerk upon the request of three members.

Notice shall be given at a regular meeting of the congregation at least seven days prior to the date of holding the special meeting; it shall name the business to be considered and the persons calling for the special meeting. No business may be considered at a special meeting other than the business for which it was called.

Appointment of Officers 3. The monthly meeting shall appoint a presiding clerk, a recording clerk, and such other officers as may be needed to expedite the business of the meeting and manage its books and affairs. It shall be the duty of the presiding clerk to see that the business is properly presented to the meeting for its consideration, to announce decisions when made, and to sign documents on behalf of the monthly meeting. The recording clerk shall keep an accurate set of minutes, showing all matters brought to the attention of the meeting and the actions taken. These shall be kept in permanent form in a minute book after they have been approved by the meeting. The minutes of each meeting must be signed by the clerk and recording clerk and dated correctly. The recording clerk, or other designated person, shall keep a current and correct record of all matters pertaining to membership, such as births, marriages, deaths, members joining by application, transfers of associate members to active membership, and transfers of members to and from other meetings.

Treasurer 4. The monthly meeting shall appoint a treasurer, who shall receive and disburse funds as directed by the meeting, keep a regular account of money so received and disbursed, and submit a complete report of the state of the treasury to the monthly meeting annually. A report of the financial activities for the past month should be given at each monthly meeting.

Annual Audit 5. The monthly meeting shall appoint an auditing committee which shall be responsible for an annual audit of the accounts of the meeting.

Trustees 6. Unless the laws of the state pertaining to the appointment and service of trustees provide otherwise, the monthly meeting shall appoint three or more trustees for the period of three years, one-third of the terms expiring each year. It shall be the responsibility of the trustees to hold all property in the name of the meeting. Where the financial responsibility of the meeting is

involved, and in other matters, the trustees should, except in emergencies, act only in accordance with the expressed will of the meeting.

**Tenure
in Office** 7. All officers of the monthly meeting shall be appointed annually, unless otherwise stated. All appointees hold their positions until their successors are appointed. Where numbers permit, committee members may be appointed to a two-year or a three-year cycle, giving special attention to rotation in office. Rotation in office is recommended as contributing to the training of new workers and the spreading of responsibility among the membership.

Records 8. Monthly meeting records should be kept in a form approved by the yearly meeting. The official minutes should be signed by the clerk and the recording clerk of the monthly meeting. The minute books and records should be carefully preserved in duplicate. The original copies should be deposited each year in the Friends Historical Collection at Guilford College's Hege Library.

Committees

**Nominating
Committee** 1. The monthly meeting shall appoint a Nominating Committee which shall function throughout the year. This committee should represent the interests of the entire monthly meeting. It shall make nominations for positions as directed by the monthly meeting. It should consult with the proposed nominees before presenting their names to the monthly meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve for a period of three years, one-third being appointed each year. Any member of the meeting may make additional nominations to the monthly meeting.

**Stewardship–
Finance
Committee** 2. The monthly meeting should make annual appointments to a Stewardship–Finance Committee with one-third of the terms expiring each year. Responsibilities of this committee shall include preparation of an annual budget for consideration by the monthly meeting, raising funds necessary to carry out the work of the monthly meeting and promoting ideals of Christian stewardship within the membership of the monthly meeting.

The monthly meeting may appoint both a Finance Committee and a Stewardship Committee.

The Finance Committee should meet regularly, not less than once each month, to give careful attention to the financial needs and interests of the meeting. The treasurer should write checks only upon official direction.

The Stewardship Committee, when established as a separate committee, should work closely with the Finance Committee in promoting the ideals of Christian stewardship throughout the membership of the meeting. The primary emphasis should be upon service in the name of Christ, rather than upon fundraising as an end in itself. Friends will seek to avoid appeals to stewardship that employ sensational methods, legal compulsion, self-glorification or self-interest, or imply that through good works one can assure his salvation. The aim of our stewardship is the commitment of the whole person to the cause of Christ's Kingdom.

Meetings are admonished to give consideration to allocating a reasonable portion of their finances to outreach and service beyond their own local expenditures.

Christian stewardship is the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions, based upon the conviction that these gifts from God are held in trust, to be used in His service in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love. The New Testament teaches that giving should be regular, systematic, and proportionate (1 Corinthians 16:2). The tithe is recommended as a biblical, reasonable, and acceptable standard of monetary giving.

Experience has shown that efficient methods of church financing are a blessing, both to the individual and to the monthly meeting. Members should be taught basic principles of Christian stewardship and encouraged to be faithful servants of God.

