

**CHRISTIAN FAITH AND PRACTICE  
IN THE FRIENDS CHURCH**

**Friends United Meeting in East Africa  
2002**

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Friends United Meeting  
East Africa**

**PART 1: FAITH**

- 1) Trinity
  - a) Friends are in unity with all Christians in our belief in: God the Creator, infinite in love, wisdom and power, the source and sustainer of all life;
  - b) God's divine Son, Jesus Christ, whose life, death and resurrection reveal the nature and reality of God;
  - c) The gift of the Holy Spirit, the ever-present Comforter Who is God's seal upon us so that we may know we belong to God.
  
- 2) Scripture: Friends accept the Holy Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments as:
  - a) Inspired by God.
  - b) The written Word of God.
    - i) The Bible, read through the eyes of prayer, tells us about the nature and promises of God; the work and message of our Saviour, Jesus Christ; and the right conduct of life as individuals and life in the Church.
    - ii) No doctrine or prophecy, which is in conflict with the message of the Bible, can be accepted among Friends.
  
- 3) Sin and Salvation: Friends believe in the reality of sin and the reality of salvation. With our weaknesses and limitations, we humans often disobey God; We disobey the Commandments which God gave us through Moses for our own good; we insult each other despite the plain warnings of Scripture; we allow false idols to divert us from God; we separate ourselves from God by pursuing power, money, pleasure or vengeance. Sin can infect whole societies, resulting in spiritual, social and economic oppression.
  
- 4) Eternal Life: God sent Jesus Christ to save us from the power of sin and bring us back into full fellowship with God. God does not want anyone to perish unsaved and has given each of us the capacity and opportunity to hear the invitation of Jesus to be restored to God; to live with God eternally. When we confess that we have sinned and repent and ask Jesus to come into our lives, to be our Lord and Saviour, He can heal the wounds of sin and break the power of sin over us.
  
- 5) Hell: Those who remain obstinate in sin and persist in ignoring the invitation of Jesus to be forgiven and saved are in grave danger of eternal separation from God. This state of eternal separation from God is known as hell.

Friends believe in the reality of evil. There is a power in the world, which wants to enslave us and turn us from God's purposes; we call that evil Satan. Satan is called the "father of lies" and the "author of confusion" because this power tries to deceive us and keep us from seeing God's light. When we fall into sin, we are in great danger of cooperating with evil. God is more powerful than Satan. Through confession and repentance of sin, God is able to overcome sin in our lives.

6) Prayer: Friends believe in the central importance of prayer. To pray is communicating with God—both listening and speaking. Prayer is turning to God either in words or in our thoughts and attitudes, in order to enjoy God’s presence, to listen to God, to love and praise God, to bring our sins to God and ask for forgiveness, to ask God’s help for ourselves and for others, and to thank God.

7) Purpose of the Church: Friends are a church, a part of the larger Christian church, which is the Body of Christ in the world. The purposes of the church are to gather at the feet of the Saviour and learn from him, to praise and worship him, to support each other as we learn to be more faithful followers of Jesus, and to express the good news of Jesus Christ in each of our communities and to the rest of the world, so that others may be saved. More specific information about the organisation and work of the church is given in Part 2, Friends’ Practices.

8) Baptism and Communion: Friends believe that there is one Lord, one faith and one true baptism that unites the new believer with the whole Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12: 13). This baptism is a spiritual experience of dying to self and being reborn by the power of the Resurrection of Christ (1 Peter 3:21 and Romans 6:4). Without this experience, a water baptism or other ceremony does not suffice, and with this experience, a ceremonial baptism is not necessary. Similarly, our communion with Jesus Christ cannot be simply an outward reenactment of a literal eating of His body and drinking of His blood, but a full remembrance of his sacrifice through prayer and waiting upon the Holy Spirit. For a fuller treatment of baptism and communion, see Appendix A, the Richmond Declaration of Faith.

9) Spiritual maturity: When we accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour and allow him to be Lord of our life, we become his disciples—his students. Jesus teaches us how to live. Instead of following self-centered ways of sin, as we did before, we walk in a new direction, following Jesus. We can no longer accept values set by society. All spiritual, moral and ethical values must be set by Scriptural standards. It is for this reason that the Friends church teaches testimonies to:

- a) Peace and nonviolence. When the standards of society tell us to hate our enemies, we follow Jesus’ command to love them. When the standards of society seeks violence, we seek non-violent resolution to conflict. We remain the harmless and innocent children of God, denying anyone the right to put weapons into our hands once we have dedicated those hands to the service of God. Our fight is not against other people, but against the forces of evil. (Ephesians 6: 12)
- b) Simplicity. Friends practice moderation in all things. Jesus teaches that we cannot serve both God and money and that anxiety will not add anything to our lives. Material possessions and money, higher education or careers in government or management do NOT make persons more important than those with less. We are equal in the eyes of God. Jesus’ teaching is about attitude toward possessions and wealth. It is not sinful to earn money honestly. It is sinful to use that money to mistreat or take advantage of others.
- c) Honesty. God says: Thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not bear false witness. Friends do not steal, accept bribes, misuse the money or assets of others. A Friend tells the truth at all times (Matthew 5:37).
- d) Equality. Friends believe that all people are made in God’s image and are equal in God’s sight. No race, tribe or language is superior. One sex is not superior over the other. (Galatians 3:28) God’s gifts of ministry are bestowed on whomever God desires, regardless of race, sex, physical disability or social status.

- e) Humility. No Friend expects or is granted special treatment because of position, education, or wealth.
- f) Marriage and Sexual Ethics. Friends define marriage as a Godly union of one man and one woman. Sexual intimacy is reserved for the context of marriage. When polygamy is part of the culture, new believers in a polygamous marriage are not expected to break their existing bonds, but to enter no further marriages. (Mark 10:7-9) Leaders are to be chosen from among those who are in a monogamous marriage. (1 Timothy 3: 1-13). Friends believe that marriage is a lifetime commitment made before God. Divorce would occur only in cases of extreme problems such as abuse.
- g) Sanctity of Life. Friends affirm the sanctity of life and oppose abortion as a method of birth control, and euthanasia.
- h) Cultural Conflicts. The path to spiritual maturity leads us to change cultural customs and traditions that are in conflict with Scripture. Many cultural customs and traditions are valuable and in union with Scripture. Others must be challenged. This was true for the early Christians, for the first generation of Friends in England, for Friends confronting slavery in the USA, and for African Friends today. Careful study and prayer allows Friends to discover God's Truth in all matters.
- i) Christian Life. It is not easy to live a Christian life, constantly rejecting temptation of society's standards in favour of God's standards. For this reason, we need the support and encouragement of the church, and of each other. We need to pray often for God's help to resist sin and oppose the work of Satan, and for God's strength to carry the news of God's victory over all forms of oppression to the entire world.

