

Faith and Practice Revision Committee Annual Report 2024

This year the Faith & Practice Revision Committee began its year with a review of the remaining work to be done. We had rough drafts of many sections of the book and spent time considering how to best organize the remaining sections. We divided into two groups, taking up the topics of testimonies and the spiritual life of the meeting community. Now, with these two topics well underway, we have initial drafts of all parts of the book in hand, except for the section on the structure of the Yearly Meeting. As we continue this work, one of our biggest challenges remains the best placement of topics for a coherent, readable book. The monthly meetings have consistently asked us for more detailed information on Quaker procedure and Quaker practice and we have tried to respond to this request with detailed appendices.

In the fall we sent out the Introduction to the book to the monthly meetings and requested feedback. Thirteen monthly meetings and individuals replied with input. We sent the draft with four specific queries, hoping to gain a better understanding on how monthly meetings understood and responded to specific aspects of religious terminology and Quaker thought. We thank you for providing guidance on these issues. We have rewritten the draft, with your input in mind, and will bring it to the Yearly Meeting for preliminary approval at the 2024 sessions.

We will not be bringing any new work to sessions this year. We continue to work on four draft chapters, both further developing them and weighing the best way to organize the material. We are also looking forward to working with Permanent Board on the text covering structure of the Yearly Meeting. Permanent Board is working on the Yearly Meeting's first set of by-laws and the Revision Committee will need to incorporate that work into a chapter on the structure of the Yearly Meeting.

We ended our report last year with these words, which remain true: Our committee remains small. Our numbers are still fewer than the intended sixteen Friends, and though we do not reflect the demographic diversity of the yearly meeting, we are grateful for our theological diversity, which does more closely represent the varieties of religious experience among the Quakers of New England. Our work together is not always easy, but always contributes to our spiritual understanding and growth. We hope our chapters embody that seasoned discernment.

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