Friends are admonished to give freely of their talents to the work of Christ's Kingdom by devoting a reasonable amount of time to Christian service.

Monthly meetings having more than one congregation may have Finance and Stewardship Committees, either or both, for each congregation.

Standing Committees 4. Each monthly meeting should appoint committees to represent each area of service in the monthly meeting. At least one person should be appointed for each concern. It is suggested that areas of service include those recognized by the yearly meeting, such as Christian education, evangelism, literature, missions, music, peace, Young Friends, and social issues and ministries. The monthly meeting may appoint such other committees as may be needed to accomplish its work.

Reports 5. Each standing committee should submit a complete report at the end of the fiscal year and may report at more frequent intervals as needed.

Relation to Quarterly Meeting and to Yearly Meeting

Representatives 1. Two or more representatives shall be appointed by each monthly meeting to attend the quarterly meeting. Each monthly meeting shall appoint one or more of its members to serve as representatives to the annual sessions of the yearly meeting. It shall also appoint one person as a member of the Representative Body. The meeting should consider the appointment of its clerk as one of its members on the Representative Body. It is not advisable to ask one person to serve the meeting in the dual capacity of representative to yearly meeting and member of the Representative Body.

New Meetings

Meeting for Worship and Fellowship 1. A meeting for worship and fellowship is composed of persons who are drawn together in meetings for worship, regularly held in the manner of Friends, to satisfy their desire for spiritual growth in the faith of Friends and in the practice of Christian service. Those who participate in the fellowship should endeavor to provide the proper religious training for their children and aim to extend their religious influence beyond the membership.

Preparative Meeting 2. A preparative meeting may be established by a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting and may be laid down by the same. It is similar to a monthly meeting in character, organization, and respon-

sibility, though it is generally less extensive in its organization and work. Under guidance of its sponsoring group, the preparative meeting has, to the extent of its resources, the responsibility for its meeting for worship and for its expression of the Christian message. It shall maintain regular communication with its sponsor.

When a preparative meeting is considered ready to acquire real estate which it deems necessary for the accomplishment of its purpose, the sponsoring monthly meeting or quarterly meeting may direct its trustees to hold the deed to such property in the name of the sponsor.

When the Church Extension Committee finds that a meeting for worship and fellowship, which it sponsors, is ready to acquire needed real estate it may recommend that the title be held by the yearly meeting. When the Representative Body approves this recommendation it shall direct the trustees of the yearly meeting to have the title drawn up in the name of the yearly meeting.

The preparative meeting shall maintain its own membership roll, which will be jointly held by the sponsoring monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting. The basis of membership for a preparative meeting shall be the same as to a monthly meeting. Its members participate in the deliberations and work of the sponsoring monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting. The preparative meeting may not speak for or in the name of the sponsoring organization, but it may make recommendations to the monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting on matters of corporate concern to the members of the preparative meeting.

**Setting Up
A Monthly
Meeting** 3. Alternate courses in the procedure for the establishment of monthly meetings are provided in the practice of Friends in North Carolina Yearly Meeting: a new meeting for worship and fellowship is sponsored by an appropriate monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting.

- a. *The Monthly Meeting as Sponsor:* Circumstances, such as geographic proximity or close association of members of the monthly meeting to the group of persons who have the concern for the new meeting for worship and fellowship may normally

lead to the sponsorship of the monthly meeting. The monthly meeting will establish a preparative meeting when the Friends in the new meeting appear to be ready for the added responsibilities of this meeting. The monthly meeting shall recommend to the Representative Body the establishment of a monthly meeting when the preparative meeting shows evidence of the necessary strength and promise of permanence to warrant such action.

- b. *The Quarterly Meeting as Sponsor:* Cooperative concern for outreach and growth expressed within a quarterly meeting may lead to its sponsorship of a preparative meeting. When the quarterly meeting sees the need for a new meeting it shall provide the counsel and assistance necessary for the nurture and development of a preparative meeting. Property provided for the use of the preparative meeting shall be held by the quarterly meeting trustees until the preparative meeting becomes a monthly meeting. The quarterly meeting shall recommend to the Representative Body the establishment of a monthly meeting when the quarterly meeting is convinced the preparative meeting has shown evidence of a strength and promise of permanence.
- c. *Church Extension Committee as Sponsor:* The Church Extension Committee of the yearly meeting is in a position to see and respond to needs for new meetings which no monthly meeting or quarterly meeting in the yearly meeting is in position to recognize or meet. When the committee is faced with a need for a new meeting, it shall provide the counsel and other assistance necessary for the nurture and development of a new meeting for worship and fellowship. When the new meeting is ready for the organization and functions of a preparative meeting, the Church Extension Committee should seek to find an appropriate monthly meeting or quarterly meeting which is in a position to grant that status to the new meeting. If such an arrangement is not feasible, the new meeting may be allowed to continue under the care of the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee as a meeting for worship and fellowship, with organization and functions similar to those of a preparative meeting. A meeting for worship and fellowship under the care of the Church Extension Com-

