FAITH AND PRACTICE

Faith and Practice

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING
of the
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

PYM
2001

FAITH AND PRACTICE

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A GUIDE TO QUAKER DISCIPLINE
IN THE EXPERIENCE OF
PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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PREFACE

> *We, like every generation, must find the Light and Life again for ourselves. Only what we have valued and truly made our own, not by assertion but by lives of faithful commitment, can we hand on to the future. Even then, we must humbly acknowledge that our vision of the truth will, again and again, be amended.*
>
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, P. 17, 1995

The Quaker way emphasizes experience over religious belief or doctrine. It is inherently difficult to capture the essence of that experience in words. Yet every *Faith and Practice* attempts to do that very thing.

As time passes, the body of experience grows and shifts and a Yearly Meeting may be moved to take up the task of revising its book of *Faith and Practice*. The book offered here is a revision of the 1985 edition, which in turn was based on revisions of 1973, 1963, 1957, and 1952, and the original plan of organization adopted at Palo Alto in 1942.

This *Faith and Practice* describes the beliefs of Friends and the structures and processes of Pacific Yearly Meeting, and its Quarterly and Monthly Meetings. It also explains the spiritual foundation of these processes and of our way of worship. It should be of interest and value to newcomers and old-timers alike.

> *Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided: and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*
>
> ADVICES FROM THE ELDERS AT BALBY, 1656
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §1.01

PART I
PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING IN CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

The religious practices of Friends are founded in direct communion with God and the conviction that the Divine Light is accessible to each person; yet it is one Light, one Truth. We wait with hearts and minds open to the Divine so that Truth will be made known among us.

Our corporate search for God's word is the heart of the Quaker Meeting for Worship. We believe that God, the Light, the Truth, is part of our being. We say, "there is that of God in everyone." Truth is continually revealed to us, often through a gathered mystical experience. We learn to recognize the truth by experience.

We work to develop a relationship between the individual and the corporate body that allows inspiration and leadings to be tested within the Meeting. In this unity, Friends find order and peace in reconciling individual inspiration and corporate wisdom, enabling us to choose right courses of action.

As God is revealed to us individually and corporately, we are guided in the right ordering of our lives. All Friends practices flow from this faith in the revealed truth: our care for each other, our governing structures and processes, our testimonies and witness to the whole world.

Through the personal experience of each seeker comes the Light necessary for their guidance. Vocal ministry in a Friends Meeting emerges from the direct relationship between the individual and the

Divine. Truth is tested, not by the degree to which it conforms to dogma, but by its power to transform our lives and the lives of others.

> *Not by strength of arguments or by a particular disquisition of each doctrine and convincement of my understanding thereby, came I to receive and bear witness of the Truth, but by being secretly reached by the Life. For when I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power among them which touched my heart; and as I gave way unto it I found the evil weakening in me and the good raised up and so I became thus knit and united unto them, hungering more and more after the increase of this power and life, whereby I might feel myself perfectly redeemed.*
>
> ROBERT BARCLAY, *APOLOGY,* 1676, 11: 7

A Brief History of the Religious Society of Friends

A great outburst of prophetic passion swept through the northern counties of Puritan England in the mid-seventeenth century, as on the forward wall of a tidal flood. It carried with it the utter conviction, based on direct personal experience, that the world could know directly and immediately the power of Christ's love and the light of his truth. George Fox, probably the most charismatic and certainly the most influential of the founding members of the Quaker movement, discovered after a long, intense search, that no priest or preacher could, as he said, "speak to my condition." He later wrote: "Then, oh then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition'; and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy."

This direct experience and others like it formed the living center of the Quaker movement that arose in the early 1650's around Fox's teachings and personality. In their thirst after righteousness and in their eagerness to engage the world with God's truth, early Friends believed they were called to be prophets to their age. Like the

Hebrew and Christian prophets whose lives they consciously used as models, they experienced God as a living, energizing power that spurred them to confront corrupt institutions and to form communities of believers.

Key figures in the Quaker movement during its early days included, along with Fox himself: theologian Robert Barclay, the charismatic James Nayler, writers Margaret Fell, Isaac Penington and William Penn.

Their prophetic vision was soon carried abroad. Borne by the "Publishers of Truth," as many early Friends called themselves, the Quaker movement spread south to London and into southern England, west to Ireland, and very quickly across the seas to Holland, Germany, France, and the American colonies. In a remarkable outpouring of spiritual energy, Quakers arrived in Puritan New England in 1656, only four years after George Fox began his public ministry.

Quakers' rejection of the established church, and their obedience to conscience rather than to legal authority, brought them severe persecution in both England and America. They suffered frequent imprisonment, fines, and confiscation of property. The Act of Toleration of 1689 finally ended the worst of these troubles in England; however, Quakers were still not allowed into professions or universities.

The Colonies varied in religious tolerance. Some permitted more religious freedom than was possible under strict British law. The colony of Pennsylvania, owned by Friend William Penn, was noteworthy, although not unique, in welcoming more than one variety of religious belief.

QUAKERISM IN THE NEW WORLD

The movement spread rapidly in America. Yearly Meetings (see Glossary) were founded: New England (1661), Baltimore (1672, in the middle of Fox's two-year visit to America), Philadelphia (1681), North Carolina (1689), and New York (1695). Quakers organized

colonies in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and settlements in New York, Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Barbados. Thus, there was a brief period when Friends thought that Quakerism would become the most influential religious movement in the American colonies.

Although the number of Quakers has never become as large as anticipated, the influence of Friends' ideas and values has been extensive throughout American society. Historically, Friends have built their Meetinghouse with adjacent land for a burial ground and a school. Today, Friends schools are respected as leaders in principled education. Friends founded excellent colleges and universities. Haverford, Swarthmore, Earlham, Guilford, and Whittier are only a few of those still flourishing today. Some have passed out of the direct supervision of Meetings, but most carry the philosophical imprint of their Quaker founding.

Friends have also had a remarkable influence on penal reform and conditions in mental hospitals both in this country and in Great Britain. Many Friends today are active in the work of abolishing capital punishment.