10) Spiritual Gifts. Friends believe in the gifts of the Spirit as taught by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. We believe that the gifts listed by Paul and in evidence elsewhere in the New Testament record are distributed according to God's plan among all Christians—old and young, male and female, among those who are illiterate and those of advanced education or physical disability. Spiritual gifts are abilities or capacities which are intended by God to help build up the church—to teach, lead, inspire, pastor, heal, assist, administer, comfort, correct, pray for others. Our spiritual leaders should be chosen by our churches based on evidence that they have the spiritual gifts appropriate for their office.

Spiritual gifts, when used under the guidance and leadership of the Holy Spirit, are to be respected by others.

## PART 2: PRACTICE

### 1) General Principles:

- a) Background. The Religious Society of Friends Church (Quakers began out of a reform movement within the larger Christian church and does not seek to depart from any of the valid principles and biblical foundation of the Christian church. Early Friends wished to reject the formal church practices which had grown up in the church since New Testament times and sought to return to the power and simplicity of the New Testament church.
- b) Meetings. Friends distinguish three purposes for meetings:
  - i) meetings for worship whose purpose is to introduce people to the salvation through Jesus Christ,
  - ii) the meeting for worship where the believers and interested members of the public gather regularly to worship God, and
  - iii) the meeting for business, sometimes called the meeting for church governance. Meetings for business (church governance) should be distinguished from and held at separate occasions from meetings for worship.
- c) Church Governance. In all meetings for church governance, Friends hold the meeting in a spirit of prayer and worship. Friends give unhurried consideration to all proposals and opinions. All members have equal rights and privileges in attendance and participation in decision-making at meetings for church governance.
- d) Speaking at Business Meeting. When speaking in a meeting for church governance, Friends express their sense of what God intends for the congregation, not personal opinion or for personal benefit. Friends who wish to speak stand or indicate to the presiding clerk that they wish to be heard. They do not begin to speak until the presiding clerk gives permission.
- e) Consensus. The concerns and doubts of a sincere minority must be carefully considered before a decision is made. The goal is to reach substantial unity. It may be that some Friends will not be in favor, but the decision may nevertheless be adopted. When there is much difference of opinion within the congregation, the clerk should postpone a decision to a subsequent meeting to allow more time for prayer and research.
- f) Decisions Recorded. It is the responsibility of the presiding clerk to determine that a decision in substantial unity of those in attendance has been reached. Decisions are recorded in writing as a minute.
- g) Minutes. Minutes of all Friends business meetings are to be made available to any member who requests them. Recording clerks should take care to ensure that minutes are safely preserved.
- h) Appointing Leaders. Officers, elders, overseers, and committee members are chosen on the basis of their spiritual gifts and general spiritual maturity. Friends do not make distinctions based on age, sex, educational credentials, work or business background, ethnic or tribal background or social class.
- i) Approved Authority. No officer or group within a meeting has any degree of arbitrary or final authority. All decisions affecting personnel, receiving or spending of funds, and the buying, selling or hiring of property, must be authorised by a written minute of the appropriate group. Among Friends, these activities are not carried out solely by an individual or small group acting apart from such authorisation.
- j) Term limitations. Friends seek a fair distribution of leadership opportunities. Appointments for service among Friends are for one, two or three years and may be



renewed. Such appointments, including reappointments, are limited to a maximum of six years, except for Trustees, who may serve a maximum of twelve years. After term limit expiration, a one-year minimum separation is required before possible reappointment. Friends ensure that a range of ages and both sexes are included in appointments. An officer should hold only one position at a time.

- k) Integrity. To avoid temptation and misunderstandings, Friends are extremely careful in their observance of the principles of good business practice, including the procedures listed below in the sections involving treasurers.

## 2) Village and monthly meetings:

- a) The village meeting is the basic unit of Friends organization at the local level. Friends worship every Sunday within their local village meeting and participate in the worship and governance processes of the monthly meeting of which their village meeting is a part.

The village meeting:

- i) Meets every Sunday for meetings of worship,
  - ii) Has a pastor who plans, organizes and conducts meetings for worship,
  - iii) Receives new members, guides and counsels them for membership at all levels,
  - iv) Keeps records which are normally made known to the monthly meeting, quarterly meeting and finally the yearly meeting,
  - v) Is represented at nominating committees of the yearly meeting,
  - vi) Has its own finance committee,
  - vii) Recommends to the monthly meeting names of members to be disciplined for expressions or conduct inconsistent with Christian discipleship or with this *Faith and Practice*. Upon consideration of such recommendations, the monthly meeting may:
    - a. work to offer a process for confession, repentance and reconciliation;
    - b. impose a suspension of membership or of leadership responsibilities for a suitable period of restoration;
    - c. remove the member's name from the membership lists
  - viii) Reaches out to those who are outside the meeting, and involving other members in outreach,
  - viii) Provides care of widows and orphans.
- b) The words "monthly meeting" refer to the congregation as well as to the actual gatherings for the transaction of church business, which usually occur monthly. As the governing body, the monthly meeting:
    - i) holds the memberships of Friends, receives new members,
    - ii) disciplines members for good cause (see section vii under village meetings),
    - iii) terminates memberships of those who persist in unrepentant disunity with the church,
    - iv) records births and deaths,
    - v) conducts marriages and burials,
    - vi) oversees the finances of the monthly meeting (see below), and vii) appoints representatives to the quarterly, regional and yearly meetings.
    - ix) It may own property.The monthly meeting may be served by one or more pastors, a presiding clerk, a treasurer and other appointed committee members as needed. These offices and functions are described below. A monthly meeting should approve financial budgets made by village meetings.
  - c) The pastor is employed by and accountable to the monthly meeting, and is responsible for:

- i) Planning, leading and coordinating the public worship of the church,
  - ii) for involving other members as participants in worship leadership,
  - iii) providing pastoral care and counseling,
  - iv) conducting marriages and funerals,
  - v) visiting those who are sick,
  - vi) providing instruction in Christian faith and discipleship,
  - vii) general pastoral administration,
  - x) reaching out to those who are outside the meeting, and involving other members in outreach,
  - xi) provide care of widows and orphans.
- d) The meeting for business is served by a presiding clerk and an assistant presiding clerk. The presiding clerk opens the meeting for business (also known as the meeting for church governance), at which all members of the monthly meeting are expected to attend. Meetings for business take place at a separate time from meetings for worship, at a time convenient for gathering Friends who may worship at separate locations.
- e) The purpose of the meeting for business is to seek God's will for the business affairs and arrangements of the monthly meeting and its constituent village meetings. Such business decisions may include:
- i) the reception, disciplining or removal of members;
  - ii) the purchase, sale or construction of property;
  - iii) the establishing or closing of constituent meetings for worship;
  - iv) the time and place of meetings for worship;
  - v) consideration of reports from committees, officers, treasurer, Sunday school classes, men's and women's and youth groups;
  - vi) the appointment of pastors and officers;
  - vii) the appointment of women and men to represent the monthly meeting at superior bodies such as quarterly, regional and yearly meeting;
  - viii) the recommendation of men and women who have shown evidence of gifts in public ministry for possible recording by yearly meeting.
- f) The presiding clerk:
- i) opens the meeting for business with prayer,
  - ii) ensures that all points of view are heard,
  - iii) offers statements that express the sense of the meeting, attempting to meet significant objections by offering modified versions of the statements, or proposing to postpone a decision to a later meeting if substantial unity is not reached.
- g) Making decisions:
- i) Statements receiving general approval are recorded in writing as official minutes.
  - ii) The presiding clerk is a servant of this process and does not advocate his or her own views.
  - iii) If, in rare cases, the presiding clerk feels that it is urgent to express his or her own opinion, he or she vacates the presiding clerk's chair and becomes an ordinary member for the consideration of that item of business. The assistant presiding clerk or the recording clerk assumes the clerk's role until that item of business has been completed.
- h) Other responsibilities of the presiding clerk:
- i) to receive correspondence directed to the monthly meeting, replying only upon instruction of the monthly meeting;
  - ii) to submit records and certify actions of the meeting, such as marriages or burials, to