mittee may participate in the activities of, and send representation to, a quarterly meeting when consent for such participation is granted by the quarterly meeting. The Church Extension Committee shall send to the Representative Body a recommendation for the establishment of a monthly meeting as soon as it is convinced that the members of the preparative meeting are ready for that step.

- d. *Action by the Representative Body:* When the recommendation for establishment of a monthly meeting reaches the Representative Body from either a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the Church Extension Committee, it shall appoint a committee of its own members to visit the new meeting to evaluate the strength of the meeting, confer with the members on the responsibilities of a monthly meeting, and report the findings to the next session of the Representative Body. If the Representative Body does not approve a recommendation for the establishment of a monthly meeting, it shall notify the body which made the recommendation and give reasons for the action.

When the Representative Body approves a proposal for the establishment of a monthly meeting, it shall appoint a committee to serve as its agent in the first session of the new monthly meeting. The clerk, or some other member of the committee, shall read the opening minute of the new meeting, read the minute which gives the Representative Body's approval of the establishment of the monthly meeting, and call the names of the Friends who have brought to the meeting their certificates of transfer of membership from the sponsoring organization together with the new names that the preparative meeting wishes to submit for membership of the meeting for its establishment as a monthly meeting. The member of the committee shall continue to preside until the monthly meeting has appointed a presiding clerk.

- e. *The Superintendent:* The superintendent of the yearly meeting should always be alert for indications of the need for establishing new meetings for worship and fellowship and cooperate in any helpful manner with either a monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, or the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee

in all stages of the development of the meeting. The superintendent's counsel should be sought in any steps leading to securing pastoral assistance or in any steps to acquire or build a meetinghouse.

Meeting on Ministry and Counsel

Establishment 1. Meetings on Ministry and Counsel shall be established for monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. Where two or more congregations constitute a monthly meeting, the members of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall constitute committees in their own congregations respectively.

Membership 2. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall be composed of all the elders and resident ministers accepted for that service by the monthly meeting. Pastors or those serving the meeting in a similar capacity shall be members of this body by virtue of their position in the meeting. The Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall select one or more members of this body to serve as clerks who shall keep a written record of proceedings.

Additional Counsel 3. To coordinate and strengthen the work of the monthly meeting, the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may call in for consultation other persons of monthly meeting as deemed necessary.

Time of Meetings 4. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall hold regular sessions, preferably each month, but not less frequently than once in three months.

Special meetings may be called by the presiding clerk of Ministry and Counsel on request of three members of Ministry and Counsel. All members of Ministry and Counsel shall be informed of the meeting.

Appointment of Representatives 5. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint representatives to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Duties 6. It shall be the duty of this body to have general care of the spiritual welfare and religious work of the meeting. The elders should be especially concerned for the ministry of the meeting, participating themselves as divinely directed. This

body should be watchful of the interests of the non-resident and non-attending members, as well as regular attenders. All meeting families should be visited, giving special care to those who are not members and inviting them to join in membership when they are prepared. Watchful care should be extended to see that associate members are nurtured in the Christian life and are encouraged to become active members as soon as they are ready for such membership.

Relations to Pastor 7. When a monthly meeting has made arrangements for a pastor to assist in its efforts to fulfill its Christian mission, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel must not allow its own responsibilities in the life of the meeting to be neglected or diminished.

A clear understanding of the work to be done cooperatively must be reached. When this is done, the pastor may expect the full support of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel in prayer, counsel, and cooperative efforts. The pastor may be provided a job description at the time the call is issued, clearly setting forth pastoral responsibilities.

Pastoral Arrangements 8. If and when a meeting decides that it may invite a pastor to serve in its behalf in a relationship for which they both feel a concern, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall seek the counsel of the superintendent of the yearly meeting and make other necessary interviews and inquiries that will enable it to make recommendations to the monthly meeting. Any recommendation relative to pastoral appointments or changes must be made by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel to the monthly meeting where final decision shall be made and appropriate action taken.