The movement's sense of cohesion arose in large part because many Friends were led to travel in the ministry, making long journeys through the wilderness to witness to the workings of the Spirit. Some were heard and welcomed, some were whipped and imprisoned by local authorities, some were run out of town, and some died of exposure and disease. Friends nevertheless continued to hear and to heed their leadings.

George Fox came by ship to America, landing at Barbados in 1671. He traveled through the colonies by horseback, by boat, and by foot. Both women and men were inspired to leave families to the loving care of their Meetings while they crossed the ocean and braved the new, wild territory to share their joyful message. Stephen Grellet, a member of the French nobility, wrote simply of his faithfulness to calls to preach, sometimes without knowing that anyone listened. Mary Dyer, Catherine Peyton, and Mary Fisher, each usually travel-

ling with a female companion, came to minister to Americans. While their messages were heard by some colonists, Mary Dyer was among four Quakers who were hanged for their teaching. The journal of Catherine Peyton (later Phillips) tells vividly of rigors of travel, the illnesses she endured, and her firmness in continuing to follow her leading. These traveling ministers and their visits played an important role in keeping alive a sense of community among scattered Friends.

Mary Fisher, after returning to England briefly, traveled through the Mediterranean to bring the message to the Sultan of Turkey, returning to settle in the colonies. When Mary Fisher was talking with the Sultan of Turkey, he asked her what she thought of Mahomet. According to Brinton, her reply was "…that she knew him not, but Christ enlightened every man who came into the world. Him she knew…. And concerning Mahomet, they might judge him false or true according to the words and prophecies he spoke." (Howard Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years,* Pendle Hill, 1965, p.159)

During the 1700's, slavery became a major concern among Friends in both Britain and America. Some Quakers had imported, held and sold slaves, but hearing the gentle yet persistent preaching of John Woolman, Friends who had formerly accepted the "economic necessity" began to be uneasy. In corporate worship, they began to discern a leading to change their ways. First, they agreed that importing human beings was wrong. Then, step by step, individual Meetings declared their opposition to trading and owning slaves. By the end of the century, because of public preaching, individual conscience, and the disowning of members who did not comply, the Religious Society of Friends contained no slave owners. Many Quakers provided leadership in the movement for emancipation.

Early Quakers were concerned with a "right ordering of one's own life." They tried to live in accordance with God's will, and felt an evangelical imperative to spread their discovery of good news around the world. A period of "quietism" developed among the

Quakers of the late 1700's and early 1800's, during which they withdrew from political activity and other concerns seen as worldly. The evangelical spirit was temporarily muted. A more passive, inward life gained ascendancy as Friends focused on spiritual purity and the subordination of self-will. Personal feeling was considered a surer guide to Truth than reason. This tendency to withdraw from the world also coincided with a decline in numbers. The Religious Society of Friends became a smaller, closed society of "peculiar people,"† set apart from the world. The prophetic mission was mostly laid aside and the mystical encounter, which had always been at the heart of the Quaker experience, became more prominent.

SCHISMS AMONG AMERICAN QUAKERS

The breadth of vision that characterized the earliest Friends required a precarious balance among seemingly paradoxical factors. The tenderness of Penington and Penn, the passion and eloquence of Fox, the dedication and sacrifices of Mary Dyer, Elizabeth Fry, and Lucretia Mott revealed the variety of ways in which Friends' convictions shaped lives. While their backgrounds were in Christian tradition, Friends were at the same time able to believe both in the significance of Jesus and in the "Inner Light," which they affirmed had been and was still in every human being, whether or not they had heard of Jesus. While believing in the immediate communication between God and the individual, Friends also revered and found wisdom in the Bible. Amidst the joy of their mystical unity, they were also motivated to lead challenging lives of service beyond their own numbers. From time to time, one or another of these elements became paramount even to the point of jeopardizing the movement's 'wholeness.'

During the 1800's, schisms arose among American Friends. The "Great Separation" of 1827-1828 began in Philadelphia Yearly

† "Peculiar" in the seventeenth century meant "chosen." Titus 2:14, *King James Version*

Meeting when some tried to prevent Elias Hicks, a New York Quaker preacher, from speaking. Hicks' followers were mostly country Friends who perceived urban Friends as worldly. Known as Hicksites, they placed a greater reliance on the Inward Light as a guide to the individual conscience, while "Orthodox" Friends tended to emphasize the Bible and Christian teaching as a guide. The split was not purely doctrinal. It reflected tensions that had been growing between the elders — who were mostly from the cities — and Friends who lived farther away from major communities and Meetings. Both groups continued as unprogrammed Meetings, having no designated preacher, music or ritual.

Following this sad separation, which became bitterly hostile in some areas, Friends continued to divide over differences in discipline and dogma. Early Quakers had been both mystics and evangelists. Following the emphasis on quietism, and confronted with the burgeoning forces of revivalism, Friends were often unable to retain the underlying unity of their heritage. Further splits occurred in both types of American Yearly Meetings. Most Orthodox Friends followed Joseph John Gurney, a British Friend, whose teachings focused on the Bible as a basic guide. He led many Friends to an increasingly evangelistic conviction. John Wilbur, a birthright Friend from New England, was disturbed by the emphasis many British Friends placed on the Bible. He spoke eloquently on behalf of the leadings of the Inner Light of Christ as the basis of faith. As the Gurneyites moved toward a pastoral and programmed system, the Wilburites† saw this as a threat to traditional Quakerism and generally either withdrew or were expelled. They usually continued to hold unprogrammed worship. A Wilburite-Gurneyite separation was evident in New England by 1845, and in Ohio Yearly Meeting in 1854. It later spread throughout the U.S.

† The term "Wilburite" was used prior to the Civil War in the United States; after 1865 these were the "Conservative" branches.

From the time of the American Revolution, Friends in America had been faced with structural changes within the Religious Society of Friends. The Civil War brought further challenges to both faith and practice. Some Friends took up arms, while others would not. Individual families found themselves divided over how abolition was to be accomplished, and whether to help escaped slaves or obey federal laws. Some Friends were active in the Underground Railroad, and some were not.

