I realize that each of us is coming here with a mixture of emotions. I was thinking about how this is the first yearly meeting I’ve been to that was not held at George Fox University. This is a beautiful space and a great choice. Thank you to the Quarterly Gathering Committee for your great work.

It is with joy that we gather, but also with pain and sadness for what didn’t work out. I find myself coming to this session feeling excited and happy to be with you all, and feeling joyful about this community we’re creating, and also with a deep sadness that the Quaker process we believe and hope in did not work. I carry that as a heavy burden this weekend, that we care about listening to the Spirit together, listening to God through one another, but to put it plainly, sometimes it feels like our Quaker way failed in our yearly meeting. That is a hard place to be coming into this session from. I want to acknowledge that we are in a space of asking questions of ourselves, and of God, and of our community. Is this Quaker thing something that is really going to work?

And yet I find myself willing and excited to keep working on this and journeying with you all, trusting that the Spirit we feel and know and believe in is continuing to lead and guide us. Even though we have made mistakes, and our community has not been perfect, God is inviting us to continue working together. It is helpful for us to acknowledge our fears and doubts as we begin. I know that many of us share this burden of doubt and sadness. Many who are not here and have trouble coming to sessions are feeling a weight of pain because Quaker process did not work, and it’s hard to trust that it will go any better in the future.

We’re at a moment of truth: Do we as Friends plan to stick with traditions just because we’ve decided those are what make us Quaker? Or will we take steps of faith into a new way that will help us serve and care for one another better? I offer that as a challenge and as a vision for us. What will it look like to be Quaker in this century? In this place, in the Northwest and California? In SCYMF? We get to be part of naming that, giving ourselves a direction, and continuing to
walk on that path of faithfulness in the best way that we know how. So I’d like us to take a minute or two to search our hearts and be honest with ourselves: what fears and pains do we bring to this place? What areas of doubt or uncertainty? Hold those up to the Living Christ who is here in our midst.

Take a moment to also pay attention to those places of joy and passion, where you feel a sense of calling, where you see both justice and love.

God we are your people. We bring ourselves and we sit together and we wait. We wait in the mystery of all our doubts and all our joys. We wait in the beauty of being community. Give us direction this weekend. Help us to care for one another. Let us see one another as you see us, to see the world as you see it. Give us clarity and energy to do the work we’re called to do this weekend and this year. Thank you for your presence here and for bringing us to this place.

Cherice opened the first meeting for worship for business of annual sessions by presenting the agenda for the night.

Visiting Friends
Welcoming visiting Friends and sharing greetings from Friends: It’s been amazing as a clerk to receive well-wishes and greetings from other yearly meetings and Friends organizations by email over the last few months. We are being held in the Light by so many Friends. We received letters of greeting from Baltimore Yearly Meeting, Illinois Yearly Meeting, the New Association of Friends, New England Yearly Meeting, North Carolina Fellowship of Friends, North Pacific Yearly Meeting, Friends World Committee for Consultation, and Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Cherice invited traveling Friends to introduce themselves.

○ From New England Yearly Meeting: Rosemary Zimmermann and Kristina Keefe-Perry
○ From Friends Committee on National Legislation: Christine Ashley
○ From North Pacific Yearly Meeting: Mim Lilly Coleman, Katherine Spinner
○ Margaret Fraser and Catherine Griffith from New Association of Friends
○ David Albert from Friendly Water for the World, North Pacific Yearly Meeting
○ Keith Barton from Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends
○ Mackenzie Morgan from Baltimore Yearly Meeting
○ Wil Brant from Illinois Yearly Meeting and Western Yearly Meeting
○ David Zeiss, Eugene Friends Meeting, North Pacific Yearly Meeting
West Hills Membership
Approval of West Hills Friends’ membership: *We would like to call for the approval of West Hills Friends into membership of Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends. APPROVED*

Nominating Committee
Patty Federighi brought forward the Nominating Committee’s list of nominations so the body could consider and discern over them during the weekend; they are set to be approved toward the end of sessions on Sunday.

*Youth Committee: [A blank slide. There were no nominations to present]. This is a huge gap that we need to fill. At our first Quarterly Gathering, a passion for youth was expressed, and many people volunteered for a youth committee. Every one of those people has been unable to continue. So tomorrow, there will be a meeting at lunch with the nominating committee to brainstorm about how to fill this committee.*

*Communications Committee: we’re going to form one. We had set up an ad hoc communications committee earlier, but didn’t approve an official standing committee. That’s something we hope to do this weekend.*

*When the recording sub-committee completed their work, they wanted to continue to nurture ministry among us. So we’re going to establish the task force as a standing committee, and we’re calling that the Nurture of Ministry Committee.*

*We’re still receiving nominations for co-clerk.*

Other Reports & Announcements
Zach Maurer shared about the People Care Committee’s work in listening this weekend. The members of the People Care Committee are available to listen with anyone, any time this weekend.

Gil George invited people to give input to the epistle committee if they notice anything that Friends around the world might like to hear about.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is offering a gathering. They will meet over breakfast on Saturday.

Carol Whorton: The Prayer Committee has been praying ceaselessly over our yearly meeting. We now have an email address where you can send prayer requests: prayerteam@scymf.org.
These requests will be held in confidence. This thing only flies if the Lord is with us and if we’re praying. We also want to celebrate our joys and successes through prayer.

Julie Peyton shared that she is hosting a Bible study in the morning over breakfast, studying the first two chapters of I Corinthians.

Cherice closed the meeting.

Saturday
May 19, 10:15 AM
Clerk: Cherice Bock
Assistant clerk: Jon Kershner
Recording clerk: Matthew Staples

*Cherice offered a welcome:* It was good to join our voices in song together earlier, and to share our own experience as we meditated on the scripture (a passage from Acts). I appreciate the worship team bringing music. I also feel a burden to say that one thing to work on in terms of our biases is the gender bias that we have, and the way that comes across in the way we worship and the words we choose. I hope everyone feels welcome and free to participate in the worship we share, and that we will be welcoming and open to everyone in the way we structure our meetings, as we remember that God encompasses all genders and all experiences in each of the moments that we share.

*Cherice invited any visiting Friends that weren’t present Friday to introduce themselves.*

Visiting Friends
David Albert, Olympia Friends Meeting, NPYM, Friendly Water for the World shared about a new meeting in Uganda called Balumkee Shay Friends Meeting, an unprogrammed meeting in Uganda.

Keith Barton, Berkeley Friends Church and the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends (WARSF).

*Take some time to get to know people from other parts of the country. It’s a gift to have so many Friends here.*
Incorporation

Incorporation Update: we are incorporated as a nonprofit corporation [cheers]. The next step is becoming a 501(c)(3) to gain tax-exempt status. We incorporated based on the bylaws and articles of incorporation we approved in February. The next step is to get someone to look over our paperwork in case we need to make any changes for legal reasons.