If and when a meeting decides to invite a minister to serve as a pastor, the meeting shall provide sufficient funds to free the worker for such service and enable him to do the work to be done effectively. The salary shall be determined by the Meeting and Ministry and Counsel in consultation with the Finance Committee and included in the recommendation to the monthly meeting.

When pastoral arrangements, or changes, are being considered by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel or the monthly meeting, the pastor should not be present except by invitation of the meeting considering the matter.

Memorials 8. Memorials sharing the life and ministry of deceased Friends may be prepared by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and referred to the monthly meeting to which said member belonged. If approved by the monthly meeting, such memorials shall be recorded in its minutes and a copy inserted in a book of memorials to be provided by the meeting. Depending on the extent of the Christian service of the Friend beyond the limits of his local meeting, copies of the memorial may be sent to the quarterly meeting and to the yearly meeting to be placed in the Friends Historical Collection of Guilford College's Hege Library. A memorial service is held during the annual sessions recognizing Friends who have died during the year.

State of Society 9. The Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall annually appoint one or more of its members to prepare and present to its sessions a report of the spiritual condition of the monthly meeting. The report when approved shall be forwarded to the monthly meeting for its consideration and disposition. The report shall cover such activities giving evidence of spiritual vitality of the members, their social concerns, special Christian work in which members may be engaged outside the limits of the meeting, the quality of the ministry in the meetings for worship, and significant accomplishments which may give incentive to others.

When the monthly meeting has seriously considered and approved this report, copies should be made available to the entire meeting and copies forwarded to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel should prepare a summary to be sent to Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Elders

Appointment 1. The Nominating Committee of the monthly meeting shall annually propose to the monthly meeting the names of persons who in their judgment possess or may develop the capacities of spiritual discernment and leadership qualifying them for the position of elder. They should also have a good understanding of and dedication to the principles and work of the Religious Society of Friends. If the nominations received are satisfac-

tory to the monthly meeting, it shall proceed with their appointment. Each monthly meeting should have at least six elders so that a breadth of counsel will give weight to their conclusions. One-third of the elders shall be appointed each year. Without sacrificing efficiency or the spiritual quality of the meeting, attention should be given to providing rotation in office as a means by which other Friends with gifts may be introduced to the responsibility of membership in the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Both men and women should be appointed, and a range of ages and spiritual gifts should be included. Continual reappointment without adequate ability and spiritual concern may be detrimental to the development of the meeting.

Duties of Elders 2. Elders should jointly feel the responsibility for the spiritual condition of the members and cooperate with, encourage, and strengthen those who share in public ministry and pastoral work. They should have an understanding of the scriptures, the teaching of Christianity, and a knowledge of the work and purpose of Friends.

Because of the delicate and sensitive nature of much of their work, elders must observe the highest levels of confidentiality.

Elders share in responsibility for appropriate vocal ministry in meetings for worship and should encourage others who give acceptable vocal ministry in meeting for worship evidencing true spiritual leading. They should seek to guide into helpful lines of service those who do not give such evidence. They should be alert to find and suggest avenues of service, especially to new or young members.

Elders should tenderly discuss with members of the meeting as to their spiritual condition and, in friendly helpfulness, endeavor to aid all in the attainment of a high standard of Christian life and unselfish service. Elders should exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of a consistent moral life by the members of the meeting. If the occasion arises, elders should gently counsel any member whose behavior, values, or attitudes are contrary to the Christian faith or out of unity with Friends' principles. Elders should endeavor to guide members toward an orderly life and useful service in full fellowship with the meeting.

Not Transferable 3. The position of elder is not transferable to another meeting.

Ministers

Procedure for the Recording of Ministers

Evidence of Gift 1. When a member has spoken in the public ministry to the edification and spiritual help of the meeting, and has rendered said service in such a manner and afforded a basis for the formation of a judgment as to the nature of his gifts and calling, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall carefully consider whether there is evidence of a gift in the ministry that should be officially recognized. While a spoken message may be helpful in its place, and should be esteemed and encouraged accordingly, not every person who speaks in public should be given official recognition. Recording should enhance and improve the opportunity for service, not simply bestow an honor. It should be borne in mind that such recognition in ministry is not only a seal of approval of one who is locally helpful, but that it also involves extension of service beyond the local community. Recorded ministers not only have opportunity for service among Friends generally, but because of the increase of interdenominational activity, such recognition opens the way for contacts and associations with ministers and members of other religious bodies.