The Enlightenment, a new liberalism, and a thrust toward evangelical renewal were lively forces in the greater society throughout the 1800's, particularly along the expanding American frontier. Charismatic speakers and massive revival meetings brought throngs of new adherents to many Protestant churches as the westward movement swept on. Some groups of Friends in the new communities held similar gatherings, thus gaining members who were unfamiliar with the traditional unprogrammed framework.

Many Meetings were led to hire pastors to help with the influx of new members, sometimes becoming almost indistinguishable from traditional Protestant churches, with reading of scriptures, singing of hymns, and prepared sermons. Once a pastoral system had been accepted, it was difficult to relinquish. Indeed, many groups began calling themselves "Friends Churches" rather than the more traditional "Friends Meetings." These followed the tenets of Joseph John Gurney and were located mostly in the Midwest, although some eastern Meetings were also affected.

By 1885, there were three distinct kinds of Quakers in America. The Gurneyites (Orthodox) were evangelical and emphasized the primacy of scripture. The Hicksites were inner-directed, relying on the guidance of the light within and traditional forms of Quaker worship. The Conservatives fell in between the other two. With no written creeds, distinctions in doctrine were not obvious, but differences were evident in forms of worship, books of Discipline, and ways of life. Friends have attempted definitions, but no single

statement of belief has ever successfully reflected the deep, often passionate faith of Friends.

STEPS TOWARD WHOLENESS

Following the divisions, Friends in America began reaching out to each other. Beginning in 1887, a series of conferences among Gurneyite Yearly Meetings at Richmond and Indianapolis, Indiana, led to the founding of a national organization in 1902, called the Five Years Meeting of Friends. It is now *Friends United Meeting* (FUM). An attempt to articulate a common declaration of faith was not entirely successful; however eleven Yearly Meetings eventually accepted a common Book of Discipline. Nearly half of the Quakers in the United States are members of FUM.

Friends General Conference (FGC) was formed in 1900 to bring together Friends from Hicksite Meetings. It did not attempt to create a unified national organization, but to serve Friends in their diversity.

Philadelphia Quakers bridged the schism in 1945 with the establishment of Philadelphia General Meeting, which encompassed both Hicksite and Orthodox Yearly Meetings. In 1955 they formalized this by establishing a single Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and Uniform Discipline. Similar unification followed in other Yearly Meetings.

In 1937, the *Friends World Committee for Consultation* (FWCC) was founded to promote better understanding among Friends the world over. Today, FWCC is widely seen as the appropriate instrument to serve Friends in consultation, work, or witness that transcends the boundaries of Yearly Meetings, traditions or nations. The *Wider Quaker Fellowship* was established in 1936 to serve "friends of Friends" and link isolated Friends across the world. It is now under the umbrella of FWCC.

Founded in 1965 in response to secessions from FUM, *Evangelical Friends International* (EFI), formerly Evangelical Friends Alliance,

links Meetings that share both a strong evangelical component and deeply held Christian doctrine.

The first *Western Gathering of Friends* occurred in 1992, bringing together Friends from all eight of the western Yearly Meetings. Although no ongoing formal organization was planned at the time, some connections have resulted such as joint retreats for women of North Pacific, Northwest, and Canadian Yearly Meetings.

The *Western Association of Friends* was established in 1996. Through it, individuals or Monthly Meetings may participate fully in Friends United Meeting activities. (For more information about Friends organizations and the relationship of Pacific Yearly Meeting to each of them, see the section *Links to Other Friends Organizations,* p. 191.)

In 2000, the various branches of the Religious Society of Friends worldwide numbered about 250,000 members. The majority belong to evangelical Meetings that follow a pastoral form for Meeting for Worship. Unprogrammed Meetings exist primarily in Europe, the United States and Canada. In the United States, most unprogrammed Yearly Meetings belong to FGC. Conservative Yearly Meetings, and Pacific, Intermountain, and North Pacific Yearly Meetings are unaffiliated. (Appendix 8 shows the evolution and affiliations of the various branches of Quakerism in the United States.)

QUAKERS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Like others caught up in western migration, Friends responded both to the California land boom of the 1880's and to leadings to establish colonies of Quakers in the West.

A group from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) settled in what became Pasadena. By 1884, a Monthly Meeting had been established, and by 1885 a Meetinghouse was being built. By 1887, with two monthly meetings in the area, Pasadena Quarterly Meeting was approved by Iowa Yearly Meeting. (The original name proposed for this group was "Pacific Quarterly Meeting.") Soon, it became the

seventh largest of the fifteen Quarterly Meetings under the care of Iowa Yearly Meeting. Villa Street Meeting in Pasadena was established under Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). It has since been laid down.

Meanwhile, Aquilla Pickering and his wife Hannah, Friends from Chicago, had traveled from Northern California to the Los Angeles area, visiting Friends along the way and seeking a place for a colony. He organized a "Land and Water Company," which sold lots and so established the town of Whittier. By August 1887, a Meetinghouse was opened, and in December, Whittier was recognized as a Monthly Meeting under Pasadena Quarterly Meeting. Plans for building Whittier College were considered by the Quarterly Meeting as early as 1888. California Yearly Meeting grew out of these and other groups which met in the programmed manner.

Although pastoral Yearly Meeting Friends were organized in groups, individual Friends from the Eastern unprogrammed tradition were slow to find each other. Small groups came into being and disappeared, lacking a structure for communication among them.

Orange Grove Meeting, in Pasadena, established in 1908, was unusual. It was under the care of unprogrammed (Hicksite) Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and was large enough to acquire land for a Meetinghouse and a school. Although empowered to develop a burial ground, they instead contracted with a local cemetery for a Friends plot. Thus, the long-established tradition of building with those three components was continued.

Soon Orange Grove Meeting took several of the emerging Meetings in Southern California under its care, nurturing them until they became Los Angeles (1942), La Jolla (1947), Santa Monica (1948), Claremont (1953), Inland Valley (1960), and other Monthly Meetings. Unprogrammed Meetings and Worship Groups in Southern California and southern Nevada comprise Southern California Quarterly Meeting. Together with College Park Quarterly Meeting (see below), Mexico City, Guatemala, and Hawaii they make up the present membership of Pacific Yearly Meeting.