- the civil authorities and to the yearly meeting;
- iii) to ensure that the minutes and membership records are kept in a secure place, are up to date, and are available to anyone who wishes to see them.
  - i) The presiding clerk has no other powers than those enumerated above. When the pastor is present, the presiding clerk does not officiate at meetings for worship.
  - j) The vice presiding clerk serves as presiding officer of the meeting for church governance in the absence of the presiding clerk.
  - k) The recording clerk: During the meeting for business, as the presiding clerk is discerning the will of the members, the recording clerk assists by writing down the presiding clerks' suggested minutes, and makes a clear record of the minutes which are approved by the members.
  - l) Financial affairs
    - i) The village and monthly meeting maintains a bank account in the name of the meeting, and appoints signing officers (presiding clerk, recording clerk and treasurer) who are authorised to make inquiries and withdrawals. At all times two signatures are required: the treasurer plus one of the clerks.
    - ii) All bank records must be meticulously (carefully and accurately) preserved and made available to any associate or full member of the church or any officer of the yearly meeting who wishes to see them.
    - iii) Every meeting is served by a treasurer and a vice treasurer. The treasurer should work with a finance committee and all financial records should be audited.
    - iv) Each meeting tithes 10% of its income. (Village meeting tithes to monthly meeting, monthly meeting to yearly meeting, and yearly meeting to Friends United Meeting.) Each member of the meeting should tithe his/her 10% income to the meeting, beginning from the village meeting.
    - v) No treasurer or other church officer may make any withdrawal from the monthly meeting's bank account or write a cheque on the bank account's funds or make financial promises in the name of the monthly meeting except on the explicit instructions of the monthly meeting or a committee authorised by the monthly meeting to make such expenditures, or according to a schedule of regular payments authorised in advance by the monthly meeting or relevant committee.
    - vi) The monthly meeting appoints auditors to conduct audits of the monthly meeting's accounts every two years or as requested by the monthly meeting. The yearly meeting may also require audits. Auditors may not be officers of the meeting or relatives or business partners of the officers. The auditors' report must be read at a regular monthly meeting for business and made available when requested.
  - m) The treasurer:
    - i) Receives income:
      - (1) records and deposits income for the meeting,
      - (2) issues receipts to individuals or organisations for all income received,
      - (3) arranges for two or more people to count and record all collections,
      - (4) without exception, may not spend any of the income of the meeting before it has been deposited with the bank.
    - ii) Makes disbursements:
      - (1) receives requests for payment, which must be accompanied by a written voucher or invoice stating the amount, purpose and a reference to the monthly meeting's authorising minute, budget account or policy,
      - (2) makes no disbursements or promises of payment without written monthly meeting

- approval,
  - (3) keeps complete and accurate records of all disbursements,
  - (4) reports to each monthly meeting for business and prepares a written report for the meeting at least annually or as instructed by the meeting.
- n) Trustees
- i) Meetings that own property appoint three or more trustees approved by the yearly meeting.
  - ii) Trustees may not benefit financially from their service in any way.
  - iii) All financial transactions relating to a meeting's property must be handled by the trustees through the treasurer.
  - iv) When a trustee position falls vacant owing to the end of a term (maximum twelve years), a death or disability, or an inability to carry out the functions of trustee, the yearly meeting must appoint a successor within ninety days.
  - v) Trustees are responsible for:
    - (1) the careful stewardship of the meeting's property,
    - (2) its protection from unauthorized use and sale,
    - (3) repairs and maintenance.

### 3) Yearly Meeting:

The Yearly Meeting consists of the members of its constituent meetings. In its meetings for business it consists of the representatives sent by monthly meetings and other members in attendance. The Yearly Meeting's officers and all persons serving its internal organizations are resident active members of the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting General Board must approve any exceptions.

- a) It has the authority to:
  - i) counsel its constituent meetings;
  - ii) open new monthly, quarterly and regional meetings and mission fields;
  - iii) conduct evangelism;
  - iv) raise funds within the guidelines stated below;
  - v) publish and modify statements of Christian faith and practice when approved by the yearly meeting in session.
  - vi) in cases of gross misconduct at the level of monthly, quarterly and regional meeting or in its mission fields intervene and discipline the meeting or the affected members.
- b) Quarterly meetings: The Yearly Meeting may establish quarterly meetings of its constituent monthly meetings. Such quarterly and regional meetings shall be governed by the basic principles enumerated above and appropriate parallel structures of clerks and committees. Large or geographically disbursed Yearly Meetings may in turn establish regional meetings composed of several quarterly meetings. Purposes of quarterly meetings:
  - i) to provide more frequent or more convenient occasions of mutual support, inspiration, and instruction for local Friends,
  - ii) for the orderly consideration of concerns arising from local meetings and destined for the Yearly Meeting's agenda,
  - iii) for the appointment of members of the Yearly Meeting's Nominating Committee.

### 4) New Yearly Meetings:

A new yearly meeting may be established when an existing yearly meeting recognizes a quarterly and/or regional meeting at its boundaries that is large and not well served within the

existing organization owing to its distance. Such regions shall be financially and organizationally self-sustaining, having at least thirty self-supporting village meetings.

5) Yearly meeting operations:

The operation of the Yearly Meeting follows the same Friends principles listed in “General Principles,” above.

- a) Officers: presiding clerk, an assistant presiding clerk, a recording clerk, a reading clerk, a treasurer and assistant treasurer. Responsibilities of these officers are the same as those listed above for monthly meetings.
- b) Staff: General superintendent and/or general secretary. See below, sections (d) and (e), for the division of labour between these two positions for yearly meetings that have both.
- c) Appointments: The clerks and treasurer are appointed by the Yearly Meeting through the nominations process described below. The general secretary and/or general superintendent are appointed by the general board of the Yearly Meeting upon recommendation of the executive committee. Other staff may be appointed by the executive committee upon recommendation of the personnel committee and approved by the general board. The general superintendent and/or general secretary are accountable to the general board through the executive committee.
- d) General superintendent responsibilities:
  - i) administers pastoral work in the yearly meeting,
  - ii) serves as a pastor to the pastors,
  - iii) conducts or coordinates the meetings for worship of the Yearly Meeting,
  - iv) recommends available pastors to monthly and village meetings (ultimate responsibility for calling a pastor rests with the local meeting).
- e) General secretary responsibilities:
  - i) provides administrative services to the yearly meeting,
  - ii) sends and receives correspondence on behalf of the yearly meeting,
  - iii) handles all personnel matters in consultation with the executive committee and general board.

