Nominating Committee is currently seeking to fill vacancies as well as to identify a new clerk for this Committee. This report will be of use to Friends to talk to Nominating if they feel led to join.

The Committee on the Discipline has spent its time since the April report pulling together its plan to proceed with this work in which NPYM Friends are engaged.

Our new process is described in detail in the document attached to this report. Below is a short summary of a three phase process.

- **Phase One**—Questions for consideration by local groups of Friends—a “cut and paste” draft  
  Meetings and worship groups will be encouraged to consider and respond to some questions about topics addressed by *Faith & Practice*. Their responses will be posted on the NPYM website for the benefit of others considering the material in the future.

- **Phase Two**—Creation of a “conceptual draft” or treatment of the topic  
  This will not be text as intended to be a draft but rather to describe content of the section.

- **Phase Three**—Creation of an “Experimental Draft” for testing by Friends

Again, please see the detailed description of this process.

It is hoped that a group of Friends, having labored with one another on some aspect of the work and provided its input to the Committee, would engage with another meeting or group of Friends that has also done so. This could be accomplished through Quarterly Meeting and Annual Session or other gatherings (perhaps some organized solely to do this) or through correspondence.

The Committee has also created some new vehicles to support Friends in this process:

- a list of Frequently Asked Questions on the NPYM website. It is intended to help those unfamiliar with the work to become oriented.

- A “Clerk’s email” sent to officers of the Yearly Meeting, members of the coordinating committee, clerks and contact people of local Friends groups, as well as any other Friend who wishes to receive it. This will be sent episodically (rather than periodically) to ensure that there is broad distribution of reports to the Coordinating Committee and new items posted to the NPYM Website.

The Yearly Meeting is in the process of providing email addresses to all of the standing committees, including this one. This will be the address used to send out the Clerk’s email. Friends will be encouraged to use it in communicating with the Committee. We look forward to having a committee email address within the next month.

We continue to encourage Friends to invite the Committee to visit, worship and hear what Friends are saying about their practices and faith.
A process of reflecting on our experience in this work and suggestions from Friends is the basis of the unity of the Committee on how to proceed. The intention is to make the work inclusive and to move the discussion away from a back and forth between Friends and the Committee. Rather, the Committee plans for a sharing and listening in the Spirit among Friends. This will support the ongoing spiritual development of all. The process of revising the Faith and Practice is a spiritual discipline in which all of us help one another along our spiritual paths.

Much has changed within our Yearly Meeting since the last time Friends engaged in this process. The process reflects that transformation we have undergone. It is more than revising a book. It is updating the vision of ourselves and the vision that we present to the world. It requires an acknowledgment that the Quaker tradition is one in which all regard themselves as works in progress, all are being changed by living in the Light, however conceived. Such transformation calls for periodic taking stock and reflection, revising our self image to reflect our journey and where it has brought us.

Members of the Committee are in unity that their role is to center themselves among Friends engaged in this sharing and listening. They will attempt to discern and capture from this discussion a sense of how Friends are led and how that can be expressed in words.

This model of revision of the Faith and Practice as a conversation among Friends is one of two major foundations upon which the Committee sees Friends going forward.

The conversation is appropriately among Friends, rather than between the Committee and this or that group of Friends, with the Committee as the center of attention trying to discern unity in what they hear from these different groups (often holding apparently irreconcilable views). Friends, rather, must come to unity among themselves, broadly, as the Committee can never “bring” Friends together.

The dialogue on the Faith and Practice is growing. As the Committee expressed several times in Steering Committee reports and on other occasions over the years, there is no apparent unity of belief among NPYM Friends about much of anything. When the discussion has centered on trying to create such a unity the result has been contention.

That leads to the second major foundation for going forward in which members of the Committee have found unity, what the Committee has come to call “Radical Inclusiveness.” The inspiration for this as the basis for unity is grounded in our Beanite heritage. It is expressed by Catherine Whitmire on page 269 of her book, Practicing Peace, where she defines a Faith and Practice as:

…a reference book compiled by each yearly meeting that contains the collective wisdom of the community, including queries and guidelines intended to support individual and corporate faithful living.

In this vision Faith & Practice is not a “book of order” as that term has been sometimes used among Protestants.

One of the 2009 Annual Session interest groups we have developed in conjunction with the Ministry and Oversight Committee explores this vision of radical inclusiveness, a vision in which Friends share a way of living out their spirituality while acknowledging differences in belief that could disrupt fellowship. Rather than reconciling differences in belief by contention and argument (or even necessarily reconciling them, at all), radical inclusiveness trusts that Friends will faithfully abide with each other, teaching and learning in simplicity, peace, integrity, community and equality.
A phrase that has stuck with members of the Committee is that the *Faith and Practice* will be one in which all Friends gathered to this Yearly Meeting will see themselves described and validated, alongside descriptions and validation of others in the fellowship, whose inspiration may come from other sources or be expressed in other words.

The Committee did not receive an “opening” that North Pacific Yearly Meeting should become radically inclusive. The Committee sees this as existing among us already. Radically inclusive is what North Pacific Yearly Meeting has always been, where it came from. Although it may not have been stated so specifically, and the “inclusive” may not have been as wide as today, it was inclusive when Joel and Hannah Bean invited Friends to worship together as the College Park Association of Friends in San Jose, California. It did not matter in which domain of the fractured Religious Society one held membership—Hicksite, Conservative, Evangelical, Orthodox. The only boundary on the association’s inclusiveness was that all worship together “in the manner of Friends.”

The direction toward which the Committee on the Discipline has pointed itself, then, is built on a vision of Friends engaging actively in a process of re-examination and growth. All of us do this individually and as a corporate body, with or without a Committee on the Discipline. We can express and develop our vision through this process, however, for our own benefit and for that of others, if we hold loosely and courageously to the faith that it is possible to remain gathered despite differences among us, the very differences that have shattered other spiritual communities. These are the differences that shattered the larger Society of Friends of which we are a part and keep that Society divided in its separate domains. We will succeed at maintaining our unity because, whether we’ve written it down before or not, we have learned how to walk our diverse spiritual paths together, in the manner of Friends. We may not have perfected this manner of walking together, but there seems to exist—acknowledged or not—a commitment that none should be left behind, that all should get home together.

The Committee hopes that this report will give Friends encouragement to consider becoming a member of this Committee. NPYM Nominating is actively seeking to fill vacancies on the Committee as well as to identify a new clerk. The gifts called for are connection, discernment, humility and patience. Writing ability is helpful but not essential.