



Greeting Friends,

Friends, North Carolina Yearly Meeting Representative Body will gather August 1, 2015 at 1:00pm for a called session of Worship and Business. The location of our gathering will be Holly Spring Friends Meeting. Each Monthly Meeting shall appoint one member to attend Representative Body and represent their meeting. However, all members are welcome to attend the Representative Body.

Our session will be for the purpose of discussing how North Carolina Yearly Meeting might restructure or even divide. A report from the New Committee that includes changes to Faith & Practice and options for restructuring North Carolina Yearly Meeting, along with explanatory material about each option, are included in the attachments/enclosures. In addition to this item of business, we may also be called on to consider for approval an Interim Director for Friends Campus Ministry.

Friends, I have been very concerned by the lack of participation from many of our Monthly Meetings. More than half of our meetings were not represented at our June 6 Representative Body. Friends, this is very discouraging to your Presiding Clerk when forty meetings cannot provide one member to represent their meeting in these major concerns. On August 1, Representative Body will meet to discuss our options. Please discuss the enclosed/attached information in your Monthly Meetings and seek the leading of the Holy Spirit. My concern is that Monthly Meetings will not take this matter seriously until it is too late.

Please send your representative prepared to share your meeting's leading on these items of business. I would encourage Friends to pray for and attend Representative Body.

Mike Fulp
Presiding Clerk North Carolina Yearly Meeting

NEW COMMITTEE REPORT

6-6-15

Black – Approved by Rep Body

Red – Work of the New Committee; Rep Body approval required.

Green – Direction from Rep Body

1. What way do we see all meetings remaining in NCYM and producing effective ministry?

(1) All meetings shall accept the same core spiritual beliefs as set forth in the NCYM Faith & Practice. (Addressed further in question #2)

- Jesus Christ is present.

Jesus Christ is actively present with us as Savior, Teacher, Lord, Healer, and Friend. Those who take time to listen to Christ can hear His voice and follow Him, individually and collectively.

- Scripture calls us to account and helps us know God's will.

The Bible, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit, one never contradicting the other, shows us what God requires of us and provides authoritative and unfailing spiritual guidance for our lives today.

- God is the source of life, and all human life is sacred.

All life has its origin in the creative work of God, and human life is to be regarded as a sacred gift from God. Because all persons have equal value and are created in the image of God, we must treat others with respect and dignity, regardless of human measures of merit or value.

- The Holy Spirit transforms and empowers us.

The Holy Spirit enlightens our paths and transforms our lives. As we yield our lives to God and become immersed in the life of the Spirit, things change. Despair gives way to hope, and weakness gives way to empowerment. All things indeed become new.

- We are called to be and to make followers of Christ.

Christ through His Spirit transforms us to be more like Him. He enables us to live lives of integrity and righteousness and calls us to bring others into this relationship. We listen to Christ, we obey Him, and we teach others how to do the same.

- We are called to live out the love of Jesus Christ.

Jesus reveals the fullest measure of God's love by His example in His death on the cross. As we become more Christ-like, we display this same quality of love corporately and individually to those around us.

- We are called to be agents of God's peace and love to everyone.

We are called to work for justice as agents of peace in a broken world. Whether situations of conflict and confusion are personal, national, or global - within the church or beyond it - we are called to be agents of the same healing and love we have received from God.

(2) All meetings shall provide financial support of NCYM on an equitable basis, and if unable to do so, the meeting must provide an explanation which is acceptable. (addressed further in question #4)

Approved 3-7-15 by Rep Body with 4 individuals recording disapproval

2. Should our Faith & Practice be the ultimate authority in our beliefs and practice, and be affirmed by all member meetings?

All meetings shall reaffirm NCYM Faith & Practice which directs us to the Holy Bible and includes documents prepared with much care and prayerful guidance, such as the Richmond Declaration of Faith, which present our core spiritual beliefs in a clear, concise manner. Affirmation of Faith & Practice as our guide does not establish a creed.

Approved by Rep Body 3-7-15

3. Why do meetings feel compelled to participate with organizations outside of NCYM?

(on hold for the New Committee – to be discussed by Monthly meetings and for them to bring back recommendations.)