6) Annual sessions of the yearly meeting:

The yearly meeting gathers annually to:

- a) conduct the business of the yearly meeting,
- b) approve
  - i) the work of the general board,
  - ii) appointment of yearly meeting officers,
  - iii) the budget and financial affairs of the Yearly Meeting,
  - iv) the adoption of doctrinal and organisational descriptions of the yearly meeting,
  - v) new programs,
- c) worship and enjoy Christian fellowship.

7) Yearly Meeting structure:

The yearly meeting structure consists of at least a General Board, an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, a Nominations Committee, Trustees or a Missions Commission, and a Service Commission.

- a) General Board: The General Board consists of at least one representative from each Quarterly Meeting, the chairperson of all yearly meeting committees and commissions,

and the presiding clerk, recording clerk and treasurer of the yearly meeting's United Society of Friends Women, the presiding clerk, recording clerk and treasurer of Young Friends The clerks of the Yearly Meeting serve as the clerks of the Executive Committee. The General Board:

- i) Conducts business referred to it by the Yearly Meeting in session,
  - ii) Conducts business which may arise between Yearly Meeting sessions,
  - iii) reports all actions and decisions to the next Yearly Meeting session.
- b) The Executive Committee is appointed through the nominations process (below). The general superintendent and/or General Secretary of the Yearly Meeting serve as ex officio members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee:
- i) oversees the staff of the Yearly Meeting,
  - ii) in case of urgent business, calls the General Board into session,
  - iii) reports all actions for approval at the next meeting of the General Board of yearly meeting.
- c) The Nominating Committee presents to the yearly meeting in session nominations for officers, elders, overseers, and committee members chosen on the basis of their spiritual gifts and general spiritual maturity. Friends do not make distinctions based on age, sex, educational credentials, work or business background, ethnic or tribal background or social class.
- i) Composition: At least one Friend appointed from each of the quarterly and/or regional meetings in the Yearly Meeting
  - ii) Responsibilities:
    - (1) To present nominations for each clerkship and each committee position for vacancies at the next annual session of the Yearly Meeting. All appointments must be approved at that time.
    - (2) When a nomination is not approved, to reconvene and prepare another nomination for presentation later in the same sessions.
  - iii) Terms of appointees: Clerks and committee members serve three-year terms, with a maximum continuous period of service of six years. Terms expire at the end of the annual sessions, and new terms commence immediately thereafter.

#### 8) Yearly meeting trustees:

Three or more trustees appointed through the Yearly Meeting nominations process oversee ownership of Yearly Meeting property and other assets.

- a) Responsibilities: Trustees are responsible for careful stewardship of Yearly Meeting property, including
  - i) its protection from unauthorized use and sale;
  - ii) observance of relevant laws and regulations on ownership and deeds, taxation, safety, environmental protection, etc.;
  - iii) adequate insurance coverage,
  - iv) repairs and maintenance.
- b) Ethics: Trustees may not benefit financially from their service in any way. All financial transactions relating to the Yearly Meeting's property must be handled through the treasurer and reported to the Yearly Meeting in session.
- c) Vacancies: When a trustee position falls vacant owing to the end of a term (maximum twelve years), a death or disability, or an inability to carry out the functions of trustee, the Yearly Meeting must appoint a successor at the next annual session.

- d) Successor ownership: If the Yearly Meeting ceases operations, its property becomes the property of Friends United Meeting in East Africa for the sole benefit of Friends work in the country of the closed yearly meeting.

9) Yearly Meeting finances:

The Yearly Meeting maintains a corporate bank account and appoints signing officers (always more than one) who are authorised to make inquiries and withdrawals. All bank records must be meticulously (carefully and accurately) preserved and made available to any official Friends meeting treasurer or any officer of the yearly meeting who wishes to see them.

- a) Treasurer: Yearly meeting treasurers are bound by the same procedures regarding receipt, deposit and recording of income, as well as authorization and recording of expenditures, as are other meeting treasurers. No treasurer or other church officer may make any withdrawal from the yearly meeting's bank account or write a cheque on the bank account's funds or make financial promises in the name of the yearly meeting except on the explicit instructions of the yearly meeting or a committee or board authorised by the yearly meeting to make such expenditures, or according to a schedule of regular payments authorised in advance by yearly meeting or relevant committee or board.

b) Finance Committee:

i) Purposes:

- (1) to prepare budgets for the Yearly Meeting's approval,
- (2) to monitor the Yearly Meeting's current financial performance in comparison to the budget.

ii) Procedures:

- (1) The Finance Committee receives, at least quarterly, reports from the Treasurer,
- (2) Consults with all committees and programs of the Yearly Meeting, as well as Friends United Meeting, Friends Theological College, and ecumenical organizations to which the yearly meeting has financial obligations, explains the current financial outlook and solicits their expected financial requirements for the following year's budget,
- (3) Estimates the income and expense limits for the following budget year,
- (4) Presents the resulting budget to the General Board or the Yearly Meeting in session for approval.

10) Ministers and Pastors:

- a) Ministers: All disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are to be ministers:

- i) to use their spiritual gifts in service to each other;
- ii) to proclaim the Gospel faithfully in daily life.

- b) Registered Pastors: The Friends Church seeks those among its members who may have special gifts that suit them for public ministry.

The monthly meeting or its elders are responsible:

- i) To counsel and encourage such men and women to consider serving the church as pastors (or, in other cases as evangelists, missionaries or teachers).
- ii) To support them morally and financially to obtain training.
- iii) In the case of pastors, to register those men and women with sufficient training, preparation, and practical experience in the minutes of the monthly meeting, and to forward copies of these registrations to the Yearly Meeting for confirmation by the Yearly Meeting's General Board. 'Sufficient training' is defined as a minimum of three years training at an approved theological college.

- iv) To withdraw the registration of any pastor if he or she becomes inactive, if the monthly meeting or Yearly Meeting finds that the minister's personal conduct is not in keeping with Christian ministry, or if he or she is no longer a member of a church within the Yearly Meeting.
- c) Unregistered pastors: A monthly meeting may call a pastor for service even if that pastor has not been registered by any monthly meeting; however, that pastor should be encouraged and enabled to obtain additional training and should be evaluated for possible registration by the meeting which he or she serves.

#### 11) Elders and Overseers:

At least three elders or overseers, also known in some meetings as the Committee for Ministry and Oversight, serve each meeting..

