

## **SAYMA Handbook Committee Report to Yearly Meeting 2023**

“The SAYMA Handbook describes the procedures we use in order to carry out our work. Detailed descriptions of positions, committees and tasks are continually revised and refined as we move forward in seeking to be faithful in carrying out God’s work. Whoever (person or committee) is charged with keeping the Handbook current receives changes from individuals who have served in positions of responsibility or from committees and reports those changes to yearly meeting.” [F&P 2012, p.8; 21, p.7]

The 2007 Handbook committee began work by requesting “short up to date work descriptions from committee clerks.” Our first step toward a systematic revision of the Handbook has been to begin sending out the individual segments of the 2013 draft edition that deal with offices and committees asking officers and clerks for up-to-date information and practical suggestions. Although the Handbook Committee clerk only recently fully grasped the fact, a good start on this part of the task, a thorough revision of the financial sections was approved in 2020.

As whole sections are revised, they will be put up on the website, with indications of how the revision differs from 2013. They will also be sent to monthly meetings, to persons whose responsibilities may include some procedure or document included in the section, and eventually brought to yearly meeting.

At some point in time, better sooner than later, discernment is needed about what – as was asked at yearly meeting in 2009 - belongs in Faith and Practice and what in the Handbook. This question of content raises more fundamental questions of priority and authority, about distinctions between assigned tasks and procedures for accomplishing them. Eventually these issues reach even to the relation of yearly meeting’s positions of responsibility and committees to the monthly meetings that constitute the membership served by the yearly meeting.

An example of this pyramid of discernment: As things now officially stand, Sayma Ministry and Nurture is assigned the task of administering the released Friend Fund but original responsibility for evaluation and recommendation belongs to the potential recipient’s monthly meeting which is to forward its recommendation to yearly meeting for approval. Yearly meeting then hands the project over to Ministry and Nurture, whose evaluative responsibility should thus be limited to discerning the amount of grants and supervising and evaluating the progress of Released Friends in the pursuit of their ministries.

Sayma Handbook Committee  
Wood Bouldin, Clerk