The New Committee is aware that a few of our monthly meetings are considering becoming members of another yearly meeting which represents one of the other major divisions among the Religious Society of Friends. No monthly meeting in NCYM shall have dual membership with another yearly meeting. If a Meeting feels compelled to join another Yearly Meeting, then they need to present their reasons to NCYM Executive Committee and NCYM Ministry and Counsel. (This action will require a change in *Faith and Practice*.)

4. Financial responsibility to NCYM should be seriously reviewed.

As a Yearly Meeting that serves as a hub for communication between all meetings, provides networking and helps the membership to enable our work, we have an administrative office and staff. We also have Trust Funds which benefit all and must be administered. We, together, have moved forward and hired a superintendent who will be working for all meetings in North Carolina Yearly Meeting. We have facilities at four or more locations to promote our work for the Kingdom of God. We have programs to teach, guide and direct the young in our fellowship and other programs to enrich and encourage the not so young. In order to maintain such assets for all and receive support from a central office, all Meetings are expected to fully pay their Askings, which have been formulated in a fashion to be equitable. Those Meetings who feel compelled not to contribute to the shared obligation, cannot expect to reap the benefits of the shared fellowship. Monthly meetings which are unable to meet this expectation should immediately notify the yearly meeting and include an explanation of why. Furthermore, if NCYM Representative Body determines that a monthly meeting is purposefully not supporting NCYM (or an individual does not follow through with financial obligations) that monthly meeting (or individual) will be penalized as follows: They shall not serve as a representative to Representative Body, in a leadership role, or on any committee, and shall pay non-member full-prices to participate in all NCYM sponsored activities. It is anticipated that even starting immediately with these procedures, addressing this issue will take time.

We recognize that there are special and unusual circumstances that may need further consideration. How do we address that some meetings have made a conscious decision not to fully pay their Askings while some of those meeting's members do not agree with the decision. Many of these individuals are supporting the yearly meeting on an individual basis. We want to move deliberately enough to avoid unintended consequences.

Approved by Rep Body 3-7-15

Additional Recommendations of the New Committee:

- A. Members of Nominating Committee, Committee on Clerks or Ministry and Counsel Nominating Committee shall not concurrently, or successively from that nominating committee, serve on NCYM Executive Committee or NCYM Ministry and Counsel Executive Committee. No two members of the same immediate family shall be nominated and approved to the same committee. This will not affect ex-officio members.

Approved by Rep Body 3-7-15

- B How can NCYM reconcile Spiritual, Financial, or other problems?
In order to resolve issues and restore meetings or individuals to good standing, the Superintendent, Presiding Clerk, Executive Committee Clerk and Ministry & Counsel Clerk will be a committee to meet with monthly meetings or individuals. They will then report back to Representative Body.

Approved by Rep Body 3-7-15

C INITIAL WORDING:

Each Quarter shall recommend, for approval at NCYM, one person and an alternate as a member to Executive Committee of the Yearly Meeting. Each appointment shall be for a three year term. Appointments shall be made from three quarters each year on a rotating basis, with the order to be determined, as closely as possible, by the quarter of members of the existing Executive Committee whose terms are to expire. (It should be understood that this change of make-up of Executive Committee will require approval of changes to Faith and Practice as well as approval of changes to the Administrative Handbook.) This will not affect members by appointment or ex-officio members.

- a. (Rep Body wanted this phrase taken out)
- b. Wording is to be worked on but the INTENTION was approved 3-7-15.

PROPOSED WORDING:

To achieve and maintain equal representation from throughout the Yearly Meeting on the NCYM Executive Committee, the Nominating Committee is to make every effort to fill upcoming positions on the Executive Committee by first considering appointees from Quarterly Meetings who are not currently represented, even when existing members of the committee are eligible for re-appointment. As equal representation is achieved, appointments shall be made from three Quarterly Meetings each year on a rotating basis, maintaining representation from each quarter of the Yearly Meeting. Each quarter will submit recommendations to NCYM Nominating Committee for inclusion with the annual nominating committee report. Each Year the NCYM Nominating Committee shall inform respective Quarterly Meeting Clerks when that Quarterly Meeting will need to make recommendations. The NCYM Nominating Committee shall also ensure that "No two members of the same immediate family shall be nominated and approved to the same committee. This will not affect ex-officio members." If an immediate family member is recommended, the alternate will be submitted as member and the Quarterly Meeting will be notified that an additional recommendation is required. Note that these recommendations require the same approval of Representative Body as the remainder of the NCYM Nominating Committee report.