As far as the transition with NWYM, we haven’t heard final word on the division of assets. The transition team and administrative committee have a meeting set for June 28-30th. We’ll see what comes out of that meeting, and trust that God is at work in that process.

The rest of the planned business for this morning’s section is to revisit a few things in the bylaws. People suggested them as minor updates from the February Quarterly Gathering, and we will address one question that has come up in our membership process. Then we will look at the progress of the Faith & Practice Committee.

Bylaws

Heather Tricola: We approved most of the bylaws last meeting, but there are a few things to update. On page 13, there’s an easy thing to add: “The Nominating Committee presents the nominations for [clerks] to a meeting of members at the Yearly Meeting For Approval.”

Page 15: “Nominating committee is encouraged to nominate new coordinating committee members and to limit how long members serve. The total number will be decided upon by the coordinating committee.”

We wanted to encourage the Nominating Committee to bring new, fresh people to the Coordinating Committee regularly.

We moved the order of the “Responsibilities of Coordinating Committee.” This is not a content change.

[paused for questions or concerns; there were none]

On audits, Part D: We wanted to be able to do an assessment without having to hire an official auditor. We recommend changing the terminology.

On page 17, this proposed change relates to the transparency and accountability of the Coordinating Committee. Addition: “If a special meeting about a decision is requested within 30 days of the decision’s posting, the decision will be put on hold until the business meeting can make a decision.”
Another section that has already been approved says that members can request a special meeting if the Coordinating Committee makes a decision that is not desired, by getting a certain number of signatures. This puts a timeframe on it, that if a special meeting is requested, the decision and its implementation is put on hold.

This paragraph talks about the posting: let’s say it’s approved and takes six months to post. It should be “approve and post a…”

General wordsmithing and clarifications on various terms

**Decision: “Approve and communicate.”**

*There are different levels of committee: on page 19. Committees need approval of committee members by the yearly meeting. There are standing committees, required by the bylaws, and any committees that come up fluidly can be disbanded by the business meeting as needed. There are permissions for working groups. Those are functional bodies that the Coordinating Committee forms when something needs to be done: they’re task oriented.*

**List of Standing Committees (read aloud). Any other committees that are necessary can be added by the Coordinating Committee or yearly meeting.**

**Question:** Do we need to list the Nurture of Ministry Committee as a standing committee?  
**Cherice:** that’s a conversation to continue as we do Faith and Practice work. These standing committees are the ones we need for the organization to function.

**Question:** The word trustees is interpreted here as a group with authority to make decisions for the group. My understanding is that our finance committee will not have that authority. So is this just for legal purposes?  
**Answer:** Yes, legally they are our trustees, but the bylaws make it clear that they are not able to make decisions for the body.

**Cherice:** After looking at the proposed amendments to our bylaws, do we approve these amendments?

The changes to the bylaws were **APPROVED.**

**Membership**

*Now we’ll move to page 7, the membership piece. At our February Quarterly Gathering, we took out a paragraph relating to the specific process of membership. We would like to propose a wording change so that Friends could feel clear to add that paragraph back in.*
What’s different: there are two ways to get membership: being approved by the business meeting (which is why we have a sign-up sheet at the back table for individual members who are not members of member meetings). We wanted people to have an opportunity to become members by form, rather than by vocal approval by the business meeting. If we can’t agree to the wording on this, I’ll pass this off to the Faith and Practice Committee. The form is not binding; it’s just an exhibit (example) in the bylaws.

Cherice: At Quarterly Gathering, we didn’t feel free to approve it because members of some meetings would be uncomfortable signing on to some of the language. This is slightly reworded, recognizing that the community is Christ-centered and the individual would like to be part of such a community, regardless of personal beliefs.

Question: who is the “agent of SCYMF”?
Answer: That’s something that Faith and Practice will work out. We’ve put the Presiding Clerk as the main person, because we know that role will always exist. The “agent” is whomever is designated by the clerks and the meeting.

Question: As I read this, it appears that someone from New Zealand might apply for membership under these rules. I wonder if that’s the intent.
Answer: That is the next thing we want to address. We have drafts about age and geography to look at if we have time. The bylaws do not currently address that. If we don’t get that today, we’ll defer it to Faith and Practice.

The paragraph was APPROVED.

Minimum Age Requirement
Heather Tricola: We would also like to suggest another change to the membership section: SCYMF does not have a minimum age requirement, so we would like to discuss what our policy is. Three possibilities:

AGE OPTIONS
1. SCYMF does not have a minimum age requirement, but all members should have a solid understanding of what joining SCYMF means.

2. Members under the age of 18 need to have parental or guardian consent to join.

3. [Don’t mention age at all. Leave it to the discernment process individually or Faith and Practice.]

Comment: I’m thinking back to when I was a teenager with a lot of strong feelings: number one would have worked for me, number two definitely wouldn’t have, number three maybe.
Comment: I’m thinking back to when Quakers didn’t allow black people to join the Society. I don’t want to let that kind of prejudice in, keeping young people from joining. I would say three.

Comment: I can imagine it being helpful for there to be some group, not necessarily parents, that meets at regular intervals with young people who want to be members, as a way of underscoring the solid understanding and as a way of welcoming and creating a step that would help them feel included, and let them speak about why they want to be members. Maybe that group is going to be suggested in Faith and Practice or somewhere else.

_Do Friends feel comfortable with number one?_ [no]

Comment: My preference would be number three. In my experience, to have a solid understanding: at age 5, I loved God, but I wasn’t signing up for Faith and Practice. My mom held my membership, and I believed. Membership helps hold people as part of the group.

_So should we have a version that says Friends of any age can participate? Do Friends have concerns with this, that would keep them from approving this?_

Comment: I want to leave out the part about a “solid understanding,” since that is different for each person.

Comment: Rather than adding this to the membership section, it would be more appropriate to add this to the non-discrimination section. _Age is in there already._ So refer here to the non-discrimination section.

Question: What we’re discussing are children who are not in a geographically convenient meeting, is that right? Otherwise, why wouldn’t they be doing the membership process in their meeting? What I’m thinking is that we want to refer children to a local meeting if we can. This is just talking about children who don’t have, at the moment, a local SCYMF meeting to be a member of, right?

_Answer: Yes._

Question: what about children whose parents don’t approve of their membership, so they don’t have the option of attending a local meeting? What about youth of gender and sexual minorities? I can see all sorts of reasons why children would want to join.

_Clerk asked for approval for the following statement: We are happy to welcome children into membership who request it. We will include the phrase “of any age” in the membership section even though our nondiscrimination section says we will not discriminate due to age. Number 1 was approved as an amendment to the bylaws, without the stipulation of having a solid
understanding, but with the assumption that children would request membership themselves and understand and be able to articulate what that means in an age-appropriate way.

Bylaws, p. 7: "Direct membership for individuals. An individual of any age may apply for direct membership in SCYMF in the following ways..."