In 1861, two well-known Quakers from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), Joel and Hannah Bean, worshiped briefly with Friends in San Jose on their way to a two-year sojourn in Hawaii. Following their ministry, a Meetinghouse was built in San Jose in 1866. Iowa Yearly Meeting recognized it in 1873, making it the first Friends Meeting on the West Coast. Joel Bean continued his ministry in Hawaii and a strong Quaker presence continued there after he and Hannah returned to Iowa.

However, while Joel Bean was Clerk of Iowa Yearly Meeting in 1877, a separation occurred which eventually led to the formation of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Although he sympathized with the dissidents who were defending traditional Quaker ways against new trends, he did not join them. The discord was so troubling to him that he and Hannah left Iowa and returned to San Jose in 1882, becoming leaders in that Meeting. He wrote two strong defenses of Quaker traditions, which were circulated by Friends journals in America and England, and the discord escalated.

With the return of Joel and Hannah Bean, Friends in San Jose began to separate into two groups. One group followed the theology and practices of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) and the new revivalist Quakerism of the Great Awakening. The other group remained with the Beans in their unprogrammed worship. In 1885 Joel Bean's followers, who were not members of San Jose Meeting, built their own Meetinghouse for unprogrammed worship. Iowa Yearly Meeting denied this group's request for status as College Park Monthly Meeting and also laid down San Jose Monthly Meeting, leaving the San Jose area with no recognized Monthly Meeting.

Nevertheless, the new Meeting continued and membership grew. In 1893, Iowa Yearly Meeting withdrew its recognition of Joel and Hannah Bean as recorded Ministers (see Glossary) evoking strong negative responses in Philadelphia and London. In 1889 Joel Bean and others founded the College Park Friends Association, which consisted of Friends who retained their membership in their

Discipline of the College Park Association of Friends

Doctrine: *Friends believe in the continuing reality of the living Christ, available to all seeking souls.*

Worship: *The worship of God is in spirit and in truth and shall be held on a basis of the leadership of the Holy Spirit.*

Ministry: *All members and all Attenders are free to participate vocally in Meetings, under a sense of God's Presence.*

Manner of Living: *Friends are advised to conduct their private lives with simplicity and directness, ever sensitive to the world's needs and eager to engage in service.*

Relation to State: *Friends are urged to feel their responsibility to the nation, and at the same time to recognise their oneness with humanity everywhere, regardless of race*

The above is an early Discipline of the College Park Friends Association, from which Pacific Yearly Meeting evolved.

various home Meetings. In 1918, the by-laws were amended to allow Monthly Meetings to join the association. Berkeley, Palo Alto, and Los Gatos joined at the outset; ten years later, there were 30 associated Meetings. Above is an early Discipline of the College Park Association, probably from the early 1890s.

EMERGENCE OF PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING

Friends from both the pastoral and the unprogrammed traditions were scattered in California and around the Pacific Rim by 1928. In

that year, Howard and Anna Cox Brinton (a granddaughter of Joel and Hannah Bean) moved from Philadelphia to the Oakland area to serve on the faculty of Mills College. They played key roles in the next phase of Quaker growth by actively visiting among Meetings and helping to start the *Pacific Coast Association of Friends* (PCAF) in 1931. It met annually and included Friends from unprogrammed Meetings in Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, China, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, Honolulu, Mexico City, and California. By 1940, it was holding weeklong gatherings every August, rotating its meeting place among the Pacific Northwest, the San Francisco Bay area, and Southern California.

The Pacific Coast Association experienced growth and change in the 1940s. Conscientious objectors (COs) to World War II were scattered to locations far from their homes. The Friends Ambulance Corps of Britain offered active service to a few. By 1942, the Civilian Public Service (CPS) program gave COs of the historic Peace Churches the option of working in special camps or other institutions where the war had depleted available staff. Thus, many young Quaker men were stationed in the West Coast area. Often their wives had moved to be nearby and the family then remained in the West. When travel became possible after the war, they built a thin but strong network. Their lives of faithful service left a lasting imprint on Pacific Yearly Meeting.

The unhappy experiences of some individual members influenced the Pacific Coast Association of Friends to shun formal relationships with other organizations. PCAF refused to exert authority over individual Friends, who could join the Association directly, without having a Monthly Meeting membership. Beginning in 1941, Howard Brinton voiced strong support for forming a new Yearly Meeting. His message gradually took effect.

In 1946, University Friends Meeting in Seattle formally proposed that PCAF become Pacific Yearly Meeting (PYM). The first annual gathering of the new Yearly Meeting was held at Palo Alto in the summer of 1947 with twelve member Monthly Meetings.

As memberships grew, and travel became an increasing problem, an amicable process led to changes in the structures of unprogrammed Meetings in the West. In 1973, Meetings in British Columbia (which had maintained dual memberships) withdrew from PYM to align with Canadian Yearly Meeting. Two new Yearly Meetings were created out of sections of the original PYM: North Pacific Yearly Meeting in 1973 and Intermountain Yearly Meeting in 1975. Although all three Yearly Meetings experienced some loss of fellowship among particular Friends, they all continue to thrive and grow and they cooperate in activities such as sponsoring *Friends Bulletin* and conducting the Brinton Visitor Program.

From its varied beginnings, Pacific Yearly Meeting has come to have a distinctive character. Many members maintain close ties with their original Meetings. Most members are convinced Friends, many of whom have little experience with Meetings outside PYM. These factors, as well as a certain western spirit of independence, have resulted in PYM's reluctance to join either Friends General Conference or Friends United Meeting.