5. What might a restructured or even divided yearly meeting look like?

Ideally NCYM will reach unity by reaffirming our foundational belief in Jesus Christ of the Bible, our core spiritual foundation and the NCYM Mission Statement adopted Eighth Month, 1999; “North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends seeks through the power of the Holy Spirit to equip and energize our Meetings in their witness to the love, message and power of the living Christ, encouraging Friends to translate our faith into practice.

Following is a summary of the three proposals that have been presented to and/or developed in the New Committee. Additional direction is required from Representative Body before proceeding.

Option One is to form associations which function in the manner that the Yearly Meeting currently functions, and to make the relationship between these associations and NCYM “fiduciary only.” In this option NCYM would not hold affiliate membership or participatory relationships apart from the member associations unless approved by each association within the Yearly Meeting. An alternative to this “fiduciary only” relationship would be to include a few selected ministries that currently receive support and/or have a relationship with NCYM, such as Quaker Lake Camp, MOWA and Friends Disaster Service for example. This would also mean that NCYM would not hold membership in FUM, for example, unless the associations approved.

There could be two or more associations named and defined by the respective associations, with one being more orthodox and another more progressive. Some have also suggested a third, centrist association.

(Essentially, this option might involve only a Financial Manager at the Yearly Meeting level to maintain fiduciary controls and each association providing the balance of their respective organizations. This would likely play out differently depending on how QLC and other shared ministries are addressed.)

Option Two is to accept the view that the Risen Christ present to us is the Authority and that the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings have no authority over the individual or local meetings. The body would “bless and release” those meetings that do not feel they can remain in relationship with the Yearly Meeting under these conditions.

Some suggest that all meetings should be free to leave or stay in North Carolina Yearly Meeting **with a “clear” deed to their property**, even if their deed currently reflects some manner of ownership or shared ownership with NCYM.

Option Three is to define and approve a mechanism for removing meetings from NCYM that do not support the theological positions of NCYM as currently expressed in Faith and Practice, including “The Richmond Declaration of Faith” and in the “Excerpt from George Fox letter to the Governor of Barbados,” as well as incorporating the approved responses and associated recommendations of Questions 1-4 as provided by NCYM in 2014 Annual Sessions.

Some might describe this as establishing consequences for the absence of adherence to our current Faith and Practice.

Note: Please recognize each of these proposals will require significantly revised practice and procedure that will necessitate considerable effort to define with “i’s” dotted and “t’s” crossed. And further note that this is likely to require a specialized taskforce to execute such work, potentially including lawyers and other professional expertise.

NEW COMMITTEE REPORT
Question 5
Option 1

1

A Draft Proposal to Restructure
North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends

Updated 5-29-15

This is offered in response to #5 of the New Business Committee recommendation as amended and approved by North Carolina Yearly Meeting in Annual Session 8-31-2014: “What might a restructured or even divided yearly meeting look like?”

2

Goals of Restructuring

To create a structure characterized by peace and harmony.

To create a structure that does not pass judgment on competing theological viewpoints.

To create a structure that minimizes legal entanglements.