Character and Qualifications 2. A recorded Friends minister must be a member of a monthly meeting within North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM), above reproach in character, and a person of deep religious experience and dedication. Such a person must have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and of Friends' testimonies and ideals, possessing the skills of a competent leader without being "priestly" or losing the spirit and status of the servant. In financial and business affairs the minister must be of scrupulous honesty and integrity, in all respects an example of Christian living. The minister is expected to meet the standards of daily living set forth in the Queries.

Responsibility of Monthly Meeting 3. When the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is satisfied a member has a gift in the ministry, and is of suitable character and aptitude, it

shall report its recommendation to monthly meeting. The monthly meeting should consider the recommendation. If approved, the recommendation should be returned to the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel which shall forward a minute of this action to the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Responsibility of Quarterly Meeting 4. The Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall upon receipt of the recommendation from the local monthly meeting appoint a committee to appraise the general fitness of the individual under consideration and report its findings back to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If the report is favorable, the recommendation shall be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel by an extract from the minutes of the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Continuing the Recording 5. If the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel approves the action of the quarterly meeting, it shall entrust the person to the care of the Committee on Training and Recording of Ministers (see page 104). This committee shall have the person under its care until all requirements of the yearly meeting are fulfilled. In case an individual placed under the care of the committee shows no interest in doing the prescribed study for a period of three years, the committee may recommend to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel that the person no longer be considered for recording. (The committee may at its discretion make work assignments to individual Friends requesting same, providing it is clearly understood that such voluntary study is for personal Christian nurture, and not as a part of the recording process.)

When an individual who has been placed under the care of the committee by the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel has completed the prescribed course of study, the committee shall review again the general fitness, character, and aptitude of the individual for the ministry. A statement of this evaluation shall be included with its report to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If this report is favorable, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may, after full and careful consideration, recommend to the yearly meeting that the member under consideration be recorded as a minister (see p. 104).

Final Action 6. When the yearly meeting has acted favorably, the recording is completed. The clerk shall furnish a copy of the minute to the quarterly meeting, to the monthly meeting where the process originated, and to any other concerned monthly meeting. Such meetings shall enter this minute on their books of record. The individual thus recorded shall also be furnished a copy of this minute.

The yearly meeting may, upon request, issue to recorded ministers in good standing certificates or cards which may be used for identification purposes. These shall be valid for one year only and shall be signed by the clerk of the yearly meeting and the superintendent.

Disapproval 7. When a recommendation to record a member as a minister is not approved, the body taking this action shall so inform the referring meetings.

Reconsideration 8. Friends should recognize clearly that the status of recorded minister is not necessarily of lifelong continuance. In case a member who has been recorded as a minister willfully and deliberately neglects the call and is inactive in the ministry over a period of five years, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, after full and careful consideration of the circumstances, shall recommend to the yearly meeting that the recorded minister's name be dropped from the list of recorded ministers. Illness or retirement shall not be considered as cause for discontinuing a person's status as a recorded minister.

If a recorded minister violates ethical standards, indulges in conduct unbecoming to a minister of the Gospel, or so lives as to bring reproach upon the church, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may consider a proposal to discontinue the person's status as a recorded minister. Such a proposal may originate in a Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel of which the person is a member and be recommended to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, or it may originate in the latter body. In either case, the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall appoint a committee to make the necessary inquiry and report back to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. If that body finds that the ministerial status of the person being investigated should be terminated, it shall report its decision to

the yearly meeting for final action. The person being investigated and the monthly meeting to which the person belongs shall be notified before the final action is taken, and care shall be exercised that any rights involved are fully safeguarded.

Accepted Pastoral Supply 9. In some instances a person feeling a call to the ministry may have the general qualifications and ability to do accepted pastoral work but may find some obstruction (such as obtaining an undergraduate degree) to qualify for full recording status. All other requirements for recording must be met to qualify for Accepted Pastoral Supply status. After five years of continuous service as a minister in North Carolina Yearly Meeting, the person designated Accepted Pastoral Supply could become a recorded minister.

In such cases the Committee on Recording shall make a recommendation to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel that this person be recognized as Accepted Pastoral Supply and granted an appropriate certificate. Appropriate minutes shall be sent in behalf of the individual in the same manner as recording.

The status of Accepted Pastoral Supply shall be terminated by (1) the completion of the recording process, (2) failure to serve as pastoral supply for a period of one year, or (3) for conditions set forth under "Reconsideration." Should reconsideration become necessary the procedure shall be the same as for recorded ministers.

Transfer of Recording 10. The recording of a minister is transferable with the certificate of membership from one yearly meeting to another. It is expected, however, that a minister planning to engage in the pastoral ministry will endeavor to meet the educational and other requirements to which the transfer is made.

