

**NPYM CONSIDERATION OF  
AFFILIATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

**Compatibility With the Faith and Practice of Friends in NPYM**

North Pacific Yearly Meeting is a fairly small body formed in 1973, with less than a thousand members and physically isolated from most Friends except for our sister body, Northwest Yearly Meeting. NPYM is cautious about affiliating with other bodies, wanting to be certain that such action is both compatible with our understanding of Quakerism as expressed in our *Faith and Practice*, and within our capacity to carry out with integrity given our small financial and personnel resources. Also, as part of the Beanite tradition, we are also wary of engaging in the disputes which have long divided Friends.

NPYM has been affiliated with three nationwide or worldwide Quaker organizations since its inception -- AFSC, FCNL and FWCC -- and has also been one of three yearly meetings which form the Board for Friends Bulletin. In more recent years the decision was made to affiliate with Friends Peace Teams. The number of representatives to these organizations as of 2007 is as follows:

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)	4
Friends Bulletin (FB)	2
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)	6
Friends Peace Teams (FPT)	2
Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)	4

For these organizations, representatives are actively involved in the governance as well as in defining their priorities. These organizations embody the testimonies which are at the heart of how we live out our faith. We see affiliating with each of these organizations as a way of joining with other Friends in the West and across the globe and magnifying our ability to change the world. The work of these organizations is in many ways an extension of ourselves so that we might better communicate our faith and actively build a more just and peaceful community.

Central to our understanding of the work we do is the sense that we must be led to it. Such a leading gives us connection to the guidance of the Spirit. In remaining true to our leadings, we find energy, commitment and courage to take whatever actions are called of us. Thus, periodically, we will take time to reflect on the life and energy present in our existing affiliations to see if any changes are needed.

From time-to-time, we expect requests will come forward for affiliation with other organizations. In order to test whether joining in with another organization in its work is right for NPYM, an Ad Hoc Committee should be formed to explore the practical and spiritual dimensions and bring a recommendation to the Yearly Meeting Annual Session for decision.

When review of an existing affiliation or request for a new commitment is called for, Coordinating Committee will appoint several Friends who represent a broad range of experience and knowledge within NPYM of the organization to serve on an Ad Hoc Committee.

### **Testing for Leadings**

The Ad Hoc Committee will listen throughout the yearly meeting for the feelings and insights of Friends. As they are led, they will consult with those proposing a new affiliation. They will consider the relationships already formed between individual Friends in NPYM and the organization, the personal, spiritual and financial resources NPYM can bring to this affiliation and any other factors that arise as they listen. The Ad Hoc Committee seeks clearness on whether the Yearly Meeting is led to affiliate with this organization at this time and on what the right form of the relationship between the two organizations should be.

Their consideration need not be limited by tradition or the expectations of the organization seeking affiliation. The Ad Hoc Committee will undertake a two stage process of evaluation and clearness, reporting to the Coordinating Committee within 6 months of its appointment. Once the Ad Hoc Committee has completed the clearness process and brought a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee, it will be laid down and the Coordinating Committee will bring its recommendation to the Annual Session for decision.

### **Basic Information**

The Committee will first gather Basic Information about the organization and NPYM's experience with it. The questions listed below are designed to aide in this process. This basic information will then be summarized and circulated to meetings and worship groups for their comments.

1. What is the organization and its purpose? Is this a Friends organization?
2. If it is a Friends organization, is this organization welcoming of all Friends or is it oriented to a particular group?
3. Is affiliation open only to Friends meetings? If not, what other individuals or organizations are affiliated?
4. What are its mission and its goals?
5. What is the decision making process of the organization? How are affiliated meetings/ organizations part of that decision making?
6. What do we know about the financial and institutional health of this organization?

7. Is there anything about the financial or legal status of this organization (e.g. tax exempt status, political lobbying status) that would have a negative impact on NPYM's financial or legal status?
8. Does NPYM Legal and Finance Committee have any specific concerns about this affiliation?
9. What are the organization's criteria/expectations for affiliation? Number of representatives? Responsibilities of representatives? Will representatives be expected to attend meetings? Where? How often? Are there funds available from the organization to defray the representatives' expenses? Does the organization expect a financial contribution from NPYM? If so, how much? Are there other obligations or expectations, e.g. Hosting an annual meeting or sharing our directory database?
10. Who has brought the request to NPYM? What is the level of interest in NPYM?
11. How are Friends in NPYM currently involved in this organization?
12. Does NPYM have any previous history with this organization?