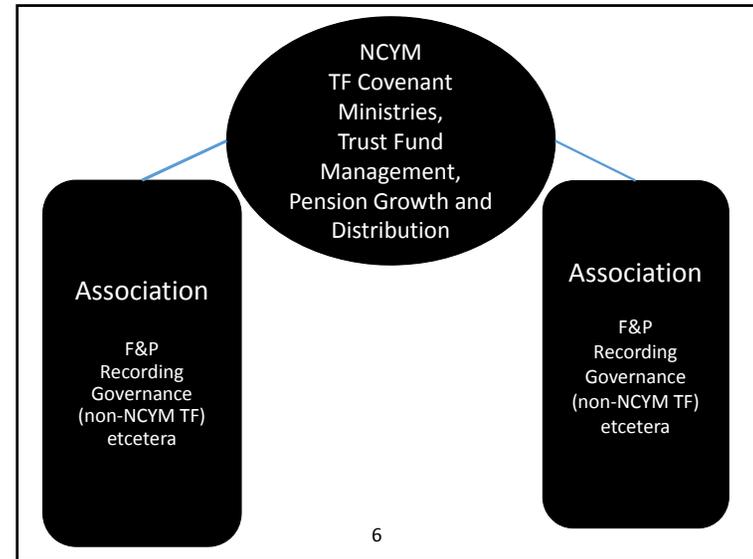
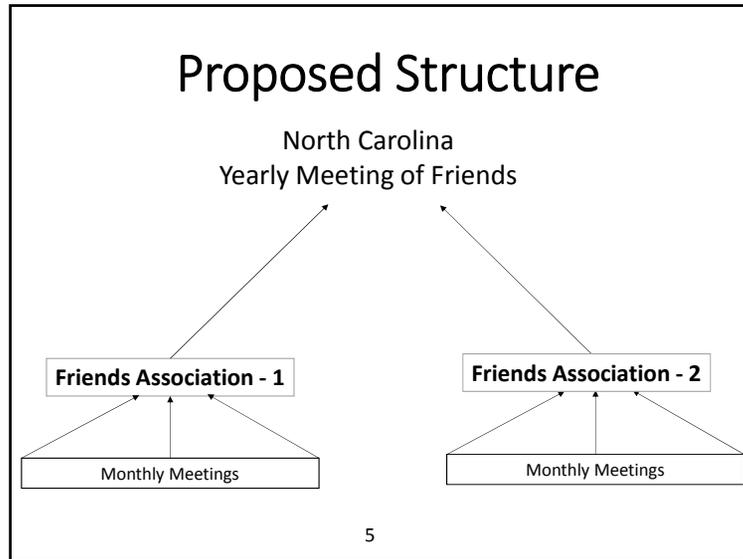
To create a structure that can be accessed by all meetings, to the exclusion of none.

3

General Concept of the Restructured
North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends

The locus of authority and activity will move from the Yearly Meeting and Quarterly Meeting level to the newly formed Associations. The relationship between the Associations and North Carolina Yearly Meeting (NCYM) will be fiduciary in nature.

4



The Associations of NCYM

All theological, financial and organizational matters concerning an association are matters determined by that association including, but not necessarily limited to, statements of faith and practice, committee structure, financing of the association, staffing of the association, approving new member meetings into the association, expelling member meetings from the association, recording of ministers, disciplining of member meetings or individual members within a member meeting and determining and maintaining relationships with affiliates of the association.

7

The Associations of NCYM - Continued

For the purpose of precluding unwarranted public association in beliefs or actions between member associations, all associations will be identified solely by the name of the association, excluding all references to NCYM; and no association may advertise their position on any of the above matters as being the view point or belief of NCYM or the belief or stance of any other association within NCYM.

8

North Carolina Yearly Meeting

- The member meetings of NCYM will consist of the member meetings of the recognized member associations. There will be no meetings of independent status within NCYM.
- Once the original associations of NCYM meeting have been established, no new member associations will become a part of NCYM without the approval of each existing association.

9

North Carolina Yearly Meeting - Continued

- North Carolina Yearly Meeting will have fiduciary responsibility for trust funds unless the Associations of NCYM approve the shifting of a particular trust to a specific association or other corporate body.
- Committees and structures in NCYM will be determined based on the financial participation of the various member associations.

10

North Carolina Yearly Meeting - Continued

- The Associations will contribute to the financial needs of the Yearly Meeting on a voluntary basis.
- NCYM will use an equitably determined percentage of monies from trust funds to pay for its operation plus donations from the member associations.

11

North Carolina Yearly Meeting - Continued

- NCYM shall not represent the member associations on any matter apart from fiduciary matters having to do with trust funds.
- NCYM shall not hold affiliate membership or participatory relationships with any other organizations apart from the Associations unless approved by each association within the Yearly Meeting.

12

Quaker Lake Camp and Conference Center

- The Quaker Lake properties are held and maintained by NCYM.
- NCYM cannot operate or plan Quaker Lake ministry programs without the approval of the member associations because NCYM's role is fiduciary only.

13

Quaker Lake Camp and Conference Center - Continued

- NCYM may contract with a Corporate entity to provide ministry and programs at Quaker Lake consistent with historical beliefs and practices of Friends and with the currently standing rules and practices as they may from time to time be revised.
- The historical standards, rules and practices at Quaker Lake may only be revised with the approval of all associations of NCYM.