The character of Pacific Yearly Meeting developed in large part from the faithfulness of Friends to their concerns. From its beginning in the Pacific Coast Association of Friends, ties stretching beyond its geographical confines have been evident. Honolulu Monthly Meeting was established in 1937 under the care of Friends World Committee for Consultation. Connections with Quakers in Korea, Japan, and China (Shanghai and Hong Kong) were maintained even through the wars and gave an unusual richness and flavor to the meetings of the PCAF and later of PYM. Shanghai dropped out in 1951, though Hong Kong remained a part of PYM at that time. The Friend in the Orient Committee, created in 1962, continued to be active after China was closed to Westerners, carrying on a ministry of support and communication among Quakers around the Pacific Rim until it was laid down in 1998.

In 2000, Pacific Yearly Meeting includes Meetings and Worship Groups in California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guatemala, and Mexico. Still,

it is geographically smaller than the Pacific Coast Association of Friends or the original Pacific Yearly Meeting. Individual participation has remained constant since 1980 at about 1,500 members. In the 1990's, the direction of outreach shifted from the Pacific Rim to Russia and Latin America.

The ongoing support and faithfulness of individual Friends has led to the establishment of several independent non-profit corporations. Among these are the Friends Association of Services for the Elderly, Ben Lomond Quaker Center, the Pacific Friends Outreach Society and John Woolman School, the only Quaker boarding school in California. Although these are not directly under PYM authority, Friends throughout the Yearly Meeting have been involved in their support. Other projects led by individual Friends and carried forward by PYM include continuing support for the Guatemala Scholarship Loan Program for indigenous students, and links with the Casa de los Amigos in Mexico City. Friends House Moscow evolved from initial work by PYM Friends in conjunction with British Friends. Many informal bonds contribute to a lively intercourse between PYM Friends and the wider world of Quakerism.†

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING WITHIN THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Pacific Yearly Meeting is one of 33 Yearly Meetings in North America, which together with 50 other Yearly Meetings throughout the world make up the Religious Society of Friends. Although an unaffiliated Yearly Meeting, PYM seeks to understand and relate to

† For more on the early history of Friends in the Western U.S., see *Friends Bulletin* (May 1998 and January 1999), *Quakers in California* by David LeShana, *The Quakers* by Barbour and Frost, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends, 1800-1907* by Thomas Hamm, *A Certain Kind of Perfection* by Margery Post Abbot, *A Western Quaker Reader* by Anthony Manousos (ed.), as well as archival minutes. Some Meetings have published extensive histories in booklet form.

all Friends. In recent years PYM established the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee to facilitate reporting and interaction among the many representatives appointed by the Yearly Meeting to various Friends organizations (see p. 191). These include Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, Evangelical Friends International, Friends Church Southwest Yearly Meeting, and the General Reunion of Friends in Mexico.

From the beginning of Quakerism, part of the vitality of the movement has been nourished by continuing visitations and contacts among Friends. Pacific Yearly Meeting sends annual Epistles (see Glossary) to all Yearly Meetings and receives similar communications from Friends across the globe. In this way, as with individual travel and through written materials of many kinds, Friends in Pacific Yearly Meeting seek to maintain fellowship throughout the Religious Society of Friends.

QUAKER SERVICE IN AMERICA

During the twentieth century, many Quaker organizations were created to respond to Friends' needs for service opportunities and connection with one another. In 1917, shortly after the United States entered WWI, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was founded in Philadelphia to enable American Quakers to act on their humanitarian concerns. Much of its early effort was to prepare Quaker conscientious objectors for relief and reconstruction work in Europe. During World War II, the AFSC also helped to organize many Friends on the West Coast to provide legal and material support to interned Japanese-Americans, including helping to place Japanese-American students in colleges and universities east of the Rockies. Today, the AFSC has regional offices throughout the United States including the Pacific Southwest Regional Office in Pasadena, and the Pacific Mountain Regional Office in San Francisco.

These modern-day service activities grow naturally out of Friends history. Prison reform, relief for victims of strife, feeding

the starving, improving the plight of native peoples are themes woven into the Quaker experience — in America and elsewhere.

Friends' concern for the political process led to the founding of the *Friends Committee on National Legislation* (FCNL), a Quaker lobbying group in Washington DC. FCNL enables Friends and like-minded people to follow and influence legislative issues. They seek a world free of war and threat of war; a society with equity and justice for all; community where every person's potential may be fulfilled; an Earth restored." (FCNL mission statement)

The *Friends Committee on Legislation* (FCL) is based in Sacramento, and is charged with maintaining a Quaker presence in California's capital while informing Friends of upcoming legislative issues and the voting records of elected officials. Although it was not established to serve beyond California, it does serve Friends within the state and some members of Pacific Yearly Meeting in other areas. Both FCNL and FCL reflect Friends' lively concern for and interaction with the worldly society in which they live.

Although Friends withdrew from politics early, they have maintained a lively concern for the health of the social order. Led by conscience to resist participation in war and looking toward a world beyond war, Friends have supported the efforts of the United Nations and established an office in Geneva, Switzerland and one at the U.N. headquarters in New York. These Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNOs) serve representatives, ambassadors and legislators, by presenting accurate, unbiased data and by creating a safe space in which informal conversations can occur.

Friends Relationship to Christianity

As it is important to consider the place of Pacific Yearly Meeting within the entire Religious Society of Friends, it is important to consider Friends relationship to Christianity, historically and in the present.

Friends are often asked: "Are Quakers Christians?" Whether one interprets the Quaker movement as a strand within Protestantism

or as a third force distinct from both Protestantism and Catholicism, the movement, both in its origin and in the various branches that have evolved, is rooted in Christianity.

Pacific Yearly Meeting includes many people who were not raised in the Religious Society of Friends and among them are some for whom Christianity is not part of their faith experience. There is thus a great variety of religious belief and expression. Many Pacific Yearly Meeting Friends articulate their Quaker faith in Jewish, Universalist, Buddhist, or other terms. Similarly, Friends hold diverse definitions of Christianity, interpreting and reacting to traditional Christian terminology differently. Some do not accept the defining beliefs required by the church of their youth or of current mainstream Christianity. This has been a point of lively discussion in Pacific Yearly Meeting for the past fifty years.[†]

Early Friends considered themselves Christians; they interpreted and justified their unique vision in Biblical and traditional Christian terms. However, from its inception the Quaker movement has offered critiques of many accepted manifestations of Christianity while at the same time empathizing with people of other faiths. We might use the phrase "primitive Christianity" to describe more closely where Friends fit across the Christian spectrum. Primitive Christianity usually refers to those teachings which pre-date Fourth Century Christians, who had been embraced by Constantine and were becoming "established." These earliest followers of Jesus were radical revolutionaries, representing a "new order" of faithful who lived communally, eschewed violence of all kinds, and practiced simplicity.[††]

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† See "Quakerism and/or Christianity" *Friends Bulletin* (December 1966), which is the transcript of talks at Pacific Yearly Meeting by Henry J. Cadbury.