- a) Term: Elders/overseers are chosen by the meeting's nomination process, and serve for a maximum of six years.
- b) Qualifications: spiritual gifts of discernment and intercessory prayer, among others, and should be acknowledged within the whole community as possessing evident spiritual maturity and trustworthiness. Both men and women are appointed as elders/overseers.
- c) Responsibilities:
  - i) to pay careful attention to the needs of members and attendees in crisis,
  - ii) to observe those who are showing the first evidences of spiritual gifts and encouraging them,
  - iii) to counsel those who are approaching the point of a spiritual decision for Christ,
  - iv) to help the pastor with arrangements for marriages, funerals and memorial meetings,
  - v) to identify and prepare candidates for membership in the church,
  - vi) to oversee the Christian education of children and adults in the meeting,
  - vii) to support the pastor and ensure that he or she has adequate resources to carry out the ministries entrusted to him or her,
  - viii) to recommend termination of a pastor's services,
  - ix) to find a new pastor; however, the meeting may appoint other members of the meeting to assist the elders/overseers in the pastoral search.
- d) Elders' /Overseers' role in church discipline:
  - i) meeting with those members and attendees whose behaviour shows lack of unity with the faith and practice of Friends,
  - ii) if firm and tender conversations with a member who is out of unity with Friends' faith and practice are not satisfactory, recommend to the meeting that the offender's name be removed from membership records.
- e) Meetings of ministers and elders/overseers:
  - i) Participants: All elders/overseers and pastors of constituent meetings in the monthly meeting should gather periodically as the monthly meeting of ministers and elders. Pastors and all active registered ministers are expected to attend these meetings, except that pastors may be excused specifically and only when there is a discussion involving evaluation of the pastor's performance.
  - ii) Confidentiality: The discussions that take place in these meetings are not divulged in any other place, except as necessary in making recommendations to meetings for business.

#### 12) Friends United Meeting and other affiliations

- a) The Yearly Meeting is part of Friends United Meeting, an international association of



Christians who share a commitment “to energize and equip Friends through the power of the Holy Spirit to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord.” Each member yearly meeting is expected to:

- i) contribute its own efforts, resources and money to this common commitment.
- ii) participate in the governance of Friends United Meeting by
  - (1) circulating the concerns and minutes of FUM throughout the yearly meeting,
  - (2) communication of Friends’ responses through their Friends United Meeting Board members (see below), through participation in FUM events, and by direct correspondence with the officers and staff of Friends United Meeting.
- b) FUM Board members: The Yearly Meeting appoints several Friends to serve as members of Friends United Meeting’s General Board. FUM does not provide financial compensation involved with Board service. However, yearly meeting should provide travel and other expense for attendance of their General Board members. The number of Board members to which the Yearly Meeting is entitled is based on a formula included in Friends United Meeting’s Organization and Procedure document.
- c) Friends United Meeting carries on the work and witness of the American Friends Board of Foreign Missions and the Five Years Meeting of Friends, under which Friends work began in East Africa. The foundational documents of the Five Years Meeting of Friends—the statement “Essential Truths,” the Richmond Declaration of Faith, and the letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados - continue to be an important part of our corporate identity as Friends, and are incorporated into this *Faith and Practice* of the Friends Church as Appendix A and B.
- d) USFWI and Quaker Men: Friends United Meeting includes two affiliated bodies of importance to East African Friends - the United Society of Friends Women International and Quaker Men International. In addition to the valuable ministries of these bodies in their home communities and on the mission field, each of them appoints one member to the East Africa General Board of Friends United Meeting.
- e) Young Friends appoints one member to serve on the East Africa General Board.
- f) FUM yearly meetings may set up regional groupings of yearly meetings, but such associations are subordinate to Friends United Meeting as a whole.

### 13) Constitutions:

All legal documents of FUM member yearly meetings should be in accord with the practices of Friends as stated in this *Faith and Practice*. At the time of writing this Faith and Practice most yearly meetings have already filed a Constitution document with the Kenyan government. It is understood that the Constitution will be modified to reflect Friends’ values. It is also understood that this process may take several years from the initial date of this *Faith and Practice* to fulfill.

A more detailed account of how each yearly meeting is governed is included in the constitution of the yearly meeting.

**East Africa FUM Friends *Faith and Practice***  
**written and edited by:**

Adego, Epaimitus .....	Bware YM
Adenya, Wilson .....	Chavakali YM
Akenga, Gilbert O. ....	Vihiga YM
Amani, Sammy .....	Chavakali YM
Chondo, Javan .....	Vokoli YM
Goliote, Timonah M. ....	Lugari YM
Inavmwa, William .....	Vokoli YM
Isiye, Tom .....	Elgon Religious Society of Friends
Kaguli, Samuel .....	Bware YM
Kidwaro, Levi K. ....	Kakamega YM
Kisanya, Lam .....	Vihiga YM
Kisia, Joseph G. ....	Vihiga YM
Kitui, John .....	Elgon East YM
Kivuya, Thomas .....	Vokoli YM
Konzolo, Ephraim .....	East Africa YM
Lilande, Ligare J. ....	Lugari YM
Malenga, Zablon I. ....	Nairobi YM
Mang'ana, Francis	
Maurer, Johan F. ....	Northwest YM (USA)
Mbwavi, Joseph .....	Central YM
McCutchen, Retha.....	Friends United Meeting
Mukulo, Andrew .....	Chavakali YM
Mulama, David A.....	Lugari YM
Musindi, Meshack.....	Kakamega YM
Musungu, Philip.....	Elgon East YM
Mwashi, Francis S.....	East Africa YM
Mwashi, Rasoa.....	East Africa YM
Neyole, Jacob M. ....	Elgon Religious Society of Friends
Ngoya, John W.....	Elgon Religious Society of Friends
Otiende, Josephat A.M.....	Vihiga YM
Obesa, Peter M.....	Bware YM
Samde, Jotham .....	Bware YM
Shaviya, Mameti K. ....	Malava YM
Shinachi, Enock .....	Malava YM
Shivachi, Wilson .....	Nairobi YM
Simiyu, Bensen .....	Nairobi YM
Simiyu, Eliud .....	East Africa YM North
Wangito, Isaac.....	Elgan East YM
Waudu, B. J.....	Kakamega YM

**APPENDIX A**  
**Historical Statements of Faith**

**RICHMOND DECLARATION OF FAITH**

[Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887: *It should be understood that the quotations from Scripture are made from the Authorized Version unless stated to be from the Revised Version.*]

It is under a deep sense of what we owe to Him who has loved us that we feel called upon to offer a declaration of those fundamental doctrines of Christian truth that have always been professed by our branch of the Church of Christ.

**Of God**

We believe in one holy (Isa 6:3, 57:15), almighty (Gen 17:1), all-wise (Rom 11:33, 16:27) and everlasting (Ps 90:1-2) God, the Father (Matt 11:25-27), the Creator (Gen 1:1) and Preserver (Job 7:20) of all things; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by whom all things were made (John 1:3), and by whom all things consist (Col 1:17); and in one Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son (John 15:26, 16:7), the Reprover (John 16:8) of the world, the Witness for Christ (John 15:26) and the Teacher (John 14:26), Guide (John 16:13), and Sanctifier (2 Thess 2:13) of the people of God; and that these three are one in the eternal Godhead (Matt 28:19; John 10:30; 17:21); to whom be honor, praise, and thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen.

