

REPORT OF PRIORITIES WORKING GROUP

Spring Sessions 2012

Lee Haring reported for the Priorities Working Group. Since Fall Sessions, the group has moved beyond the planning stage. It meets monthly by conference call and quarterly in person. Visitations have begun: members of the group have met with Friends of Poplar Ridge and Matinecock Monthly Meetings. There was positive response from both, and a clear understanding of the group's purpose, as stated in last year's Spring Sessions, "to gather the sense of the monthly and regional meetings and of individual Friends as to how the Spirit is at work among us and where it is leading us as a society of Friends in the immediate future." Additional visitations have been scheduled for several meetings between now and Summer Sessions; more will be scheduled later. The group has a strong sense of welcome from all the meetings it has contacted, confirming the primary role of monthly meetings as the driving force behind discerning how the Spirit is at work among us.

In addition to visiting monthly meetings, the Priorities Working Group is considering ways to improve the Yearly Meeting's budgeting process, by working throughout the year and making budgets in a timely fashion. A subcommittee on governance continues to work on a proposal.

Some, perhaps all, Friends who joined the Priorities Working Group were at first daunted by the magnitude of the task, but the experience has been rewarding, rich and joyful. At the same time, with some regions unrepresented and with the withdrawal of a couple of Friends, the group begins to notice the demands of the work on its members' time. The Working Group is in accord that Friends should be added to serve on the Working Group, particularly persons residing in the western part of the Yearly Meeting area. Friends are invited to consider participating as members of the Working Group, or to assist as elders to accompany Working Group members on visitations. The group is aware of the Yearly Meeting's difficulties in filling existing posts, but those very challenges raise the question, "What shall be our priorities?"