†† See *Primitive Christianity Revived in the Faith and Practice of the People called Quakers*, William Penn, 1696 and *Quakerism and Christianity*, Edwin B. Bronner, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 1967.

For some contemporary Quakers, the concept of the Divine Light Within emerges from the Bible, teachings of Jesus and traditional Christian doctrine; for others, it comes through different sacred sources. Quaker history demonstrates that an excessive reliance on any one perspective, neglecting the essential unity among them, has been needlessly divisive.

In the centuries since its founding, the Religious Society of Friends has embraced a wide variety of beliefs and practices; however, there are important commonalities throughout much of the Society. As Robert Vogel said in 1993, "…[most Quakers adhere to] plainness and devotion to truth, a clear understanding of spirit-led worship, and essential inwardness; the use of queries and advices in framing faith; seeking the sense of the meeting in business sessions; the peace testimony and other social concerns; and the rejection of outward ordinances and sacramental worship."† Friends in London Yearly Meeting (now Britain Yearly Meeting) spoke practically on these matters:

> *We respond [here]…in Christian language, but many Quakers would prefer less specifically Christian terminology. We worship, live and work together in unity, however, valuing the variety of expressions of truth which each individual brings.*
>
> LONDON YEARLY MEETING
> *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987, PP. 7-8

RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

Quakers encourage one another, in John Woolman's phrase, "to distinguish the language of the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart," rather than focusing on seeking names for God. The Light of Christ to one may be what another understands as the Inner Light; the Spirit to one may roughly be what another

† *Friends Journal*, March 1993, p. 18

understands by the Christ Spirit. The Eternal, the Divine, and God may mean the same or not, depending on the context, the speaker or the reader.† The language used in all Quaker writing (including this *Faith and Practice*) varies with the source of material. Friends should temper their interpretations, knowing that any specific phrase may have different connotations to different Friends.

In the course of following their spiritual paths, many Friends find great depth of meaning in familiar Christian concepts and language, while others find more universalist language speaks to their condition. Although this phenomenon may seem perplexing to a casual observer, it does not trouble many seasoned Friends who have discovered deep unity with one another in the Spirit. The breadth of Friends' terminology promotes latitude in expression and appreciation for what may be subtle differences in understanding.

> *…tell them in the name of God that there is to be no wrangling about words: all that this ever achieves is the destruction of those who are listening.*
>
> 2 TIMOTHY 2: 14. *THE NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE.*

THE BIBLE

For most Friends, the Judeo-Christian Bible is an interpretation of God's revelation over many centuries and a rich and sustaining source of inspiration. The Quaker movement began at a time when the Bible had recently come into wide circulation in England. George Fox and other Friends knew the Bible well, studied it earnestly, and quoted it often.

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† In fact one can find many terms for the same or similar concepts in the books of *Faith and Practice* of other Yearly Meetings. Inner Light, Living Spirit of God, Risen Christ, Truth, Light, Light of Christ, Light Within, Divine Spark, Holy Spirit, Living Christ, Jesus Christ, Inner Teacher, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Divine Light, Divine Presence, God's Light, Seed, Spirit, Presence, Eternal, and Divine are found in the vocabulary of Friends.

While they affirmed the inspiration of the scriptures, early Friends made a distinction that has remained vital to this day. In Henry Cadbury's words: "Divine revelation was not confined to the past. The same Holy Spirit that had inspired the scriptures in the past could inspire living believers centuries later. Indeed, for the right understanding of the past, the present insight from the same Spirit was essential." Thus, in emphasizing both the power that produced the scriptures and the accessibility of that same power today, Friends have avoided making written records a final or infallible test. Instead, Quakers seek the spirit behind the Bible, both in order to understand its contents and to be led in continual discovery of God's ways.

SACRAMENTS

All of life is sacred. Friends recognize that special moments of particular insight and spiritual awareness do occur, but they do not require prescribed rites or external sacraments. Friends practice the inward condition, but not the outward form, of the sacraments of baptism and communion. John Wilhelm Rowntree in 1902 wrote:

> *It is the inward change, the inward purification, the spiritual fact and not the outward symbol, that belongs in truth to the Kingdom of God. Neither in the refusal to baptise nor to take the supper do Friends set forth a negation. They assert, on the contrary, the positive truth that the religious life is the inward life of the spirit. But no place or time can limit its action, nor any symbol adequately express it.*
>
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §27.37

In most Christian worship services, the goal is communion with God or the celebration of the Eucharist, so that worshipers sense the immediate presence of the divine among them. Friends feel that

their experience of Meeting for Worship, especially when it is a gathered Meeting (See "Meeting for Worship" in Part II), parallels this phenomenon. Worshipers who prepare the way by waiting together upon God sometimes experience this mystical connection.

Friends in unprogrammed Meetings, like most people, cherish the passages and life experiences often marked by traditional sacramental forms and community recognition. Friends hold special Meetings for Worship where some of the content is planned in advance, specifically on the occasion of marriage or death. Many Meetings also hold small, usually informal, celebrations for the birth of a child, graduation, new membership or another special event. These often take on the sacred character of a community united in its focus on the divine: a sacrament. Wary of how quickly a spontaneous celebration can become an empty ritual through repetition, Friends have avoided adopting rituals governed by outer rules or supervised by an ordained individual.†

CREED

The lack of a creed or clear description of Quaker beliefs has sometimes led to the misconception that Friends do not have beliefs or that one can believe anything and be a Friend. Most Quakers take the absence of a creed as an invitation and encouragement to exercise an extra measure of personal responsibility for the understanding and articulation of Quaker faith. Rather than rely on priests or professional theologians, each believer is encouraged to take seriously the personal disciplines associated with spiritual growth. Out of lives of reflection, prayer, faithfulness, and service flow the statements of belief, both in word and in deed.