**The Lord Jesus Christ**

It is with reverence and thanksgiving that we profess our unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18). In Him was life (John 1:4), and the life was the light of men (John 1:4). He is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9), through whom the light of truth in all ages has proceeded from the Father of lights. (James 1:17) He is the eternal Word (John 1:1) who was with God and was God, revealing Himself in infinite wisdom and love, both as man's Creator (Col 1:13-16) and Redeemer (Col 1:14), for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matt 1:20), born of the virgin Mary (Matt 1:23-25; Luke 1:35), the word was made flesh (John 1:14), and dwelt amongst men. He came in the fullness (Gal 4:4) of the appointed time, being verily foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20) that He might fulfill (Isa 11:1-5, Isa 52:13-15) the eternal counsel of the righteousness and love of God for the redemption of man (Isa 53). In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Col 2:9) Though He was rich, yet for our sakes, He became poor, veiling in the form of a servant (Phil 2:7) the brightness of His glory, that, through Him the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4) toward man might appear in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); for us He endured (Isa 53:4; Luke 12:50; Luke 19:41; Luke 22:44) sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness, (John 4:6) pain, unutterable anguish of body and of soul, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). Thus humbling himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven, sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them, leaving us the one perfect example (1 Peter 2:21) of all righteousness (Matt 3:15) in self-sacrificing love.

But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to His people. In Him is revealed as true God and Perfect man (Eph 4:13) a Redeemer, at once able to suffer and almighty to save. He became obedient (Phil 2:8) unto death, even the death of the cross, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); in whom we have redemption through His blood (Eph 1:7) the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. It is our joy to confess that the remission of sins which any partake of is only in and by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice and not otherwise. (Barclay's Apology, Prop. 5 and 6 par. 15, p.141). He was buried and rose again the third day (1 Cor 15:4) according to the Scriptures, becoming the first fruits (1 Cor 15:23) of them that sleep, and having shown Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs. (Acts 1:3) He ascended into heaven, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Heb 1:3, 9:24) With the apostles who beheld His ascension, we rest in the assurance of the angelic messengers, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11, and see 5:7) With the apostle John, we would desire to unite in the words, "Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev 22:20) And now, whilst thus watching and waiting, we rejoice to believe that He is our King and Savior. He is the one Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant (1 Tim 2:5, Heb 9:15) who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and man offending; (Letter to the Governor of Barbados) the great High Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable. (Heb 4:14, 7:24) He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Heb 7:25) All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. (Matt 28:18) By Him the world shall be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:31); for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. (John 5:22-23) All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil until the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28-29 RV)

We reverently confess and believe that divine honor and worship are due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and His name to be called upon, as the Primitive Christians did because of the glorious oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer prayers and praises to God, nor receive from Him a gracious answer or blessing, but in and through his dear Son. (Declaration of 1693, in Sewell's Hist., vol. 2, 379)

We would, with humble thanksgiving, bear an especial testimony to our Lord's perpetual dominion and power in His church. Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light, their forgiveness, and their joy. All are members of this church, by whatsoever name they may be called among men, who have been baptized by the one Spirit into the one body; who are builded as living stones upon Christ, the Eternal Foundation, and are united in faith and love in that fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Head. (Eph 1:22) All its true members are made one in Him. They have washed their robes and made them white in His precious blood (Rev 7:14), and He has made them priests unto God and His Father. (Rev 1:6) He dwells in their hearts by faith, and gives them of his peace. His will is their law, and in Him they enjoy the true liberty, a freedom from the bondage of sin.

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is, in the unity of the eternal Godhead, one with the Father and with the Son. (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14) He is the comforter "Whom," saith Christ, "the Father will send in my name." (John 14:26) He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. (John 16:8) He testifies of and glorifies Jesus. (John 16:14) It is the Holy Spirit who

makes the evil manifest. He quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and opens the inward eye to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. (Eph 2:1) Coming in the name and with the authority of the risen and ascended Savior, He is the precious pledge of the continued love and care of our exalted King. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them, as a realized possession, to the believing soul. (John 16:14) Dwelling in the hearts of believers (John 16:7), He opens their understandings that they may understand the Scriptures, and becomes, to the humbled and surrendered heart, the Guide, Comforter, Support, and Sanctifier.

We believe that the essential qualification of the Lord's service is bestowed upon His children through the reception and baptism of the Holy Ghost. This Holy Spirit is the seal of reconciliation to the believer in Jesus (Eph 1:13,14), the witness to his adoption into the family of the redeemed (Rom 8:15,16); the earnest and the foretaste of the full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

We own no principle of spiritual light, life or holiness, inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We believe in no principle of spiritual light, life or holiness, but the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, bestowed on mankind, in various measures and degrees, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence, which in an especial manner, gives man pre-eminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God; as a being not only intelligent but responsible; for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a joyful sound. The Holy Spirit must ever be distinguished, both from the conscience which He enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason, which when unsubjected to His Holy influence, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is the conscience to our inner being, the organ by which we see; and as both light and life are essential to the eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright, without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. One with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit can never disown or dishonor our once crucified and now risen and glorified Redeemer. We disavow all professed illumination or spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem.

### **The Holy Scriptures**

It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that, therefore, there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ. "These are written so that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." (John 20:31) The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound, as Christians, to accept, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions. No one can be required to believe, as an article of faith, any doctrine which is not contained in them; and whatsoever anyone says or does, contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion. To the Christian, the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. It is to be read in the light and completeness of the New; thus will its meaning be unveiled, and the humble disciple will be taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole, and the many-sidedness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; His doctrine is learned in the doing of His will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper

and richer experience of His truth and love.

### **Man's Creation and Fall**

It pleased God, in His wisdom and goodness, to create man out of the dust of the earth, and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul; formed after the image and likeness of God, capable of fulfilling the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker. (Gen 2:7, 1:26-27) Being free to obey, or to disobey, he fell into transgression, through unbelief, under the temptation of Satan (Gen 3:1-7), and thereby lost that spiritual life of righteousness in which he was created; and, so, death passed upon him, as the inevitable consequence of his sin. (Rom 5:12) As the children of fallen Adam, all mankind bear his image. They partake of his nature, and are involved in the consequences of his fall. To every member of every successive generation, the words of the Redeemer are alike applicable, "Ye must be born again." (John 3:7) But while we hold these views of the lost condition of man in the fall, we rejoice to believe that sin is not imputed to any, until they transgress the divine law, after sufficient capacity has been given to understand it; and that infants, though inheriting this fallen nature, are saved in the infinite mercy of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

### **Justification and Sanctification**

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) We believe that justification is of God's free grace, through which, upon repentance and faith, He pardons our sins, and imparts to us a new life. It is received, not for any works of righteousness that we have done (Titus 3:5), but in the unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Through faith in Him, and the shedding of His precious blood, the guilt of sin is taken away, and we stand reconciled to God. The offering up of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation the pardon of sin involves no abrogation or relaxation of the law of holiness. It is the vindication and establishment of that law (Rom 3:31), in virtue of the free and righteous submission of the Son of God himself to all its requirements. He, the unchangeably just, proclaims Himself the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. (Rom 3:26) From age to age, the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery, and a rock of offense to the unbelief and pride of man's fallen nature; yet, to the humble penitent whose heart is broken under the convicting power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that death. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions (Isa 53:5), and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us all (Isa 53:6), his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the exceeding sinfulness of sin for which the Savior died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he will have joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Rom 5:11)

