

Dear members of the WARSF Board of Oversight (cc:ed to immediate past members):

Greetings! I am overdue to send you a report on several matters related to WARSF business, and this will be the first of at least two over the course of the next couple of weeks. This one is in re: our communications with meetings in Oregon and Washington that are being separated from Northwest Yearly Meeting.

If you were at the annual meetings here in Berkeley, you know that we discussed the impending division of Northwest Yearly Meeting over the issue of the status of sexual minorities (LGBTQ people). If you weren't, here is a brief summary: Several meetings in NWYM that have minuted their welcome for LGBTQ people are going to have to leave the YM by June of 2018. The YM has begun what they intend to be an orderly process of separation that, among other things, would create a new body in which the expelled meetings could continue in fellowship. It is unclear whether this new body would be a YM or Association, or something else. As of this writing, there are five meetings that will be leaving the YM, and my understanding is that at least two others are in discernment about whether to remain with Northwest, or depart.

At our annual meeting, the Board of Oversight proposed that we open and continue a dialogue with the congregations that are leaving NWYM, which could include an exploration of their affiliation with WARSF. The Meeting of Members approved our doing so, and I have begun the dialogue on behalf of WARSF. Thus far the new group in formation has no official leadership or representatives, so I have had several e-mail conversations with people involved in the process, and one face-to-face meeting at the FWCC Section of the Americas meeting at the end of March in New York State. This last interaction was with Julie Peyton, a member of one of the separating meetings (West Hills Friends, in Portland), who happily is also one of NWYM's representatives to FWCC.

Here's a brief summary of my conversation with Julie: we mostly spent our time sharing information about WARSF and discussing when might be the right time for someone from WARSF to visit the Northwest and continue the dialogue in person. Initially, I had thought that a meeting scheduled for tomorrow (4/22) in Eugene, OR would be a good opportunity. However, Julie's sense was that things are still too ill-defined; the group that is leaving NWYM has no clear sense of what they want in terms of continuing affiliation, if indeed they want a continuing affiliation at all. The annual sessions of NWYM might be a better opportunity, although that remains to be seen. YM sessions are generally open to having visitors from other Friends groups, and sometimes are quite good at welcoming such visitors.

You can read summaries of these communications thus far online, here:

<http://www.quakernews.com/category/warsf/>

(This is a new website set up by Barclay Press to report on the ongoing process. In my opinion, it is a positive sign that Northwest is trying to be more transparent than some

other Yearly Meetings have been in recent separations...)

For the time being, I would invite you to the following:

1. Please pray for the Friends who will be meeting tomorrow at Eugene Friends Church. The meeting agenda is here: <http://www.quakernews.com/agenda-set-for-eugene-meeting/>
2. Please consider if you would feel led to visit NWYM sessions this summer on behalf of WARSF. The dates are Sun, 7/23 - Thurs, 7/27. At present, it seems unlikely that I would be able to be there due to other travel commitments
3. As time permits, avail yourself of the online resources--the aforementioned [quakernews.com](http://www.quakernews.com) has a wealth of information, and there is also an online forum at <http://zzzeke.com/forum/>.

Finally, **Elisabeth Elliot**: (a gold star for reading this far!) If you would like to excerpt any of this for the Living Light, feel free, or let me know if you'd like any sort of elaboration.

Thanks, and blessings to you all.

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In Christ's Light,

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