

To: NCYM Executive Committee, NCYM Clerk, NCYM Superintendants, each Meeting within NCYM

From: Deep Creek Monthly Meeting

Re: Concerns relating to the Listening Sessions, Organizational Assessment Survey and letter from Poplar Ridge Meeting

Dear Friends,

Our stated vision at Deep Creek is that we strive to be *A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS growing in God's Word, reaching all generations, and serving others in Christ's love.*

We are concerned about the winds of discord blowing through our Yearly Meeting. These winds have given us cause to consider what we believe and although we found the impetus for these considerations to be of great concern, the process has encouraged us to be thoughtful and deliberate in discussions of our faith. George Fox, in his letter to the Governor of Barbados, sums it up pretty well. We believe in God and in Jesus Christ and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, that He was crucified, buried and rose again, that He ascended and now sits at the right hand of God to intercede with God the Father on our behalf. We do believe that the Holy Scriptures were given by the Holy Spirit of God, that they are to be read, believed and fulfilled and that He that fulfills them is Jesus Christ. (paraphrased from Extract from George Fox's letter to the Governor of Barbados) We hold that any seeking that identifies "Light" from any source other than God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son and the Holy Spirit is false and not worthy of consideration by members of NCYM. (paraphrased from 1 John 2:22-25 and the Richmond Declaration of Faith)

We assert that what we do as Friends should be considered with a three-part test. Is Jesus Christ at the center? Is this rooted in Biblical faith? Is this committed to and rooted in the Quaker expression?

If we are true to ourselves, and have any integrity at all, we will review our beliefs as members of this organization. If any of us as members, and possibly as member Meetings, upon such evaluation, see that we no longer are in accord with the "General Doctrinal Statements" as set forth in *Faith and Practice*, then we should consider following the lead of the Wilbur-Gurney separation, and more recently NCYM-Conservative, and seek affiliation with those more closely aligned with our beliefs. We need to go where we are fed.

For many years theological differences have inhibited us from operating with the level of trust and accord that is vital to our mission and purpose. We have allowed confusion about the basic tenants of our faith to go unanswered, thus creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust among us. There have been valiant efforts to reconcile our differences over recent decades which have not met our needs. As painful as separation would be; is another split a viable option for us? How can we move forward?

There are tangible parts of NCYM that are shared by all, *i.e.* QLC, Pastor's retirement funds, MOWA, NC FDS, *etc.* There will be delicate and complex issues relating to a separation. However, the greatest act of care and love for one another could be to release those with differing beliefs to the path they feel led to follow.

Structure of the Yearly Meeting administration, staffing considerations and financial affairs of the Yearly Meeting are all important but remain secondary to the clear statement and requirement that our core beliefs center on Jesus Christ. In order to be a member of NCYM, participate and have a voice in its ongoing business, individuals and Meetings must affirm the core beliefs of NCYM as stated in *Faith and Practice*.

Until we can agree on Jesus, we can never have hope of "Claiming the future God has for us."

Read and approved at Deep Creek Monthly Meeting in session 8<sup>th</sup> Month, 10<sup>th</sup> Day, 2014

Walter Shore, Clerk of Monthly Meeting

Roger Holt, Clerk of Ministry and Counsel