### **Queries for Clearness**

Once the Committee is satisfied that all the basic information and comments from meetings and worship groups has been gathered, and that it still seems right to go forward, the next step will be a clearness process. The queries below are suggested to aid this process.

- Has our consideration of this affiliation been filled with care and loving listening? Have all meetings had plenty of opportunity to consider this action?
- How does affiliation with this organization resonate with the vision of NPYM? Does the organization embody a commitment to core Quaker values such as commitment to nonviolence, commitment to serve the oppressed and does it carry out concerns that are primary in NPYM?
- Is this an organization whose work NPYM is called to support at this time, in this manner? Are there ways to further the work of this organization other than affiliation?
- How might we most effectively contribute to the purposes of this organization? Locally? With regional gatherings? Nationally? At their annual meetings? In committees?
- What purposes will our connection serve?
  - o What do we and they hope to accomplish in the world?
  - o What are the benefits to NPYM?
  - o What are the benefits to the organization?
- How will affiliation with this organization deepen the work of the Spirit in NPYM? How does this involve more than the representatives? How will this engage and enrich people throughout the Yearly Meeting?

- Does NPYM have the financial and personal resources to meet the expectations of affiliation? Is this a responsibility we can undertake with grace and energy?

- Where is the joy in this? What are the challenges?

- How is the Spirit leading us, as a community, in relation to this organization? Do we feel led to affiliate with this group?

### **Representatives**

The number of representatives to an organization is usually set at their behest and these individuals are proposed by the NPYM Nominating Committee and approved at Annual Session for terms appropriate to each organization. When more than one representative is named, they should be appointed so that their terms of service are staggered.

A job description is prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee in cooperation with the affiliated organization and given to each representative. In addition to the duties and expectations requested by the organization seeking affiliation, NPYM expects its representatives to report back to the Coordinating Committee on at least an annual basis on the work of the organization and their experience and expect to attend NPYM annual session. The AFSC, FCNL and FWCC representatives also bring a report or other program as part of the Annual Session once every three years on a rotating basis.

The representative(s) should also bring any proposed action items to the attention of the NPYM presiding clerk to determine appropriate method for consideration by the Yearly Meeting.

Periodically, the Associate Clerk of Coordinating Committee will convene meetings of all NPYM's representatives to discuss issues affecting their work.

The representatives of FWCC also meet annually with the NPYM presiding clerk in order to recommend Friends-in-Residence for the NPYM Annual Session.

### **Periodic Review**

Leadings are often for a certain time and place. Thus, it is helpful to check in periodically to ensure that the leading is still alive. Affiliations are to be tested at least every ten years – with one considered in a year, beginning with the longest affiliation. The process is similar to that of affiliation. A small ad hoc clearness committee is appointed, including a representative to the organization. This ad hoc committee will meet to reflect on the work being done and the presence of divine Light in that work. The ad hoc committee will then report to Coordinating Committee on their findings, including any recommendations for changes which might support the work. Decisions on any changes in affiliation are made by the Annual Session.

### **Funding**

Our intent is to fund the work of NPYM's representatives to other organizations at a level which allows people we name to these positions to serve without regard to their ability to fund the sometimes expensive travel involved in this work. We also hope that Friends will contribute to their expenses as they are able and would seek financial support from the organization as appropriate.

Funding decisions include the cost to participate meaningfully in the organization and fulfill the responsibility to report back to the Yearly Meeting, e.g. attend the annual meeting of the organization, participate in committees, report to Coordinating Committee and/or visit among the meetings and worship groups of NPYM in order to keep them apprised of this work.

At least a nominal financial or other contribution to the work of the organization is included in the annual NPYM budget as an encouragement for individual Friends to also contribute. If there is an expectation of annual fees or a certain level of contributions from the organization seeking affiliation, this should be considered as part of the clearness process, along with NPYM's ability to support the participation of our representatives.

### **Correspondence, Observer Status and Other Levels of Affiliation**

Full affiliation is not always appropriate for an organization, even when we feel a close affinity with their mission and work. This may simply be beyond our resources or we may feel that the work is good, but for others to take up. Sometimes we may simply offer them good wishes. Other times it may be appropriate to name a correspondent who can keep NPYM members informed on the work of the organization and encourage individual participation. Sometimes it may be right to name an observer or a liaison — a reflection of the fact that we are not involved in the governance of the organization or contributing a full share to its work. Recommendations for naming and funding correspondents, observers or similar levels of relationship with other organizations will be the result of a clearness process as described above and brought to the Annual Session for decision.