Geography

Heather Tricola: We recognize that Quaker community and business both work better when we’re geographically close together, but we also recognize that people desire something to belong to, and may not have a Christ-centered, Quaker, LGBTQ+ friendly group to be a part of in their region; we want to discuss what we think about whether members need to be in our geographical region or not. Here are some suggested options:

1. All members of SCYMF need to live in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or California for at least part of the year, or have been sent out to other regions by members of SCYMF.

2. Member churches for SCYMF need to be located in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or California. Individual members should be associated with SCYMF, but do not have geographical requirements. Annual sessions will be held in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or California.

3. There are no geography requirements for members of SCYMF, but annual sessions will always be held in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or California.

4. [Don’t mention geography at all. Leave it to the discernment process individually or Faith and Practice.]

Cherice: This is probably a longer-term discussion, because lots of people around the world are excited at this new possibility of being a part of a Christ-centered, LGBTQ+ affirming Quaker meeting. Take time throughout the rest of the weekend to let these options season. We’ll see if we have time to come back to this later in our sessions, or at a later gathering.

A clarifying statement: the bylaws are in relationship to our status as a corporation. This is what members are and what process we use to define them. Knowing who is eligible for membership is a minimum legal requirement.

Let’s consider a scenario as SCYMF matures: someone with leadership gifts needs to move to an adjacent area. They move to start a congregation with no place to go, but they’re comfortable with SCYMF. Will we be open to that, or will our bylaws forbid it?
Due to time, we’ll leave it at that for now, and people can discuss this with other Friends informally and see what rises. We’ll continue this conversation, probably several times, in the future.

Nominations

The Nominations Committee will present nominations for the committees that will begin their official work this afternoon: the Nurture of Ministry Committee and the Communications Committee.

The formation of the Communications Committee was APPROVED

Patty Federighi: Names are being considered, two are ready to bring for approval: Eric Muhr and Lorraine Watson. They were approved before the clerk could finish asking for approval.


The names were APPROVED.

Faith and Practice

Julie Peyton: When I started this work, I dreamed of a document that could protect us from any harm. We can’t do that, we can’t build walls. We walk into the process of creating the Faith & Practice with open-hearted trust. We can’t do this in just one year. We’ll take one piece at a time and just live with it for a bit. Today, I want to approve an opening statement.

I wanted to be really clear about “what this book is, and what it is not.”

Starting with what this book is not:

A creed - a list of statements of what must be believed

A law book - a list of behaviors or neccessary rites and rituals that must be performed.

What this book is:

This document is our attempt to explain who we are (Christian Quakers), where we came from (our history, both old and recent), and who we want to become (deepening, broadening, growing in faith and practice).
It is our best guess of what God wants of us. We expect our understandings to mature and change, and thus this book will be emended by future generations.

Because many of us are convinced Friends, we also want this book to be a reference, a teaching tool, a manual of how to live more faithfully as Quakers. One method will be to include many quotations from Friends past and present who speak faithful words to eager (and sometimes reluctant) hearers.

Cherice: We’ll talk about this for a few minutes, and consider this a first reading that we’ll come back to tonight or tomorrow.

The overall direction of the Faith & Practice, based on the outline that was presented, was affirmed.

Budget & Finance

Roger Watson: Budget and finance: net income was $10,485, [total income: $10,802; expenses: $317] that gives us a good start to have capital for expenses that will come.

Our cash balance before annual sessions expense: $29,699 [Year to date contributions from churches: $5,706; Year to date contributions from individuals: $3,629; Restricted contributions to Annual Sessions Scholarship Fund: $1332; Payments to support Barclay Press for communications work: $830].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Budget for the year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Church Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal reports from three member churches at $1,130 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions from Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on current year to date contributions annualized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Sessions Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of Contributions to Annual Sessions Scholarship Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barclay Press Support for Internet presence at $100 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational development and legal expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Sessions expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on 2018 minimum charge plus approximately 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability Insurance Expense estimate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other expenses yet to be identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Income less Expenses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*That even balance at the end is a nice number to have. I’m trying to break it down a bit for you here so you can see the overall picture.*

*The estimate for local church support is conservative. I believe we may have some others that will be forthcoming. This is just based on those churches that have made their intentions known.*

*Contributions from individuals are based on what we’ve raised so far, and I analyzed that number. This is a hypothesis-educated-guess number.*

*Annual Sessions Registration is roughly based on what happened this year, as is the scholarship fund.*

**Division of Assets**

*There is one item that was not included here because I don’t have a basis for calculating it: investment income. There is ongoing discussion about division of assets with NWYM. There will be a sizable increase in our income that could happen if those discussions go that way (a few thousand per year, perhaps). As a conservative (in accounting language), you don’t count something if you don’t have a basis for counting it.*
On the expense side: there has been one change: the finance committee agreed to increase the support to Barclay Press from $1200 to $1800 per year. That is the one known item on the expense side that’s more than an educated guess. Some of the other expense lines may be less-than-educated. For organizational development and legal expense, I just threw a dart and it hit $500. That might be what it costs. Maybe.

The Annual Sessions expense estimate of $14,000 is likely a little low.

I’ve reduced the “other expenses yet to be identified” by about $2,000, but that will go up or down based on a number of things.

Pastors Retirement
I want to say one thing about those who are pastors or staff members of churches, if you have funds in the NWYM 401k: that plan is still available for you to participate in, to make contributions to. I have checked with the 401k provider and they say that this is fine, they checked with their legal department. You’re welcome to participate in that plan and continue to make contributions and take advantage of the treatment you will receive at retirement through this plan. I will not be the administrator of the plan because that was connected with my NWYM job, but I can put you in contact with people who can help if you have questions.

Question: A clarification on the 401k: new pastors that are hired after June 30, can they be in the 401k?
Answer: Yes, they can.

A minute of gratitude was APPROVED: We minute our gratitude for the work of our treasurer, Roger Watson, for standing in the gap between the yearly meetings and being used by God in that way. We affirm Roger in both his integrity and actions.

Budgeting
Cherice: I propose that we authorize the Coordinating Committee to work with each committee and the Finance Committee on their budget line, and each committee can start using those funds without needing the full body’s approval. The Coordinating Committee can work with the Finance Committee to figure out the final numbers as soon as we know them, and what’s left can be disbursed to committees to meet the needs that have been discerned by each committee.

The authority to do that was APPROVED.
Announcements and instructions were given for the afternoon, and Cherice closed the meeting in prayer.

We reconvened at 4:00. The gathering opened with silence.

Recording & Licensing

Agenda: reporting on the work of the recording task force, which is transitioning to the Nurture of Ministry Committee.

Jan Wood: In the process of pulling and tugging on what the appropriate and God-led recording process should be, we keep bumping up with people who have paid a heavy price to bring us to this place of joy and freedom. While there is not a completely straight line between the recording task force and this minute we bring, we hope you’ll join with us in it.

