

Discipline Committee Report to PYM, July 2014

Submitted by Carolyn Stephenson, Clerk, Discipline Committee

Discipline Committee met October 18-19, 2013 and January 31-February 1, 2014 in Los Altos, California. Present were: Liz Baker, Stratton Jaquette, Carolyn Stephenson, Jan Tappan, and DJ Bloom. Representative Committee in March 2014 approved Discipline Committee's recommendation to bring to the PYM Annual Session a minute to begin revision of *Faith and Practice*.

Minute on revision of *Faith and Practice*

With the understanding that our faith recognizes that we are brought continuing revelation, Discipline Committee agreed that our light so far leads us to conclude that it is time to ask Pacific Yearly Meeting to undertake a revision of *Faith and Practice*. The preponderance of evidence after 13 years of Discipline Committee receiving inputs, questions, and concerns, along with changes to the organization and structure within the Yearly Meeting, brings us to the conclusion that the current *Faith and Practice* is not adequately serving the needs of the Yearly and Monthly Meetings.

With the approval of Representative Committee, Discipline Committee asks that Pacific Yearly Meeting approve the following minute:

Pacific Yearly Meeting approves beginning on the next revision of our *Faith and Practice*.

Background:

Faith and Practice is an evolving document, representing the growing experience of Pacific Yearly Meeting Friends in seeking to know and follow the Inner Light. Earlier editions were published in 1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1965, 1973, 1985, and 2001. Friends will notice that 16 years elapsed between the 1985 and 2001 editions, and that it has now been 13 years since the 2001 edition, and that much has changed in the world and in PYM since that time. Given that it will likely take at least 5 years to revise the current *Faith and Practice*, many Friends and PYM Meetings have asked the Discipline Committee whether it might now be overdue to begin on such a revision. Among the concerns and issues raised have been:

Possible changes to the Advices and Queries in both format and substance. This includes a recommendation from one Monthly Meeting for a revision of the Advices on Personal Relationships.

Possible changes to the section on testimonies, including consideration of whether Earthcare is now recognized among us as a testimony.

Concerns that the section on minutes is incomplete and unclear and needs revision along the lines of the workshops that Discipline Committee provided several years ago.

Concerns from a Monthly Meeting about appropriate records-keeping, as well as revisions in Whittier College PYM and Monthly Meeting records-keeping procedures.

Changes to PYM Committee structures, including the laying down of East-West Relations Committee, and the creation of a Youth Program Coordinating Committee.

Need for greater clarity on committee responsibilities.
Concerns on a more explicit statement of the core or source of our faith.
Concerns on more explicit statement of our Christian origins.
A need to adapt to modern technologies for maximum accessibility.

While there was substantial support for beginning on a revision of *Faith and Practice* at Pacific Yearly Meeting 2013, concerns were raised about the costs in time, effort, and money that would be required. Therefore, Discipline Committee suggests both a return to a revision committee size as practiced in editions prior to the 2001 revision, when the size was doubled, and urges that the committee attempt to bring revisions for PYM's consideration in a much shorter time than the decade the last revision took. It also recommends that the revision committee embark on a well-designed process of consultation with Monthly Meetings to ensure widespread involvement in the revision process, which might well help to re-energize us as a yearly meeting.

Discipline Committee Interest Group.

Discipline Committee will sponsor an interest group at this annual session:
“*Faith and Practice* as a Living Document”

Description: We envision discussion on what parts of *Faith and Practice* you use most often, that are most meaningful, valuable, to you. We will ask Friends to picture themselves 5-10 years from now: what should *Faith and Practice* look like and how do you see yourself or your meeting using it then?