† A few pastoral Friends practice the outward rituals commonly used in other Christian churches.

'The Scriptures were the prophets' words and Christ's and the apostles' words, and what as they spoke they enjoyed and possessed and had it from the Lord'. And [he] said, 'Then what had any to do with the Scriptures, but as they came to the Spirit that gave them forth. You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of the light and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?'

MARGARET FELL,
DESCRIBING A SERMON OF GEORGE FOX
BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE, 1995, §19.07

PART II
QUAKER FAITH AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

WORSHIP AND THE MEETING

Meeting for Worship

> *And it is especially to be observed, that in the whole New Testament there is no order nor command given in this thing, but to follow the revelation of the Spirit, save only that general one of meeting together; a thing dearly owned and diligently practised by us…*
>
> ROBERT BARCLAY, *APOLOGY*, 1676, 11:10

Worship is the response of the human spirit to the call of the Divine. Friends seek communion with that of God within, which some Friends call the Living Christ, the Teacher with whom each one has a relationship. Corporate worship deepens our sense of the Presence and our connection to it. In worship at its best, we transcend ourselves: "Every individual man and woman" is brought "to the Spirit of God…and Truth in their own hearts, [to] love one another and love enemies" (George Fox, *The Power of the Lord Is Over All*, 1668, p. 235)

The Meeting for Worship is at the core of Quaker practice. There, Friends gather together in expectant silence, waiting upon God. Typically, Meeting for Worship begins when the first worshipers settle into the silence at the appointed place and time. It ends when the Clerk or another designated individual shakes the hand of another person seated nearby. At that signal, Friends generally shake hands and greet each other.

Meeting for Worship is different from solitary prayer. The strength and focus of the community draw one who is distracted back toward the Center. In the embrace of the Meeting, an individual may be more willing to be searched by the Light that exposes weaknesses and shortcomings, and challenges the worshiper to transformation. Together, we can more clearly see Truth; we can better receive and understand continuing revelation. William Penn's query captures this spirit in the language of his time:

> *When you come to your meetings…do you sit down in True Silence, resting from your own Will and Workings, and waiting upon the Lord, with your minds fixed in that Light wherewith Christ has enlightened you, until the Lord breathes life in you, refresheth you, and prepares you, and your spirits and souls, to make you fit for his service, that you may offer unto him a pure and spiritual sacrifice?*
>
> WILLIAM PENN, A TENDER VISITATION,
> *WORKS*, 1771, P. 441

Thus conducting worship under the leading of Divine Will, Friends assemble in the silence without prearranged program. Each tries to still the inward clamor of personal anxieties and ambitions, listening for the voice of the Inner Guide, endeavoring to be faithful to its instruction. Such faithfulness may require an outward silence. It may require one to rise and speak words that do not come easily, which may not be fully understood, or which may be uncomfortable. It may require action, or restraint of action, by some individual or the whole Meeting, outside the Meeting for Worship.

During worship, all share responsibility for vocal ministry. God may call upon any one, regardless of experience or education, age or gender, to be a messenger. No one is excluded from the possibility of such service just as no one is appointed in advance to preach or pray at a particular Meeting for Worship. When someone does offer vocal ministry, Friends seek to be open, notwithstanding any

hesitations or imperfection in the speaker's words. An unexpected message may touch hearts, reveal the wisdom from the Source, and encourage the growth of the Seed within.

During Meeting for Worship, Friends seek connection to one another and to God dwelling among them. In some Meetings, the vocal ministry will have a common theme, each message deepening and enriching the other, and connecting to one's own thoughts. Some Meetings are entirely silent. At a gathered Meeting, "the sense is present that a new Life and Power has entered our midst" (Thomas Kelly, *The Gathered Meeting*). Not every Meeting is a gathered Meeting, and not everyone has the same perception of a particular Meeting.

> *The meeting comes to be truly gathered when most, if not all, of those present have themselves been drawn in to the depths of themselves so that even their thoughts have been stilled and their minds, while by no means empty, are in near perfect rest.*
>
> GEORGE GORMAN,
> *THE AMAZING FACT OF QUAKER WORSHIP*,
> 1986, P. 4

In nurturing its worship, a Meeting that is experiencing an extended period of arid silence might try to encourage those who are reluctant to speak to be faithful to the call when it comes. Another Meeting, where many vocal messages have come from speakers with questionable discernment, may seek to encourage a greater spiritual depth in both the silence and the words. Seeking what George Fox referred to as the "universal, true, and perfect worship," Friends return in faith to God for guidance.

> *All of us, with our unveiled faces like mirrors reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the image that we reflect in brighter and brighter glory; this is the working of the Lord who is the Spirit.*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 *THE NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE*

PREPARATION FOR AND PARTICIPATION IN WORSHIP

Friends who thoughtfully prepare to come together with clear minds and open hearts enhance the depth and quality of Meetings for Worship and for Business. Preparation may include regular prayer and worship, the reading of Scripture and other devotional literature, reflection, and other ways of experiencing God's presence. The quality of each person's participation affects the entire community. Regular and punctual attendance is helpful, as are attentive listening to the vocal ministry of others and the exercise of careful discernment in offering vocal ministry. Genuine preparation includes knowing others in the Meeting, being of service, and through words, actions and attitudes, honoring covenant relationships with one another and with the Living God.

PRAYER AND OTHER REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

Prayer outside of Meeting for Worship takes many forms. For some, constant awareness of the Presence is the background to everything else that happens. For others, prayer is a change from one's usual focus to communicate with the Divine at a particular moment.

Prayer may be of a traditional type, such as intercession or praise in the form of beloved words written by another. A prayer may be vocalized, alone or in a group. It may be silent: formed of internal words or deep and wordless. Prayer may include an embodied discipline, like chant or a movement meditation.