14

NEW COMMITTEE REPORT
Question 5
Option 2
CALL FOR A TIME OF RELEASING
("Bless and Release")

Underlying Assumptions and Beliefs:

Some have talked about foundational beliefs, but not *the* foundational belief that shapes and undergirds all of our faith and practice: There is one Christ Jesus who can speak to our condition *and* he has come, is here now, to teach his people himself. Early Friends assumed basic Christianity and went beyond it, proclaiming a genuinely participatory faith where every person is to listen for and obey that One come to teach and guide and save us. The larger Body of Christ shapes a container within which listening and obedience take place. To early Friends, the abstractions of theology were all "notions," the ephemeral creations of human minds. Christ Jesus is eternal and as we *know* him and allow him to shape our lives *in relationship* (as a branch connected to a vine), our understanding of him grows and changes. When humans realized the earth orbits the sun and not the other way around, nothing changed but human understanding. Christ Jesus invites us to move out of the center of our known universe and allow him to dwell there.

Listening worship—our communion with one another and with Christ Jesus—arises out of this conviction that Christ is present to each of us and needs no mediation from human authority. Friends business practices arise from this foundational belief as *each one present* listens for the ways the Christ will move through the particularity of our gifts and calling as we each share our small truths as we seek together the One who is Truth and how he is moving in this particular time and place. Our testimonies arise out of this intimate relationship, for as we grow in that relationship, we are convicted that there are things we can no longer do and *continue* to grow and follow faithfully. We are convicted that we have to alter how we live as our hearts and minds are tendered by this One who is more and more Lord in our lives. The One come to teach and guide and save us has not abandoned us.

Our governance arises from the conviction that the Living Christ, the Risen Christ, comes into the contexts of our lives and speaks there. Because of this conviction

- We are non-creedal. The *Living Word* is our authority and what is right in one time and place may not be the way the Christ longs to manifest in another time and place (thus we now have pastors and music in worship).
- We are congregational in governance; every meeting is autonomous, in theory deciding how to worship, whom to call as a pastor, etc., under the authority of the Living Christ alone. To change governance is to put human beings over the authority of the Risen Christ in our meetings.
- Fellowship in the yearly meeting is voluntary.
- The yearly meeting has no provision for expelling a meeting from fellowship because we are not privy to the workings of the Christ in another group.
- Business is done by those sitting together under the authority of the Risen Christ and not by proxy from voices not sharing in communion in that time and place.

Proposal:

We enter into a time of release where meetings who no longer want to live according to the accepted governance of Friends may go their own way with our blessing. We enter a time of examining and releasing outdated practices and policies while seeking to renew and even deepen our abilities to listen individually and

corporately for Divine guidance. Quarterly meetings, for example, need some real examination as to purpose and function in a day of speedy travel and instant communication. If we laid them down, what might arise to take their place? The guiding questions should be “Where is there Life? Where is the One who is Life moving and calling us? What is dead and dying that can be released?” What if we were to lay down all committees except maybe those necessary to function (while asking if those are Life-supporting as well)? What if we rethought recording (which we do poorly anyway) and helped each meeting develop standards for a pastor they would call? Early Friends had no use for theological learning not because of a value of ignorance, but because educating the mind does not usually lead to intimate knowledge of the One in whom we seek to live and move and have our being.

Queries: (the point of which is to invite us to go to the One we profess to know and let him shape us as we allow him to show us how we measure up to where he would like us to be.)

- Are we listening for the voice of the Risen Christ in our midst and submitting ourselves to it?
- Are we trying to get what we want or to do what simply makes sense?
- Are we as individuals and as meetings being faithful to the best we hear?
- If we are all being shaped by our individual relationships with Christ within the body of Christ within which we live and worship, what is the appropriate role for a pastor?
- What is the appropriate role for yearly meeting or yearly meeting staff?
- The yearly meeting was set up for us to do what our meetings can't do alone. Does it still serve this purpose? Is the yearly meeting serving us or are we serving it?
- We do not tell members of our meetings how to give or remove them from membership if they don't. Is it then right to tell meetings how to give or threaten sanctions if they don't?
- In what meeting do we limit the leadership of individuals by virtue of their monetary contributions? Why do so on a yearly meeting level?

The crisis in Christian fellowship is not that we are not Christian, but that we are not Christian enough. We fight over theological words, but do we *know* the Risen Christ?