We believe that in connection with Justification is Regeneration: that they who come to this experience know that they are not their own (1 Cor 6:19) that being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we are saved by His life (Rom 5:10); a new heart is given and new desires; old things are passed away, and we become new creatures (2 Cor 5:17), through faith in Christ Jesus; our wills being surrendered to His holy will, grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 5:21)

Sanctification is experienced in the acceptance of Christ in living faith for justification, in so far as the pardoned sinner, through faith in Christ, is clothed with a measure of His righteousness and receives the Spirit of promise; for, as saith the Apostle, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor 6:11) We

rejoice to believe that the provisions of God's grace are sufficient to deliver from the power, as well as from the guilt, of sin, and to enable His believing children always to triumph in Christ. (2 Cor 2:14) How full of encouragement is the declaration, "According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt 9:29) Whosoever submits himself wholly to God, believing and appropriating His promises, and exercising faith in Christ Jesus, will have his heart continually cleansed from all sin, by His precious blood, and, through the renewing, refining power of the Holy Spirit, be kept in conformity to the will of God, will love Him with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and be able to say, with the Apostle Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom 8:2) Thus, in its fullexperience, Sanctification is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. To this we are every one called, that we may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life. (Luke 1:74-75) It was the prayer of the apostle for the believers, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it." (1 Thess 5:23, 24) Yet the most holy Christian is still liable to temptation, is exposed to the subtle assaults of Satan, and can only continue to follow holiness as he humbly watches unto prayer, and is kept in constant dependence upon his Savior, walking in the light (1 John 1:7) in the loving obedience of faith.

### **The Resurrection and Final Judgment**

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that there shall be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15), and that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ whom He hath ordained. (Acts 17:31) For, as saith the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor 5:10)

We sincerely believe, not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen and sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with Him in glory. But that all the wicked, who live in rebellion against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. And that the soul of every man and woman shall be reserved, in its own distinct and proper being, and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (1 Cor 15:44); that being first which is natural and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said, "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" (1 Cor 15:53), the change shall be such as will accord with the declaration, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." (1 Cor 15:50) We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality, and shall be the children of God, being the children of resurrection. (Luke 20:36) (See also Declaration of 1696, Sewell's History, vol. II, 383-384)

"Our citizenship is in heaven" (RV), from whence also we look for the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. (Phil 3:20-21)

We believe that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting, according to the declaration of our compassionate Redeemer, to whom the judgment is committed, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matt 25:46 RV)

## **Baptism**

We would express our continued conviction that our Lord appointed no outward rite or ceremony for observance in His church. We accept every command of our Lord in what we believe to be its genuine import, as absolutely conclusive. The question of the use of outward ordinances is with us a question, not as to the authority of Christ, but as to His real meaning.

We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is, under the Christian dispensation, but one baptism (Eph 4:4-5), even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body. (1 Cor 12:13 RV) This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (1 Pet 3:21), but that inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience towards God, but the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the experience of His love and power, as the risen and ascended Savior. No baptism in outward water can satisfy the description of the apostle, of being buried with Christ by baptism unto death. (Rom 6:4) It is with the Spirit alone that any can thus be baptized. In this experience the announcement of the Forerunner of our Lord is fulfilled, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matt 3:11) In this view we accept the commission of our blessed Lord as given in Matthew 28:18, 19 and 20th verses: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (RV) This commission, as we believe, was not designed to set up a new ritual under the new covenant, or to connect the initiation into a membership, in its nature essentially spiritual, with a mere ceremony of a typical character. Otherwise it was not possible for the Apostle Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (2 Cor 11:5), to have disclaimed that which would, in that case, have been of the essence of his commission when he wrote, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." (1 Cor 1:17) Whenever an external ceremony is commanded, the particulars, the mode and incidents of that ceremony, become of its essence. There is an utter absence of these particulars in the text before us. Which confirms our persuasion that the commission must be construed in connection with the spiritual power which the risen Lord promised should attend the witness of his apostles and of the church to Him, and which, after Pentecost, so mightily accompanied their ministry of the word and prayer, that those to whom they were sent were introduced into an experience wherein they had a saving knowledge of, and living fellowship with, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## **The Supper of the Lord**

Intimately connected with the conviction already expressed is the view that we have ever maintained as to the true supper of the Lord. We are well aware that our Lord was pleased to make use of a variety of symbolical utterances, but he often gently upbraided His disciples for accepting literally what He had intended only in its spiritual meaning. His teaching, as in His parables or in the command to wash one another's feet, was often in symbols, and ought ever to be received in the light of His own emphatic declaration, "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63) The old covenant was full of ceremonial symbols; the new covenant, to which our Savior alluded at the last supper, is expressly declared by the prophet to be "not according to the old." (Jer 31:32, Heb 8:9) We cannot believe that in setting up this new covenant the Lord Jesus intended an institution out of harmony with the spirit of this prophecy. The eating of His body and the drinking of His blood cannot be an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of their Lord as their only



hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives to drink of the fullness that is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking that is the true supper of the Lord.

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit. "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever" (John 14:16), convincing of sin, testifying of Jesus, taking of the things of Christ, this blessed Comforter communicates to the believer and to the church, in a gracious, abiding manifestation, the REAL PRESENCE of the Lord. As the Great Remembrancer, through whom the promise is fulfilled, He needs no ritual or priestly intervention in bringing the experience of the true commemoration and communion. "Behold," saith the risen Redeemer, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me." (Rev 3:20) In an especial manner, when assembled for congregational worship, are believers invited to the festival of the Savior's peace, and in a united act of faith and love, unfettered by any outward rite or ceremonial, to partake together of the body that was broken and of the blood that was shed for them, without the gates of Jerusalem. In such a worship they are enabled to understand the words of the apostle as expressive of a sweet and most real experience: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor 10:16-17)

### **Public Worship**

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms: it may be without words as well as with them, but it must be in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24) We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of an end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord. Having become His adopted children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our privilege to meet together and unite in the worship of Almighty God, to wait upon Him for the renewal of our strength, for communion one with another, for the edification of believers in the exercise of various spiritual gifts, and for the declaration of the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted who may gather with us. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ there is a church, and Christ, the living Head, in the midst of them. Through His mediation without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality, is the Father to be approached and reverently worshiped. The Lord Jesus has forever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law, by the offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary, and graciously provided spiritual offerings of the service of his temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song and melody of the heart (Eph 5:19), the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love, these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is pleased to prepare, by His Spirit, in the hearts of them that receive Him, and to present with acceptance unto God.