Immediately upon accepting a pastorate in North Carolina Yearly Meeting, the minister's credentials shall be made available for review. The yearly meeting Committee on Training and Recording of Ministers shall review the credentials and make a report of their findings to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The minister shall be expected to fulfill equivalent requirements for recording in North Carolina Yearly Meeting. Further work, including the study of Friends'

history and principle, may be required. The Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall furnish a certificate of authorization to each pastor who meets established criteria for serving in the yearly meeting.

Any person ordained in a different denomination seeking to be recorded by North Carolina Yearly Meeting shall be subject to the requirements of the Recording Committee.

The Recording Committee may issue a temporary certificate of authorization. Before the recording process can begin, the individual must be a member of a monthly meeting in the yearly meeting. If the candidate has not begun the process within two years, this lack of progress shall be reported to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel which may withdraw the certificate of authorization.

Minutes for Service

Minute Granted 1. When any Friend feels the call of God to service beyond the limits of the person's yearly meeting, the person shall present the concern to the monthly meeting of which the person is a member. If this meeting concurs, it shall transmit a written statement of the nature and field of the proposed service together with an expression of its unity and concurrence herein to the clerk of the quarterly meeting who shall in turn, if the meeting approves, transmit the same to the clerk of the Representative Body of the yearly meeting. If that body approves, it shall grant the applicant a minute defining the nature and field of service and expressing the unity and concurrence of the yearly meeting through its Representative Body. Monthly meetings may grant Letters of Introduction for members who will be visiting within the limits of other yearly meetings.

Minute Returned 2. All minutes or letters should be returned to the meetings that granted them upon completion of service.

Pastoral Meetings

The Pastor and the Meeting 1. Pastors should recognize the opportunity for public ministry in the meeting for worship. They should prepare themselves by careful, prayerful

study to expound the scriptures, to awaken the consciences of those who hear, to inspire a longing for Christ, and to guide all the congregation, particularly young people and children, in the search for God and the Christian way of life. They should realize the value of silent worship and respect the privilege and responsibility of others to participate in the vocal ministry of the meeting.

The Pastor and the Community 2. In the development of a sense of responsibility on the part of the meeting toward the community, pastors should maintain an interest in public affairs and should cooperate with other churches and associations in fostering in every possible way the welfare of the community.

The Pastor and the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel 3. The pastor shall be a member but not an officer of the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The pastor should present concerns for the consideration of this body but have no more authority over its decisions than other members. All matters of policy affecting the meeting for worship, the undertaking of special evangelistic efforts, and programs of work should be submitted to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for discussion and decision.

The Pastor and Committees 4. At the discretion of individual monthly meetings, pastors may be asked to sustain a cooperative relationship with all the committees of the meeting, assisting in their programs and policies.

Pastoral Secretary 5. Some meetings employ pastoral secretaries instead of pastors. They are generally not recorded ministers. Their relationship to the committees of the monthly meeting and to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel is the same as that of pastors.

Non-Pastoral Meetings

Responsibilities In most of the local meetings of this yearly meeting pastors assist in the accomplishment of the purposes of the meetings. For this reason the above standards and procedures relative to the pastor are deemed necessary. However, in some of the local meetings the full responsibility for worship and work is carried by the membership of the meeting without the assistance of a pastor.

Friends should give aid and encouragement to local meetings to find, through prayer and experience, the form of worship and the fields of service which enable them to meet to the fullest extent the spiritual needs of those within the limits of the meeting.

Rules of Membership

Reception by Application 1. Application for membership should be made in writing to the monthly meeting. This application should be acknowledged by the clerk and directed to the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Application for membership in a preparative meeting should be made in the same manner as with a monthly meeting and the same guidelines followed. The preparative meeting should seek the advice of the sponsoring organization, then act upon the application and send a notice of its action to the sponsor.

Steps to Membership 2. It shall be the duty of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel to guide applicants for membership in their search for Truth. It shall designate one or more of its members to confer with the applicant at an early date. It is not the purpose of the conference to conduct a pointed examination. The purpose is to share views and to ascertain whether the applicant seeks a fuller understanding of the basic principles of Christian living, finds satisfaction in the faith of Friends, and desires to join with Friends in a corporate and continuing search for Truth. It should be made clear to the applicant that regular attendance of meetings for worship and business and a willingness to support the work and services of the meeting with one's time, talents, and financial resources are responsibilities of membership.

After hearing the discernment of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, the monthly meeting shall act upon the application for membership.

