

# Ad Hoc Faith and Practice Review Committee Report

Melissa Preast, Wood Bouldin and Star Smith met on Jan 31, 2023

Our charge was to review the 2021 edition of SAYMA Faith and Practice looking for what has been left out. We were also tasked with finding the approval minute for printing the 2021 edition.

1. After searching through many previous YM minutes, no approval to print the 2021 edition was found.

## 2. Miscellaneous Omitted Items, thus far:

A. Under Ministry and Nurture, one of their responsibilities is to write a State of the Yearly Meeting Report, yet it is not listed in SAYMA Faith and Practice.

Draft Proposed wording to be inserted for section: E. The Yearly Meeting 3. Committees of Yearly and Representative Meetings; Ministry & Nurture Committee Provide an annual State of the Yearly Meeting Report that addresses both the spiritual state of the collective Meetings as represented in their individual State of the Monthly Meeting reports and a section on the spiritual state of our Yearly Meeting as observed by Ministry & Nurture during Representative and Yearly Sessions and reported by individuals, committees, and persons of responsibility within Yearly Meeting.

B. Naming Committee and its duties are not listed under YM Committees.

C. Uplifting racial justice (URJ) is not listed as a YM Committee. URJ could also be listed under "Programs of the Yearly Meeting." We propose listing URJ in both places, along with its vision and Mission. (See SAYMA website)

D. There is no mention of "associate memberships".

## Contradictions:

A. Under "Proceeding in the Life of the Spirit", on page 33, it says, "a worship group must establish an association with an established monthly meeting within SAYMA." Whereas, in the Glossary, on page 72, says, "a worship group "may or may not be under the care of a monthly Meeting." That needs to be cleared up.

B. Nominating: (from Wood's notes) On p.25 it is stated that members of standing committees other than M&N and Nominating "are either self-selected or recommended by the yearly meeting Nominating Committee." There needs to be an account of when and by whom one or the other method is chosen. On p.27 we read "The Nominating Committee discerns the gifts of SAYMA Friends whose names can be brought forward to fill the positions of responsibility of yearly meeting. The three words here italicized, working together around the 'can', may be taken to suggest while

Nominating may nominate to all positions of responsibility, these positions may also be filled by self-selection and may include non-SAYMA and, presumably non-Friend, persons. On p.28 we find a statement that seems to mitigate part to the ambiguity of p.27. "Through the discernment of the Nominating Committee and the approval of the yearly meeting the positions listed below are maintained." The list includes clerks of committees. Clarity having been omitted, how do Friends want this all to work?

C. Worship groups; page 33 says worship groups need to be under the care of a monthly Meeting, whereas, on page 72, it says, worship Groups may not be under the care of a MM.

D. Lastly, there is no congruity or continuity between Faith and Practice and the Handbook or between SAYMA yearly meeting minutes and representative meeting minutes.

As a result, Friends have been able to weaponize contradictory statements from F&P, the Handbook or previously approved minutes for their own purposes, or simply make up rules at any moment. For example, nowhere does it say that standing committees must have their vision, mission, and goals approved by the full body of SAYMA, yet we insisted on that for URJ. Meanwhile, the Handbook says, committees give an annual report. Period.

**Queries:** From a racial justice perspective, there were so many problematic queries, that I don't even know where to begin. We recommend that the SAYMA co-clerks create a larger ad hoc committee and more time to deal with the query issue.

For example: There is not one word about racial justice or colonialism in the entire book—not even in the queries.

Star Smith, clerk, F&P ad hoc review committee