By the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, He as the Head of the church, alone selects and qualifies those who are to present His messages or engage in other services for Him; and, hence, we cannot commit any formal arrangement to any one in our regular meetings for worship. We are well aware that the Lord has provided a diversity of gifts (1 Cor 12:4-6) for the

needs both of the church and of the world, and we desire that the church may feel her responsibility, under the government of her Great Head, in doing her part to foster these gifts, and in making arrangements for their proper exercise. It is not for individual exaltation, but for mutual profit, that the gifts are bestowed (1 Cor 12:7); and every living church, abiding under the government of Christ, is humbly and thankfully to receive and exercise them, in subjection to her Holy Head. The church that quenches the Spirit and lives to itself alone must die.

We believe the preaching of the Gospel to be one of the chief means, divinely appointed, for the spreading of the glad tidings of life and salvation through our crucified Redeemer, for the awakening and conversion of sinners, and for the comfort and edification of believers. As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him; and that, as in the primitive church, so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men, agreeably to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17), respecting which the apostle declares, "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39) As the gift is freely received so it is to be freely exercised, (Matt 10:8 See Also Acts 20:33-35) in simple obedience to the will of God.

Spiritual gifts, precious as they are, must not be mistaken for grace; they add to our responsibility, but do not raise the minister above his brethren or sisters. They must be exercised in continued dependence upon our Lord and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and His grace exalted. "He that is greatest among you," said our Lord and Master, "let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth." (Luke 22:26-27)

While the church cannot confer spiritual gifts, it is its duty to recognize and foster them, and to promote their efficiency by all the means in its power. And while, on the one hand, the Gospel should never be preached for money (Acts 8:20, 20:33-35), on the other, it is the duty of the church to make such provision that it shall never be hindered for want of it.

The church, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) Knowing that it is the Spirit of God that can alone prepare and qualify the instruments who fulfill this command, the true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal, and when he hears the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me." (Isa 6:8)

### **Prayer and Praise**

Prayer is the outcome of our sense of need, and of our continual dependence upon God. He who uttered the invitation, "Ask and it shall be given you," (Matt 7:7) is himself the Mediator and High Priest who, by His Spirit, prompts the petition, and who presents it with the acceptance before God. With such an invitation, prayer becomes the duty and the privilege of all who are called by His name. Prayer is, in the awakened soul, the utterance of the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13), and, at every stage of the believer's course, prayer is essential to his spiritual life. A life without prayer is a life practically without God. The Christian's life is a continual asking. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper

longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies, from Him who delights to bless. Prayer is not confined to the closet. When uttered in response to the prompts of the Holy Spirit, it becomes an important part of public worship, and, whenever the Lord's people meet together in His name, it is their privilege to wait upon Him for the spirit of grace and supplications. (Zech. 12:10) A life of prayer cannot be other than a life of praise. As the peace of Christ reigns in the church, her living members accept all that they receive, as from His pure bounty, and each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of His house, whether as individuals, in families, or in congregations, they will be still praising Him (Ps 84:4), heart answering to heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name." (Ps 103:1)

### **Liberty of Conscience in Relation to the Civil Government**

That conscience should be free, and that in matters of religious doctrine and worship man is accountable only to God, are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament; and which are confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel, and by the example of our Lord and His disciples. To rule over the conscience, and to command the spiritual allegiance of his creature man, is the high and sacred prerogative of God alone. In religion every act ought to be free. A forced worship is plainly a contradiction in terms, under that dispensation in which the worship of the Father must be in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

We have ever maintained that it is the duty of Christians to obey the enactments of civil government, except those which interfere with our allegiance to God. We owe much to its blessings. Through it we enjoy liberty and protection, in connection with law and order. Civil government is a divine ordinance (Rom 13:1, 1 Pet 2:13-16), instituted to promote the best welfare of man, hence magistrates are to be regarded as God's ministers who should be a terror to evildoers and a praise to them that do well. Therefore, it is with us a matter of conscience to render them respect and obedience in the exercise of their proper functions.

### **Marriage**

Marriage is an institution graciously ordained by the Creator Himself, for the help and continuance of the human family. It is not a mere civil contract, and ought never to be entered upon without a reference to the sanction and blessing of Him who ordained it. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life (Matt 19:5-6), designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmeets to each other in thingstemporal and spiritual. To this end it should imply concurrence in spiritual as well as temporal concerns, and should be entered upon discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of the Lord.

### **Peace**

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Law-giver, and the whole spirit of His Gospel, and that no plea of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe to Him who hath said, "Love your enemies." (Matt 5:44, Luke 6:27) In enjoining this love, and the forgiveness of injuries, He who has brought us to Himself has not prescribed for man precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice, or of which the practice is to be postponed until all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent now, and that we have in the prophetic Scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application not only to individuals, but to nations also. (Isa 2:4, Micah 4:1) When nations conform their laws to this divine teaching, wars must necessarily cease.

We would, in humility, but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace, in strict conformity with His commands.

### **Oaths**

We hold it to be the inalienable privilege of the disciple of the Lord Jesus that his statements concerning matters of fact within his knowledge should be accepted, under all circumstances, as expressing his belief as to the fact asserted. We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matt 5:34); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well being. This command, in our persuasion, applies not to profane swearing only, but to judicial oaths also. It abrogates any previous permission to the contrary, and is, for the Christian, absolutely conclusive.

### **The First Day Of The Week**

Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought to be at all times present with the Christian, we would express our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that He has been pleased to honor the setting apart of one day in seven for the purposes of holy rest, religious duties, and public worship; and we desire that all under our name may avail themselves of this great privilege as those who are called to be risen with Christ, and to seek those things that are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God. (Col 3:1) May the release thus granted from other occupations be diligently improved. On this day of the week especially ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures and for waiting upon the Lord; and we trust that, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of the day may be so ordered as not to frustrate the gracious provision thus made for us by our Heavenly Father, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship or for private retirement and devotional reading.

In presenting this declaration of our Christian faith, we desire that all our members may be afresh encouraged, in humility and devotedness, to renewed faithfulness in fulfilling their part in the great mission of the Church, and through the Church to the world around us, in the name of our Crucified Redeemer. Life *from* Christ, life *in* Christ, must ever be the basis of life *for* Christ. For this we have been created and redeemed, and, by this alone, can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Historical Statements of Faith**

#### **George Fox's letter to the Governor of Barbados**

#### **Extracts from George Fox's Letter to the Governor of Barbados, 1671:**

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, the Creator of all things both in heaven and in earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and forevermore.

And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only-begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe that there is no other foundation to be laid than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who tasted death for every man, shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Savior, even the captain of our salvation, who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works; he is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification, and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls: He is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of, saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of the brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:22, 23).

He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." He rules in our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life, but of Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending: He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace; the author and finisher of our faith. This Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; He whom the high-priest raged against the said, He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach a horrible lie, namely, "That his disciples came and stole him away by night whilst they slept." After He was arisen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

Concerning the Holy Scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who, as the Scripture itself declares, (II Peter 1:21) spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (He that fulfills them is Christ), and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" and "are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ

Jesus.” (II Tim. 3:15-17)

—*Autobiography of George Fox, edited by Henry Stanley Newman*