Welcome 3. The monthly meeting clerk shall inform the applicant of the action of the monthly meeting. If it has been favorable, a committee may be appointed to visit and welcome the applicant into membership. Announcement of the applicant's membership may be made at a regular meeting for worship

when all members may have an opportunity to extend a welcome such as the right hand of fellowship.

Associate Members 4. Parents and guardians may make application for the enrollment of minor children as associate members, when applying for membership or when transferring from other denominations. If only one parent is a member, the children may be enrolled as associate members upon the request of that parent and the consent of the other. Such requests shall be made to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Children of non-members may be received into associate membership upon parent request and recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Associate to Active 5. An associate member may apply for active membership on the same basis as any other applicant.

When an associate member reaches the age of maturity and fails to apply for active membership, the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel shall endeavor to provide the counsel and care that may help encourage a decision about membership.

Transfer of Membership 6. Members moving to the limits of another monthly meeting should request the transfer of their membership to that meeting. At the discretion of the monthly meeting, certificates shall be issued for such members if requested. The monthly meeting receiving a certificate shall inform the meeting which issued it of the action taken thereon. A certificate of membership shall be issued to a monthly meeting and shall be sent to the clerk thereof, who shall submit it to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for consideration and appropriate recommendation to the monthly meeting.

Quarterly meetings and the yearly meeting Church Extension Committee shall issue certificates of membership for members of preparative meetings under their care.

Joining Other Bodies 7. If a member in good standing wishes to unite with some other denomination, the monthly meeting may issue a letter of recommendation to the church chosen by the member, whereupon membership with Friends shall cease.

Church Letters 8. When an applicant for membership brings a letter of recommendation from another denomination, the monthly meeting may exercise its judgment in regard to receiving the applicant on this recommendation. All certificates and letters should first be presented to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel.

Records 9. The acceptance and issuance of all certificates and letters shall be recorded in the minutes of the monthly meeting and the list of members shall be changed accordingly. Removal certificates for recorded ministers shall include a statement of their recording.

Resignation 10. Resignation of membership shall be made in writing to the monthly meeting. The monthly meeting may exercise its discretion in accepting a resignation. Before taking action, however, the matter should be referred to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel for study and recommendation.

Forfeiture 11. When any member becomes a member of another meeting or denomination without having requested a letter of recommendation, the monthly meeting, upon verification, shall remove the member's name from its list of members and inform the member of its action.

Discontinuance 12. A member moving beyond the limits of the monthly meeting should correspond with the meeting and contribute to its support. Monthly meetings should correspond with absent members. If no information has been received from a member for a period of three years, the monthly meeting, upon recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel after due care and concern has been exercised, may remove the name from its list of members.

Dismissal 13. When any member habitually neglects attendance at meeting, fails to contribute to its support, and is generally inactive in the work of Friends, the monthly meeting may refer the matter back to the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. Elders should prayerfully counsel with the member, after which the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel may recommend to the monthly meeting that the name be removed from the monthly meeting membership list.

Associate Membership Discontinued 14. An associate member who shows no interest in becoming an active member after reaching a mature age, upon recommendation of the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, may be removed from the list of members.

Dealing with Problems

Disownment 1. All formal complaints against a member shall be introduced to the monthly meeting by the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The monthly meeting shall appoint a committee to confer with the offender. The committee shall endeavor, in a spirit of love and tenderness, to resolve the difficulties and to lead the individual to that state of mind and heart that will enable the member to be restored to fellowship with the monthly meeting. If the exercise of due care and forbearance shall be of no avail, the monthly meeting shall execute a minute of disownment and furnish the person involved with a copy. The membership records of the monthly meeting shall be corrected accordingly.

Right of Appeal 2. When an offender is dissatisfied with the decision of the monthly meeting, the decision is appealable to the quarterly meeting for a review of the case. Such an appeal must be filed with the clerk of quarterly meeting within three months following the decision of the monthly meeting. If the quarterly meeting upholds the decision of the monthly meeting, the member may appeal to the next meeting of Representative Body or annual session of yearly meeting. The decision of the yearly meeting shall be final.

When a case is reviewed before a quarterly meeting or yearly meeting, a committee of three shall be appointed to represent the meeting from which the appeal is made. When meetings consider appeals, they shall endeavor to exercise a spirit of fairness and goodwill. Frequently, hearings of a case can be conducted by common accord before a judicious and representative committee appointed by the meeting to which appeal is made.