There are many among us who have paid a heavy price in their consistent work toward yearly meeting grace and inclusion. To name a few:

   Becky Ankeny, Tom Stave, Gregg Koskela, Lorraine Watson, Elenita Bales, Catherine Olson, Roger Watson, Gil George, C. Wess Daniels, Bob Henry, A.J. Mendoza, Retha McCutchen, and Anna Baker.

However there are two among us that served as pastors of two churches asked to leave NWYM. Therefore we would like to honor Mike Huber and Clyde Parker

Mike Huber and Clyde Parker

Clyde Parker has been a pastor at Eugene Friends Church for 40 years. Clyde and Wendy came to Eugene Friends when Clyde was hired as a youth pastor; then he served as senior pastor before retiring in March 2018. However, he simply transitioned to a new focus of ministry. For Clyde, ministry is a way of life! Clyde is multi-talented, hardworking, entrepreneurial, and visionary—all of which are brought to bear on his ministry both within and outside the church. Clyde empowers others to live into their full God-given selves. Eugene Friends is full of active ministers, a tribute to Clyde’s leadership. Clyde was never satisfied with ministry inside the church. For years he worked in construction, believing there is just as much ministry to be done on the job site as in the pastor’s office, maybe more! Clyde gets people outside their comfort zone to do service, evident in the 34 years he’s taken people to Mexico through “Get Away Give Away.” Retirement means more time to facilitate this work in Mexico. Clyde has served his church and yearly meeting well. He pushed us to be better and to open our hearts to everyone. He believed we were better together, yet is unwilling to close our doors to anyone. The cost was high. But that did not stop him from being faithful to follow Jesus in his welcome. Clyde is a faithful servant and a faithful Christ-follower.

It is our desire to honor the faithful service of Mike Huber for his pastoral ministry at West
Hills Friends Church. Mike and Erica served West Hills Friends from July of 1988 until January of 2018, and they continued, deeply loved by their community. Mike is a stellar husband, father, and Friend, and has accompanied many of us in our journeys with tenderness and wisdom. Mike is a captivating teacher and especially knowledgeable of Quaker history. We value and appreciate Mike’s humor, humility, and gentle strength. He has walked the talk of Friends distinctives throughout his ministry and continues to do so in the new work he has been called to do with Quaker Voluntary Service. Mike has displayed unfailing courage. He modeled for Friends in the Northwest and beyond a persistence to follow the Spirit-guided discernment of his meeting in its decision to be a welcoming and affirming, Christ-centered community. Under his leadership, West Hills Friends has become a refuge. Mike was recorded by Northwest Yearly Meeting in 1995, and our newly forming yearly meeting wishes to recognize and affirm his gifts of ministry.

Lorraine Watson: It felt important to us to affirm the ministry of those who have served well among us. Thank you for joining us in that by listing others who have also served us well. We’re going to transition now into talking about the process of recording.

Recording Task Force

First we would like to name those who served on the recording task force: Jon Kershner, Johan Maurer, Anna Baker, Jan Wood, and Lorraine Watson.

Where we are: in October 2017, we approved a process of transferring recording and licenses to SCYMF. In February 2018, a proposal was presented for new recording candidates and licenses. It was not brought for approval at that meeting, and after incorporating the feedback received since then, we now would like to bring this process for approval.

What we were about as the recording task force: we were guided by our desire to return to Quaker recording rather than some version of ordination. We are committed to recording what God has already put in place. We recognize and observe the work of God as already evident. By contrast, ordination is a process of preparing people for ministry. It comes before they are active ministers. For ordination, prerequisites are the norm, having a list of accomplishments to prove that you have achieved this. That is not what Quaker recording is. Instead, we are recognizing what God has already done.

We are also mindful that in our structure, local meetings are autonomous. We’re together in a covenantal relationship. In this case, local meeting recording is valid. It is appropriate to record either at the local meeting or at the larger yearly meeting level. One is not of greater value than the other. Rather than speaking of a “better” recording, it’s more about the sphere of your public ministry. Does your public ministry mainly occur within your local meeting and local area, or is it beyond that sphere, in the yearly meeting or beyond?

In addition, SCYMF will accept individual members, and it’s possible that some of these will be recorded by other Quaker meetings. That is very appropriate. There are also those who will stay
in NWYM meetings because that is where they worship, but it could be that they feel, spiritually, that their home is in SCYMF. Their recording will be recognized as well.

Recording cannot be rescinded; it is for life (except in narrowly-defined circumstances). Ministry is not just preaching, and so recording is not just for pastors. We want to include anyone and everyone that is involved in public ministry of any kind. When we see that people are doing public ministry, and recognize it is the power of God at work in and through them, we want to name that the fruit of that ministry is observed by the people around them. We record people who are familiar with us and know Quaker values and history. They know us, and affirm SCYMF as a Christ-centered community of people who have gathered in the Spirit.

First of all, I am just going to report on what we approved in Eugene in October: the transfer process of recording and licenses. This delineates that we are willing to transfer the existing recording and licensing of NWYM or WARSF (from the very beginning we’ve been aware that meetings from WARSF have had interest in joining with us). We also want to recognize the recording of people who are members of us, but who had their recordings outside NWYM. We also wish to reinstate ministers who released their recording because of inconsistency with the Faith and Practice of their previous yearly meeting.

Local Meetings initiate transfer to SCYMF by sending a minute of transfer to SCYMF.

This may be done by meetings with membership in SCYMF, independent meetings leaving NWYM, or ministers active in NWYM but who want their recording held by SCYMF.

The recording for those transferred to SCYMF will take place later this afternoon. We will present them and celebrate them today.

Next we’ll talk about the recording of Friends ministers, the process of initiating recordings, and this has not yet been approved, so that is what we will seek now.

The first step is to “Identify an Empowered Ministry.” Recording occurs after an individual has been faithful to their call to public ministry. It can be initiated by the candidate’s spiritual community, or by themselves: we recognize that when you feel the Spirit bursting through your leadings, it is appropriate for you to name that this is your calling. An individual wishing to be recorded will meet with their local elders, or an anchor committee if they are from a non-SCYMF meeting.

A clarification regarding the use of the term “elders”: a comment cautioned us about the word “elder,” that many Friends around the country prefer “ministry and oversight,” but we’re using the words that are common to our local meetings.

Next: the person wishing to be recorded fills out the Recording Questionnaire, which includes basic information like name and contact information, church membership, and a brief description of your ministry.
Then the local elders (or the person’s anchor committee) hold a meeting for clearness. This is a time when the elders (or the group the candidate has gathered) hear the candidate’s story and consider the request. If you are not a member of a meeting of SCYMF, you gather an anchor committee around yourself. The purpose of this is to seek clarity and guidance. There is a summary in our documents. Just to be clear about the next step, you may be clear to move forward, you may be clear that it is not time to record this person, or you may be clear that you need to wait, have another meeting, and season the process.

Next, the candidate completes a ministry packet, in which you write out about yourself and your journey, as well as your education, with attention to Quaker history and testimonies. We have a change here in that we added familiarity with Quakerism: who we are, what does that mean, how did we get to where we are today?

