

**A Discussion Guide
for
Pastoral Care, draft text, NEYM Sessions 2018
October 2018**

Dear Friends,

New England Yearly Meeting is engaged in writing a Faith and Practice that reflects the yearly meeting as it is today, in a way that encourages spiritual renewal and fresh spiritual insight. The more the Faith and Practice Revision Committee hears from you, the more our new book of Faith and Practice will reflect the faith and practice of New England Friends. The committee needs to know if the draft texts encourage you and your meeting on your spiritual path. Does the text provide guidance for you to find the way forward together on difficult issues?

The usual feedback from a monthly meeting on a text is a list of things said by those who attended the discussion. It is very helpful to the committee to hear the range of individual responses to what is written and you often point out to us what we have missed. We can hear in your reports that you have engaged with the work and spoken openly and lovingly with one another. However, what is often unclear, is how the meeting as a community is responding to the text. This often leaves the committee uncertain as to whether we have written in a way that supports the life of the meeting. In contrast, a number of monthly meetings have taken the time to write minutes that reflected the sense of the meeting concerning the draft. We encourage more of this feedback from the meeting as a body.

Please use the enclosed Draft to make hard copies as needed. The document is also available on the NEYM web site at neym.org/fp-revision/text-currently-under-discussion.

Below are a series of queries on the various sections of the Pastoral Care draft that may be helpful in guiding a discussion on the text. When you send in your responses to the text, please let us know how much of the text your group reviewed. Did you just review the paragraphs of descriptive text? Did you discuss the Extracts? Advices and Queries? Did you get as far as reviewing the Appendix?

Foundations of Pastoral Care – Did this ring true for you? Did it change or expand your previous understanding of pastoral care? Are there important elements missing from the description?

Practices Supporting Pastoral Care – Consider how each of these practices (subheadings in the text) is experienced in your meeting. What parts of the text particularly spoke to you? Is something missing? Does the text open a fresh way to understand PC? Does it give you the grounding and courage to engage in PC? Does the organization of this section work? Is there a clearer way to present this information?

Structures Supporting Pastoral Care – Is it helpful to have the various support structures described in this way? Is the section on the PC of children helpful? Are there concerns surrounding children that are missing? Are there other groups in the meeting community that need a more focused section similar to the section Pastoral Care of Children and Young People?

Pastoral Care of the Meeting - Does the section Dealing with Conflict adequately address the issue of conflict within the meeting? Do you share this sense that pastoral care is not the responsibility solely of an appointed group within the Meeting?

Extracts – Are there extracts that are particularly useful to you or your meeting. Are there extracts that miss the mark and can be removed? Do you have others you would wish to see included?

Advices and Queries

You might like to address the queries together. Are there queries you would rewrite?

Appendix 8

Appendix 8 has several sections: Advices & Queries for Pastoral Care committees, and several sections concerning clearness committees. Are these helpful? Do they help to create the ground for good Quaker practice? How might they be improved? Are there other topics within Pastoral Care that you would like to see expanded in the appendix?

Please send your meeting's input to Phebe McCosker, clerk of the Faith and Practice Revision Committee. You may email her at phebe.mccosker@gmail.com, or email her through the yearly meeting website at fandp@neym.org. Hard copies may be sent to: Phebe McCosker, PO Box 66, Thetford, VT 05074.

Phebe McCosker, clerk, for the committee

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