- Are our hearts tendered to the teaching of the One seeking to guide us?
- Are we daily aware of our need for One to save us (from ourselves most of all) and humble in our prayer for mercy?
- Do we submit any illness—physical, spiritual, mental—to the Great Physician who still makes house calls?
- Do we read scripture attending to the Living Word, ready to be instructed or chastened or encourage or challenged?
- Do we go to scripture or prayer looking for confirmation of what we already believe?
- Do we allow Christ his office of Judge in our lives—a Judge who never shames us but shows us to ourselves, making clear where we are out of step with him and how we should turn?
- Do we insist our will be done or humbly pray “Your will be done”—and do we know the difference?

NEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Question 5

Option 3

Note: References in this document are to the attached/enclosed document, "NEW COMMITTEE REPORT," dated 6-6-15

Question #5: What might a restructured or even divided yearly meeting look like?

Question #5, Option #3 presented at Rep Body today: Option Three is to define and approve a mechanism for removing meetings from NCYM that do not support the theological positions of NCYM as currently expressed in Faith and Practice, including "The Richmond Declaration of Faith" and in the "Excerpt from George Fox letter to the Governor of Barbados", as well as incorporating the approved responses and associated recommendations of Questions 1-4 as provided by NCYM in 2014 Annual Sessions.

Some might describe this as **holding meetings accountable** to uphold our current Faith and Practice directives.

Additional details of Option #3 are: There was a committee approved at March 7th Rep Body meeting that consists of the Superintendent, NCYM Clerk, Clerk of Ministry and Counsel and Clerk of Executive Committee which would work to resolve issues and bring meetings back into good standing. The suggestion is that this committee be named "The Auditing Committee" for purposes of clarity and start immediately addressing meetings that are out of harmony with NCYM and implement the standards of Option 3, question #5 stated above.

Again, the process should start immediately and meetings found out of harmony/compliance would be held accountable as described in question #4 of the New Committee report and approved at Rep Body on March 7th, 2015 at Quaker Lake.

- Below are the consequences which would apply to Option 3;
 - Members will be removed from any NCYM committees temporarily until the next Rep Body meeting when a report will be given concerning the meeting.
 - Members cannot serve as Representative to Rep Body during this process.
 - Members must pay non-member fees to all NCYM activities during this process.

The "Auditing Committee" will implement these restrictions immediately on a temporary basis and report to Executive Committee actions taken. These actions will be taken to the next Rep Body meeting, reporting their non-compliance and that the meeting does not choose to be in harmony with NCYM statements; then Rep Body may release the meeting from NCYM. All

meetings will be ministered to in order to obtain change so that they might comply with the will of NCYM as to theological, financial and membership issues. There will be ongoing dialogue between the meeting and the Auditing Committee during this process. If any meeting which is out of compliance wishes to commit to change and come back into compliance, they will be asked to sign a statement of such by the pastor, clerk and all members of Ministry and Counsel and be on probation for one year with consequences. The Auditing committee will monitor this meeting and report to Executive Committee. Compliance to question #4 of the New Committee report as to finances will have additional requirements, such as past due askings and questions of a meeting's reason for not paying. Meetings that are in compliance theologically, but can't meet their financial obligations, will be given all consideration and help with their situation.

The Executive Committee will have oversight of the Auditing Committee and will support and monitor their actions to keep things moving and expedite this process so that other meetings in NCYM that are in compliance/harmony will not be wondering if action is going to take place. The faster we resolve these issues the better chance we have in retaining the majority of NCYM intact, so we might start to repair our minds and hearts to worship Jesus Christ and present the truth to the world at large. Addressing meetings that are not in compliance should continue between Representative Body sessions, with actions taken as appropriate and reported to the subsequent Representative Body for final approval.

The time is now to settle some of our divisions, after some 30 or so years we cannot go on arguing these differences among ourselves. Neither side is accomplishing anything for Christ by doing this. The Evangelical/conservative meetings in NCYM cannot compromise our stance because of biblical instruction in this area, as we do consider the Holy Bible our final authority. We will be glad to bless and release any meeting that sees our differences and can anticipate the consequences coming through this action, but this has not proven to be the case so far. Thus we have the need for consequences to hold meetings accountable and put integrity back in NCYM. We must unite in a common belief and truth in order to survive, but more importantly we need to be presenting Jesus Christ and God's truth to the world at large, bringing in sinners to salvation **only** through Jesus Christ.

Thanks,

Johnny Simmons, Surry Quarter representative to the New Committee and representative for Pine Hill Friends to Rep Body.