If we’re clear at that point, we move on to the decision of the elders or anchor committee that has been gathered of whether to move the candidate forward in the recording process. They review all this information, and decide either to decline to proceed with recording, they can have further conversation and discernment, they can issue a recording at the local meeting, or they can recommend a recording at the SCYMF level, and all the information they have gathered is forwarded.

We removed the psychological evaluation requirement. That was an area where we received pushback: does it achieve what we want, does it weed out those who have beliefs or tendencies that do not align with our values? After hearing the perspectives of those with knowledge in this area, we decided the psychological evaluation does not really do what we would hope that it would, namely, help identify those with unsafe or unhealthy behaviors that would make them dangerous when in power over others. We also learned that psychological evaluations do not honor those who feel they have God speaking directly to them, which can be associated with “hearing voices.”

We are adding that candidates must comply with the local church or SCYMF policies on safety of children and abuse prevention.

Then they are to meet with the Committee for Nurture of Ministry. We recommend that when a candidate moves from the local meeting to SCYMF, a local elder or anchor committee member will accompany them to all of their recording meetings. This is particularly important if you are not particularly well known among the SCYMF community, and is for the benefit of the candidate so they will feel supported and safe.

A change in this process: we’ve added the sentence that in the meeting for clearness, the committee will give attention to resources which can strengthen the candidate’s ministry. There’s no cookie-cutter process that everyone has to go through. For example, those that are maybe newer to Quakerism, it may take time to learn Quaker history, or maybe if you’re newer to pastoral ministry you need a mentor. Here we can discern together, what do you need, what
do we need, how can we move forward together? The goal is that we can record people that are really a part of us and set free to minister among us as Christ-centered Quaker ministers.

If the committee is clear to record this person, they initiate a 60-day period in which they invite feedback from the community, including positive affirmation, cautions and concerns, and reports of problematic behavior. This allows transparency and also accountability, so that any reservations would not be coming forth for the first time on the floor of the yearly meeting when we’re seeking approval. Those giving feedback must identify themselves to the committee, but their identity will be withheld from the candidate when appropriate.

If there is clearness at the end of the 60-day period, the minute of recording is brought before the yearly meeting body, who will be asked to approve the recording, and it will be held in the minutes of SCYMF.

Then we host a celebration during annual sessions to announce and recognize the recordings of everyone recorded in the previous year, including those recorded by SCYMF or at the local meeting level. It also will include transfers, not just initial recordings.

Question: What is the reason in dropping the requirement for psychological evaluation?
Answer: We received significant pushback on what it accomplishes and why it is done. The tests that are most readily available don’t identify abuse or things we would hope to identify by doing this. It’s also not particularly friendly to those of us who hear directly from God.

Cherice: Those who are traditionally marginalized may not fit standards for “normalcy” that tend to center cis, white, male experience. We don’t want to have this as a checklist item.

Question: Would a background check be appropriate in lieu of a psychological evaluation?
Answer: Yes.

Question: Back to how a person starts the process: you said either the meeting or the individual can recognize it. But the form is only set up for the individual to apply. If the meeting recognizes the ministry, how does that work?
Answer: The meeting takes the initiative and goes to the individual, says that they have noticed their ministry, so we want to initiate this process, and then the individual would start by filling out that form.

Question: In a couple places you referred to anchor committee and committee for clearness. Those aren’t necessarily the same thing; are you using them the same way?
Answer: I’m using the meeting for clearness as the process used to determine, “Are we clear to go forward with the recording process?” The anchor committee is the group you gather around you to have a meeting for clearness with if you are not in a meeting that has elders or is in SCYMF.
Question: But you’re not asking a prospective minister to necessarily have an anchor committee?

Answer: No, the elders of a local church would function in that role. One thing they can do in that discernment is saying that the individual will best be served by having an anchor committee that is distinct from (or a subset of) the elders.

Comment: This is a really tender question that I don’t have the answer for: I could see down the road a local meeting would want to record someone where the larger meeting does not think so, but you have the whole meeting celebrating that person. That could get messy.

Response: In some ways, being a Quaker and doing good Quaker process is a bit messy. We live into that, do our discernment work together, ask God how to take the next step forward. It’s not perfect. Thank you for that concern.

Comment: Something that needs to be said out loud again: we’re used to thinking of recording processes as weeding out people. The spirit of this recording is inviting people in. If God made every one of us a recorded public minister, praise God! Let’s record 200 people. What makes us think that this is some scarcity to protect and keep from people?

Let’s quickly say: I really honor the last commentor’s commitment to naming what she hears in the room. What needs to be named: there is fear. We’ve come from a culture of fear, and we haven’t left it all behind. I think we need to acknowledge that this fear exists.

Discussion about process for Minister’s License: different from recording, the minister’s license is not meant to be long-term. SCYMF meetings must request one for each minister each year. Changes since original proposal in February: including the requirement that licensed ministers must comply with SCYMF policies for protection of children and avoidance of boundary violations. Licenses expire 12/31 (or on a date to be determined by the Nurture of Ministry Committee) and churches must request a repeat license.

Discussion about the tasks of the Committee for Nurture of Ministry: Duties: receive recording and license transfers; receive and process new recording candidates; grant new minister’s licenses; ongoing support of recorded and licensed ministers.

Question: What if I have experienced the recording process to be unfair or come to a decision I disagree with? I have been issued a license which has showed up for ten years, and I would like to know, is there a way for people to protest which decision has been made? If, say, I wanted to be recorded, and I was rejected, but then I was handed a license, and I have no idea what that meant, is there a place for that person to protest in a way what has happened?

Answer: I think the legal process of protest is outlined in the bylaws on how you would protest or appeal a decision of any nature by SCYMF. However, I think that this is really where we would sit down with you. This is discernment we do with you. We ask, “What do you need to be the minister God has called you to be?” We’re not about seeing how many people we can keep out; we’re about seeing where God is at work.
The recording and licensing process was APPROVED.

Recordings & License Transfers

*Celebration of recordings and license transfer that we are receiving from NWYM and other yearly meetings:*

*Jon Kershner: Friends, the moment has come to do the celebration element of the work the recording task force has been doing [cheers]. We will recognize our new ministers by reading a minute of transfer of recordings and then licenses. Cherice will hand out a certificate. Not everyone is here, but we will read the names nonetheless.*

Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends recognizes the gifts of public ministry and leadership in the Spirit in appointing the following individuals for Gospel ministry and we joyfully accept their transfers of recording. We record again the Spirit’s work in their lives and among Friends:

- Gil George
- Mike Huber
- Johan Maurer
- Judy Maurer
- Faith Marsalli
- T. Vail Palmer
- Caryl Menkhus Creswell
- Carol Twichel
- Lorraine Watson
- Carol Whorton
- Jan Wood

[cheers]

Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends celebrates the calling and gifting for ministry of the many people who serve among us. We bless and empower those who carry this calling to the work of ministry and receive the transfer of their ministry licenses. We license them to conduct their ministries on behalf of the Gospel:

- Matt Boswell
- Ruba Byrd
- Thea Cowley
- C. Wess Daniels
- Claire Nail
Mark Pratt-Russum
Judy Scott

These are our ministers. [cheers]

Members of the body came forward and put their hands on the ministers to pray for them.

