

October 28, 2008

Kelly Kellum, Presiding Clerk  
Friends United Meeting  
800 Quaker Lane  
High Point, NC 27262

Dear Kelly Kellum,

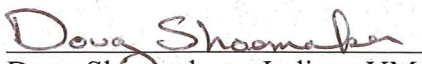
The General Superintendents of Indiana, Iowa, North Carolina, Western and Wilmington Yearly Meetings, in prayerful consultation, feel led to write to you expressing our deep concern for the mission and future of Friends United Meeting. While you are relatively new to leadership in this organization we are sure that you are well aware of the organization's often contentious history and the current undercurrents that erode unity and undercut important ministry.


In short, we believe that the current composition and structure of FUM is not working. We share a strong conviction that we can and must do better. Our dually-affiliated yearly meetings suffer from painful conflict connected to their relationship with FUM; conflict that eats up valuable time and energy. The five yearly meetings that we represent likewise often face painful division among our own meetings concerning our relationship with FUM and share the frustration of being yoked together with Friends who do not share a common sense of identity or a common vision for ministry. We observe that the FUM staff struggles to lead an organization divided by competing theologies and priorities. The most tragic result of this is that the work of FUM around the world suffers.

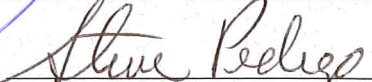
We have a vision of General Board meetings that could be times of deep prayer and celebration. Instead they often feel like times of outward filibusters and underlying tensions. We observe that deep differences in crucial matters such as the divinity of Jesus Christ, the atonement, the authority of scripture, and issues related to the FUM personnel policy continue to deeply divide us, with no real unity looming on the horizon.

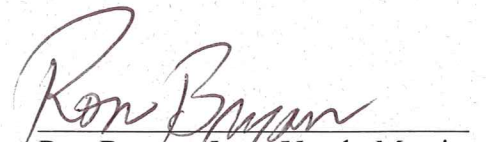
Again, our concern is not only that we can do better, but that we must do better. We ask the FUM General Board Executive Committee immediately assume the task of searching for options that would address these concerns and that specific strategies be presented at our next meeting of the FUM General Board in February 2009.

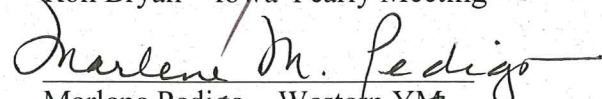
Sincerely,


  
Doug Shoemaker - Indiana YM

  
John Porter - North Carolina YM

  
Steve Pedigo - Western YM

  
Ron Bryan - Iowa Yearly Meeting

  
Marlene Pedigo - Western YM

  
Marvin Hall - Wilmington YM