Marriage When Arranged by the Meeting

Significance 1. Throughout their history as an organization, Friends have provided a form of ceremony in keep-

ing with the belief in the deep religious significance of marriage. The avoidance of undue haste, the emphasis upon the equality of the sexes, the responsibility assumed by the monthly meeting, the thoughtful attention given to the religious, moral, and physical qualifications, and the impressive statement of the marriage vows by the contracting parties are all important features of the Friends' marriage practice. Persons desiring to unite in marriage through the meeting shall proceed as follows:

Report Intentions 2. The individuals desiring to be married under the care of monthly meeting shall report their intentions to the monthly meeting of which either is a member. If both are Friends, this is done by obtaining a statement of certification¹ for each person signed by two or more elders of the meeting to which each person belongs to the effect that no obstruction to their proposed marriage appears. These certificates and a letter declaring their intent are submitted to the monthly meeting under whose care they wish to be married, which may then proceed according to the rules of *Faith and Practice* and the provisions of the law of the state.²

Committee Appointed 3. If certifications are not presented or if for other causes inquiry is desired by the monthly meeting of either person, the monthly meeting may appoint a committee of inquiry consisting of two men and two women to seek further clearness for the marriage. They may consider such things as maturity, clearness from other engagements, the consent of parents or guardians in the case of minors, and rights of children by a previous marriage, if there are such. If the parties belong to different meetings, a committee may be appointed in each meeting. Reports may be made to the next regular sessions of monthly meetings or to special sessions, and, if the reports are found to be satisfactory, they shall be sent to the meeting in which the marriage is to be held, and the parties will be at liberty to proceed accordingly.

¹ See *A Wedding After the Manner of Friends*, published by North Carolina Yearly Meeting (1975, revised 2000).

² See Appendix G.

One Not A Member 4. If one person is not a member of Friends, certifications, prepared as in paragraph 2, should be presented to the monthly meeting of which the other party is a member; or a committee may be appointed by said meeting which may proceed as in paragraph 3.

Non-members 5. A monthly meeting may allow a marriage ceremony within the meeting when both persons are non-members. In such a case the meeting shall appoint a committee to proceed as in paragraph 3, or, alternately, certifications shall be signed by three elders of the monthly meeting to which the application is addressed. If the findings of the committee or the certifications are satisfactory, the proceedings in relation to the proposed marriage shall be in the same manner as if the contracting persons were members of Friends.

Oversight of Marriage 6. After a couple has been liberated to proceed with arrangements for their marriage, a committee of oversight consisting of not less than two women and two men shall be appointed by the monthly meeting to attend the marriage and report to the following session of the monthly meeting as to whether it has been properly solemnized.

Marriage in Meeting 7. The marriage shall be solemnized in a meeting for worship at a time convenient to the contracting persons (Appendix E).

Certificate 8. Following the marriage a certificate shall be signed by the couple. The certificate shall then be audibly read by a designated person. At the conclusion of the meeting it shall be signed by others as witnesses (Appendix F).

Officiant 9. The pastor, recorded minister, or other clergy may assist in the solemnization of a marriage within the meeting, if the couple so desires. If the marriage ceremony is performed without participation of a pastor, recorded minister, or other clergy, the presiding clerk of the monthly meeting is authorized to certify the marriage to the appropriate legal authorities.

With the Minister Participating

Meeting's Concern 1. Members of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting, influenced by the general acceptance of pasto-

ral leadership, recognize the fact that many young people are looking to pastors and other Friends ministers for guidance in relation to marriage. The meeting should share a concern for the happiness and spiritual welfare of those who request the pastor to participate in the solemnization of their marriage. It should cooperate in every possible way with the pastor in keeping the marriage procedure harmonious with the ideals of Friends.

Advice to Ministers 2. Pastors and recorded ministers are recognized by the state as qualified to perform the functions of clergymen in the solemnization of marriage. They are advised, therefore, to exercise due care to observe all legal requirements as set by the several states, and also to endeavor to make the exchange of marriage vows a matter of the deepest religious import to the contracting parties and to all who are present.

Counseling 3. Pastors are encouraged to conduct classes for young people in which helpful counsel may be given to those contemplating marriage and to all youth in the matter of choosing their life companions. Personal counsel with individuals and couples is also advised. But in cases where previous consultation has not been possible, pastors are urged to ascertain as fully as they are able all circumstances that would concern the qualifications of the contracting parties for marriage and to satisfy themselves that all legal and moral requirements have been observed.

Marriage Service 4. Pastors and other ministers are encouraged to use a marriage service in keeping with the ideals of Friends. In recognition of the importance of pastoral leadership in ever widening areas and the prevalence of pastoral service in connection with marriage, a ceremony is provided for the help it may give those who feel the need for guidance (Appendix H).