Jon closed the meeting in prayer.

Sunday
May 20, 1:00 PM

After some logistical reminders, Cherice opened the group in a time of centering silence.

God we're thankful for the time and space to be together. Thank you for these Friends who have gathered, for the business we’ve accomplished, and the friendships we’ve developed and deepened. Help us to remain aware of your presence this afternoon.

Cherice outlined the agenda.

Nominations
(Patty Federighi): I want to say one thing about doing this work. I am not the clerk of Nominations, Rachel Hampton is: she has served so well through trying times, and she doesn’t just clerk Nominations, she’s also on Quarterly Gathering Committee.

I learned a lot about who we are when I did this work. We have about 80 nominations.

Nominating:
-Carolyn Myers, Camas, 3 years
-Tom Stave, Eugene, 1 year
-Patty Federighi, North Seattle, 2 years
-Rachel Hampton, West Hills, 1 year
-Joe Lynn Rader, Silverton, 3 years
-Faith Marsalli, Klamath Falls, 2 years
All APPROVED

Finance:
-Dave Cundiff (ad hoc), Olympia, 2 years
-Karla Rice, Eugene, 1 year
-Stan Muhr, Silverton, 1 year
-Beth Oppenlander, North Seattle, 1 year (clerk)

All APPROVED

People Care:
-Ruba Byrd, Eugene, 3 years
-Becky Wood, North Seattle, 2 years
-Sue Scott, Eugene, 1 year
-Jim Miller, Camas, 2 years
-Anna Scott-Hinkle, Eugene, 1 year
-Norma Silliman, Camas, 2 years (clerk)
-Zach Maurer, Newberg Emerging, 1 year
-Will McClatchey, Eugene, 3 years
-Valerie McClatchey, Eugene, 3 years
-Pat Matthews, West Hills, 1 year
-Lawson, North Valley/Hillsboro, 2 years

All APPROVED

Coordinating:
-Chuck Fairchild, Eugene, 2 years
-Wendy Davenport, North Seattle, 2 years
-Dorothy Day, West Hills, 1 year
-Joann Boswell, Camas, 1 year (clerk)
-Terri Beardsley, West Hills, 1 year
-John Price, Eugene, 3 years
-Cassie Hwa, Eugene, 3 years
-Judy Maurer, Eugene, 2 years

All APPROVED

Prayer:
-Tiffany Graham, Newberg Emerging, 1 year
-Carol Whorton, Klamath Falls, 2 years (clerk)
-Patty Federighi, North Seattle, 2 years
- Faith Marsalli, Klamath Falls, 3 years
- Diane Beebe, West Hills, 2 years
- Johan Maurer, Eugene, 3 years
- Kendra Purcell, Camas, 1 year
- Bruce Murphy, Newberg Emerging, 1 year
- Judy Maurer, Eugene, 3 years

All APPROVED

Faith and Practice:
- Jade Souza, independent, 2 years
- Jedidiah Abdul Muhib Carosaari, North Seattle, 3 years
- Julie Peyton, West Hills, 1 year (clerk)
- Marie Matsen, Eugene, 1 year
- Derek Lamson, Eugene, 2 years
- Helen May, Camas, 3 years
- Judy Maurer, Eugene, 3 years
- Anna Baker, North Valley, 1 year
- Sarah Katreen Hoggatt, independent, 3 years
- Ron Myers, Camas, 2 years
- David Peyton, West Hills, 3 years
- Elizabeth Price, Eugene, 2 years

All APPROVED

Quarterly Gathering:
- Rachel Hampton, West Hills, 1 year
- Terri Beardsley, West Hills, 1 year
- Erika Craig, North Seattle, 1 year
- Sue Fairchild, Eugene, 1 year
- Vicki Stave, Eugene, 1 year

All APPROVED

Equity & Inclusion:
- Chris Durost, West Hills, 3 years
- Dove John, North Seattle, 2 years
- Erika Craig, North Seattle, 1 year (co-clerk)
-Carrie Hutchinson, West Hills, 3 years
-Tanya Hill, North Seattle, 1 year
-Cassie Hwa, Eugene, 2 years
-Kayden Glenn, Independent, 3 years (co-clerk)
-Cecilie Hudson, North Seattle, 2 years

All APPROVED

Youth: We asked, and these are the nominees we have. They're all for one year because they're only just getting started. We also felt that it was important to have youth on the committee, so we have two.

Question: Can this be left open for other youth to join at a later time? Answer: Yes, every committee is open to join any time.

-Heather Tricola, Camas, 1 year
-Braden Tricola, Camas, 1 year
-Espen Bock, North Valley, 1 year
-Mark Pratt-Russum, West Hills, 1 year
-Vicki Stave, Eugene, 1 year
-Joel Bock, North Valley, 1 year

All APPROVED

Communications:
- Eric Muhr, Independent, 3 years (clerk)
- Lorraine Watson, North Seattle, 2 years

All APPROVED

Nurture of Ministry:
-Anna Baker, North Valley, 1 year
-Jan Wood, North Seattle, 2 years (clerk)
-Johan Maurer, Eugene, 3 years
-Lorraine Watson, North Seattle, 3 years
-Ruthie Tippin, Camas, 1 year

All APPROVED
Co-clerk:
-Cherice Bock, North Valley, 1 year

Assistant Clerk:
-Gil George, Independent, 1 year

Treasurer:
-Roger Watson, Tigard, 1 year

Recording Clerk:
-Matt Staples, Newberg Emerging, 1 year

We have a proposal from someone who has been recommended as co-clerk but has declined that Cherice find an anchor committee, not just for personal support but to help her do some of the work. People with intensive jobs like this benefit from having an anchor committee.

I believe we should approve asking the Coordinating Committee to approve the co-clerk outside these sessions: we don’t want to wait until next Quarterly Gathering for that to be approved. It’s possible they have the power to do it anyway, but we want to be up front and ask them to approve it.

Jon asked for approval for the Coordinating Committee’s authorization to nominate a co-clerk to serve until the next Quarterly Gathering, at which time they will be approved by the full group. Approved.

The other nominated clerks and the treasurer were approved.

Jon offered a prayer of thanks for Cherice’s work, and prayed for her continued work.

Cherice thanked the Nominating Committee for their work. Cherice reminded the group that all committee members must be members of SCYMF as per the bylaws, so individuals not attending a meeting that is a member of SCYMF need to sign up as individual members.

Membership Requirement
Cherice sought approval for the following short-term policy: By the time of our next annual sessions, those serving on SCYMF committees will either be members of SCYMF due to their meeting membership, individual membership, or stated dual membership in SCYMF and another Friends body. If an individual wishes to be on a SCYMF committee but does not wish to become a member of SCYMF, the person must notify the Nominating Committee, and special approval must be sought from the yearly meeting, per the bylaws. Between now and next
annual sessions, some Friends may serve on committees without being formal members, since some meetings are still deciding whether or not to join SCYM. **APPROVED.**

Committee Reports

Coordinating Committee report:

Joann Boswell: We have a minute for the committee members and clerks of this first year who are now leaving those roles.

The Coordinating Committee would like to thank those involved with the historic creation of SCYM in its inaugural year. Your contribution has been foundational to the creation of our new yearly meeting.

Joann requested and Cherice asked for authorization of Roger Watson, treasurer, to open a bank account in SCYM’s name; **approved.**

Goals and Progress:

Communication: *we see right now Coordinating Committee as the center of a spoked wheel, with all the committees coming out of the spoke. We don’t make the wheel turn, but we make communication happen.*

Each person on Coordinating Committee is tasked with a different committee to be the liaison with, ask what their needs and goals are, check in, and talk with the clerks. We’re now working on making sure the 501(c)(3) paperwork is filed by June 30th. We’re also visioning. We’re still trying to think what questions we need to ask ourselves as we’re forming:

1. **Who do we want to be?** We’ll create space to discuss this at our next gathering.
2. **What do we want to do?**
3. **With whom do we want to partner?** Who are we in relationship to the rest of the Quaker world?

Cherice thanked the Quarterly Gathering Committee for their work in planning the annual sessions weekend, for location, schedule, logistics.

Cherice expressed appreciation to the Prayer Team for holding us in prayer.
People Care Committee report: Our goals are really to create an atmosphere of nurturing and healing and community building. We want to build and strengthen relationships within SCYMF, we see ourselves doing that by promoting travel between our communities.

We want to create a way to share our stories and experiences as we travel, to provide an easy way to report in order to build our community and our stories. We want to encourage cross-pollination: that’s been a theme for us. We want to develop a space on the website that communicates more of who we are and how we can be of service. We would also like to create a system of reimbursement for travel.

We want to focus one quarter at least on young people, focusing on reaching out and connecting, so we’ll probably be in touch with the Youth Committee. We want to hold a forum around people care at one of our quarterly meetings.

Budget-wise, we see needs for two things: travel; for copies of books; and other expenses such as those related to hosting workshops.

Comment: Travel is so near and dear to my heart. I would love to remind folks that travel needs to include going outside the boundaries of SCYMF.

Comment: NEYM specifically has said they would love to have someone at their annual sessions, as would NPYM.

Cherice: We’ll use that as a segue to talk about visitors to other yearly meetings. We would like to have people at the local yearly meetings and gatherings (NWYM, NPYM, and WARSF), and we’ve received specific requests for people to visit Baltimore YM and New England YM. Some have mentioned they would be interested in that. Come to us if this is something you feel led to do, and we will ask for approval from the Coordinating Committee. This procedure was approved. You can send those requests by email to clerks@scymf.org.

Comment: As Friends do travel, they should go with a traveling minute from the clerks.

Question: It seems that traveling minutes have fallen out of practice. Could we have an example posted online so that meetings could see what that looks like? Answer: Yes, we can work on posting a template.

Question: We learned of an opportunity to appoint members to FCNL. Is that something we will take up today? Answer: That is not something we’ll take up today, as we have not officially decided to affiliate with FCNL. We opted to put that decision off until after our official split from NWYM. What we can do is send representatives to the meetings. If you’re interested in doing that, FCNL has
mentioned we can have up to six people represent us at their November meeting that sets their agenda. They can help with travel costs if Friends need it.

Equity & Inclusion report: Cassie Hwa: We nominated and approved Kayden Glenn as clerk. We set up a schedule of things to accomplish prior to and for each Quarterly Gathering. You can look forward to workshops and activities, as well as queries that help us all think about equity and inclusion. We plan to continue providing input about how to keep doing an even better job of working toward full equity and inclusivity.

For next Quarterly Gathering, Dove John will present a report from a conference from Quakers Seeking Right Relationships with Indigenous Peoples. We are planning a workshop about the terms in the LGBTQ+ community, so we can build a common vocabulary. Third, we will send one of our committee members to the Quaker lobby weekend at FCNL, with a report from them on their experience to be shared at a future Quarterly Gathering. Fourth is our interest in translating resources and making them available in Spanish.

Individual Members

Cherice: Welcoming individual members into membership: anyone who has signed up to be an individual member, if you wouldn’t mind standing.

All individual members were welcomed into membership.

    Rebecca Teeters
    Jim Teeters
    Peggy Hanson
    Anna Baker
    Stanley Muhr
    Catherine Olson
    Joann Boswell
    Joel Bock
    Diane Beebe
    Bethany Lee
    Will McClatchey
    Valerie McClatchey
    Gilbert George
    Zach Maurer
    Braden Tricola
    Juulie Downs
    Eric Palmer
    Carolann Palmer
    Elenita Bales
    Mark Ankeny
    Becky Ankeny
Faith and Practice

*Julie Peyton asked us to consider approving the “what this book is and what it is not” section of Faith & Practice. She described changes made based on our feedback on Saturday.*
A Message to the Reader: what this book is, and what this book is not.

What this book is:

This document is our attempt to explain who we are as Christian Quakers, how we got to this point (our origins and recent past), and who we want to become (deepening, broadening, growing in our faith, practice, and community).

We have asked ourselves: What does God want of us? Here we record our responses to the best of our ability today. We expect to keep learning from each other and the Holy Spirit, and future editions will reflect what we (and you?) have learned.

For those in our community, and for those considering joining us, we hope and pray that this book may serve as a reference, a teaching tool, a guide for living more faithfully as Quakers in the Body of Christ. For this reason, we include many quotations from Friends past and present who have spoken faithful words to eager (and sometimes reluctant) hearers.

If any knowledge concerning the things of God be held out of the freshness of the Spirit, it presently proves dead and unprofitable.... Oh! this is it hath undone many, even catching at light from the Spirit, transplanting the image of divine things into the earthly principle, and there holding of them in the earthly part, growing wise by them there, and making use of them from thence as man sees good, and not seeing a necessity of depending on the Spirit for fresh light and life every day to every spiritual motion. Thus the traveller soon comes to lose the true path, and instead thereof travels on in a road of his own wisdom's forming: and so though he seems to himself to make a large progress, yet makes no true progress at all, but is exceedingly run out aside in a by-way; all which ground he must traverse back again, ere he can come to the truth of his former state, or proceed in the true travel.

—“Some Directions to the Panting Soul,” Isaac Penington, 1661

What this book is not:
A creed — a list of statements of what must be believed.

A law book — a list of behaviors or necessary rites and rituals that must be performed. There is a very important exception: legal requirements, for example our rules concerning the safety of children, will be enforced. Most of these will be in our bylaws, which can be found in the Appendices.

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

—Postscript to “An epistle to the brethren in the north,” issued by a meeting of elders at Balby, 1656

The Society of Friends is tolerant of varied judgments amongst its members. It does not expect acceptance of a precise definition of its faith. It does not adopt an order of service for its public worship. It leaves it members wide freedom in working out the application of its testimonies.... The book is, therefore, intended to reflect the way in which Friends have come to understand their Christian faith and how they have been led into the service of Truth. Its purpose is to make Friends aware of their inheritance, not that they should be enslaved or fettered by their past, but that they may find guidance and inspiration today in the faith and practice of their predecessors.

—Christian faith and practice in the experience of the Society of Friends, Britain Yearly Meeting, 1960

Oh! Mark therefore, the way [to unity] is not by striving to beget into one and the same [understanding] concerning things, nor by endeavouring to bring into one and the same practices; but by alluring and drawing into that wherein the unity consists and which brings it forth .... [L]et all wait for the daily new and living knowledge, and for the ordering of their conversations and practices in that light, and drawings thereof, and in that simplicity and integrity of heart, which the Spirit of life at present holdeth forth and worketh in them; and the life will be felt, and the name of the Lord praised in all ... and there will be one heart, and one soul, and one spirit, and one mind, and one way and power of life...

—Isaac Penington, 1660

Comment: Might the Pennington quote be rephrased in contemporary English.
Comment: In the third paragraph, a guide for living more faithfully as Quakers in the body of Christ: body of Christ might come across as Christianese. We might want to explain that.

Comment: I’m hesitant for you to change Pennington’s words. 

Answer: My plan was to have the modern language and original side by side.

Comment: I don’t know how I can be asked to approve it when I don’t have the rest of the book in front of me. What I find myself wanting to do is approve the notion of this is what I’d like to empower the committee to work toward.

Comment: It strikes me the wrong way that the safety of children is just a legal requirement. Isn’t there a higher reason than just legal? 

Some discussion followed.

Cherice: Are we ready to approve these sections, “What this document is, and what it is not,” as a first reading with amendments?

The first reading of the Faith and Practice sections: “What this document is, and what it is not,” with amendments, was APPROVED.

Geography of Members

Regarding Bylaws: What I suggest for the bylaws conversation about geography of members is that we send out suggestions for discussion of this topic, and have those conversations at the local level. We will request feedback – what are the positives and negatives of including people beyond our geographical scope? We’ll bring that back as an item either at the next gathering or sometime within the next year, and not approve members at this time who are not part of our geographical region, but let them know we’re still discerning about that.

The bylaws at this point do not specifically exclude people from outside our geographical region—it could be interpreted as “anybody can join.” Since we haven’t decided about that, we’ll keep people on a list that are interested in joining from a distance, and revisit this question later.

Report on offering: current count is $2,393.50.

Thanks was expressed to Katherine Spinner for running childcare for the weekend.

Epistle, brought in draft form by Gil George

With the knowledge that clerks, the epistle committee, and other interested Friends will finalize the details, the general direction of the epistle was APPROVED.
Greetings to Friends near and far from the 132 Friends attending the Inaugural Annual Sessions of Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends (SCYMF),

We are grateful for the ways many of you have been prayerfully holding us in the Light of Love as we engage in the work set before us. We are also filled with gratitude for your epistles, well-wishes, and visitors to our Annual Sessions at the Canby Grove Christian Center in Canby, Oregon. Our gathering was enriched by visitors or representatives from American Friends Service Committee, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Friendly Water for the World, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Illinois Yearly Meeting, The New Association of Friends, New England Yearly Meeting, North Pacific Yearly Meeting, the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends, and Western Yearly Meeting.

We carry mixed feelings at the beginning of this journey, because it started with our forced separation from Northwest Yearly Meeting. Even as our emotions ranged from grief, tears, and anger to joy, hope, and laughter, our fellowship and worship felt covered in grace. In light of that emotional mix, our Meeting for Business was held with grace for each other as we heal from past trauma. The Spirit remained present and spoke to our condition with words of comfort and a deep, abiding love. One example was our discussion around a proposed recording process. The discussion exposed some raw nerves, as people shared the residual pain that came from years in a two-tiered system in which some ministers were treated as second class because their public ministry did not fit the preconceived notion of church pastor. Most of the weekend’s work involved following the leading of the Spirit as we practiced discernment, threshing through feelings and former assumptions to see a vision toward a new path. Some leadings are beginning to take shape: We are a Christ-centered yearly meeting, even as we discuss and discern together what that means. Is it possible to go deeply into one faith story, one Way of understanding God, holding one Truth, and still allow others with a different model of the Divine Life to feel comfortable traveling with us on this amazing journey? We want to welcome and share with others who think differently, or practice differently, but who seek and feel the same Loving Center.

During our sessions we were led to minute our gratitude to those who have provided leadership in our service and were hurt in the events leading up to the formation of SCYMF. We are grateful for all those, named and unnamed, who put livelihoods, relationships, and access to community in jeopardy for the sake of integrity, justice, and love of neighbor.

We joyfully accepted the transfer of recording of the following Friends as ministers: Gil George, Mike
Huber, Johan Maurer, Judy Maurer, Faith Marsalli, T. Vail Palmer, Caryl Menkhus Creswell, Carol Twichel, Lorraine Watson, Carol Whorton, and Jan Wood. We also transferred and renewed ministry licenses for the following Friends: Matt Boswell, Ruba Byrd, Thea Cowley, C. Wess Daniels, Claire Nail, Mark Pratt-Russum, and Judy Scott.

Over the course of our first year, we wrote and approved bylaws and incorporated as a non-profit organization called Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends. At our annual sessions and as we look toward the future, we move into a phase of exploration and ongoing discernment of how we are called to live into the Quaker way together at this time and in our particular places.

A seed has been planted: a little, tender, growing plant. May we be good soil even as we are good gardeners, trusting God to give the increase.

Your Friends in Expectant Waiting,
Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends

Cherice Bock, Presiding Clerk

SCYMF Epistle Committee:
Julie Peyton, Gil George (clerk), James Hibbs, and Promise Partner

One last thing to say is thank you to Jon Kershner. This is his final time serving as assistant clerk. He’s done a great job in support, taking on many tasks that you all don’t see. He’s been a great help, and been a connection point between clerks and particularly the recording task force.

The clerk closed the meeting with an invitation and a prayer: Take a look around, Friends, and remember this weekend. I would like to invite people to shout out one single word that encompasses the way you feel about the weekend.

Happy
Hallelujah
Shiny
Nourishment
Blessing
Peace
Informative
Homecoming
Joy
Fun
Connection

For all these and more, God, we give you thanks. We’re grateful for the time together this weekend. Thank you for the work you’ve done through each person here and the community we’ve formed, the part each of us has played. Give us courage and joy as we go back to our everyday lives. Amen.