Daily prayer is a discipline that sustains the spirit and prepares for the coming Meeting for Worship. The Meeting community is greatly strengthened when its members regularly pray for it and for one another.

> *There is no use trying to conceal how difficult it is to find time for private prayer in the congested schedules under which most modern people live. But at the bottom it is not a question of finding time…[but] of the depth of the sense of need and of the desire. Busy lovers find time to write letters to one another,*

often…long letters; although what really matters is not the length of the letter any more than it is the length of the prayer. In this life we find the time for what we believe to be important.

DOUGLAS STEERE, 1938
BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE, 1995, §2.32

Study of Judeo-Christian scriptures, Quaker materials, devotional literature, and other inspiring works can deepen understanding and enliven spiritual imagination. Individual reflection, conversations with a spiritual friend, group discussions, small gatherings for worship during the week, retreats, and pursuit of opportunities for religious education enhance spiritual development and readiness to be faithful instruments of God's will.

VOCAL MINISTRY AND FAITHFUL LISTENING

Just as careful preparation enhances the quality of worship, so too does attention to the Light during worship. Friends come to worship to receive and to give, to speak when led, to be silent when that is what obedience requires. Vocal ministry is a vital part of the Meeting for Worship. It is a form of service in which a person stands to share a message from God delivered through the individual. Friends hope that all spoken messages during worship are in fact vocal ministry. The responsibility rests on each member of the group to be ready and willing to offer such ministry when called to do so.

As one sits in silence, a message may arise out of the depth of the soul that seems intended not simply for the worshiper, but for the gathering as a whole. Some Friends feel burdened with a sense of omission if a message is not expressed, but once it is faithfully uttered, a sense of inward peace may follow. Experience in Meeting helps to discriminate between private words and those that arise as true leadings of the Spirit that should not be silenced. An

inclination to share a message may arise in advance of Meeting, but the decision to speak should await a clear leading at the time. With practice, a person may learn to discern a call clearly, though many are quite unable to describe its quality.

Some worshipers called to speak feel an internal or external quaking, deep emotion, tears, an increased heart rate, or other agitation. Some have felt grabbed by the hand of God and held until after delivering the message. One person feels a profound stillness accompanied by a clear voice that is not her own. Another may find himself suddenly standing, and then wait, praying silently for guidance, before beginning to speak. Still another may test a message by repeatedly pushing it 'out of mind' only to find that it returns again and again.

As one is weighing whether to speak, certain questions may be helpful: Is this message Spirit-led, or merely emotionally compelling? Is this message intended for this group, or is it only for me? Is it better saved until another time or place? When the call to speak is clear, the worshiper should stand if possible. He or she should speak simply, briefly, audibly, and from personal spiritual experience. Occasionally, ministry may take the form of singing or of standing silently. Neither debate, nor discussion with previous speakers, is ever appropriate, and speaking twice during a single Meeting for Worship is very seldom so.

Those who are led to speak have different backgrounds, verbal skills and interpretive power. Friends try to listen more than they speak, keep an open heart, seek the Spirit behind the words and hold the speaker in love. Listeners may find it helpful to pray that the messenger is faithful to the call, and that God's word will emerge through the medium of human speech. A message that does not speak to one person's needs may be helpful to another. After a message has been given, it is important to allow time to ponder its meaning, letting the Spirit move through the assembly of Friends before another ministers.

Meeting for Worship for Business†

> *Being orderly come together… proceed in the wisdom of God, not in the way of the world… not deciding affairs by the greater vote… [but by] assenting together as one man in the spirit of truth and equity, and by the authority thereof.*
>
> EDWARD BURROUGH, 1662
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §2.87

There is little record of how Friends' unique practice for conducting business evolved, but there can be no doubt that it is derived directly from Friends' faith. It is guided by three core beliefs: that there is that of God in everyone, that each can experience that of God within, and that divine guidance will lead to the realization of a single shared truth.

From these beliefs it readily follows that a Friends Meeting for Business is a Meeting for Worship in which business is conducted by seeking God's will in the decisions that are to be made. The silent worship with which the Meeting for Business both opens and closes connects individuals to the Spirit. It prompts them to be sensitive to and grounded in the Love that binds the Meeting.

Anyone may call for silence in the course of a meeting: when resolution of a matter is proving difficult, when there is a need to reflect on what has been said, or to return the Meeting to a spirit of quiet reverence. A call for silence is always a call to worship, to focus on the guidance of the Spirit, to listen with a loving and open heart. As in other Meetings for Worship, Friends may feel moved to speak out of the silence on the matter in hand.

Friends strive to observe a discipline of plain speaking, expressing themselves simply and directly. This discipline extends to not

† This section looks at the mystical roots of Quaker business process. Detailed treatment of procedure is to be found in Part V, Friends Process for Making Decisions.

interrupting or interjecting remarks. The occasional "That Friend speaks my mind" shows support for a viewpoint. Friends maintain order and ensure full participation by waiting to be recognized by the Clerk and usually standing to speak, addressing all comments to the Clerk and not to one another.

Although Friends study and discuss issues in advance, they should not come to Meeting for Business with minds made up. Seeking to be reverent to that of God in themselves and others, Friends should offer their personal perspectives and avoid taking fixed or adversarial positions.

Friends pay careful attention to all expressions, searching for the truth behind the words, aware that it may come from unexpected places. However, the voice of an experienced Friend is often especially valuable, providing wisdom that the Meeting needs.

Listening is at the very heart of Friends' faith and practice. By listening to the Divine in ourselves and in each other, Friends are better prepared to find God's will. Friends should not listen for the most convincing argument, but for the greater understanding to which each contributes and to which each may assent. A sense of the Meeting evolves from the interplay of all contributions and the skilled guidance of the Clerk. When unity is realized, the outcome is deeply satisfying. It produces a sense of the rightness of the decision and a loving connection between members.

Friends do not vote or act on the will of the majority. In Quaker experience, it is possible for all to unite in a decision, even when some have reservations. A united Meeting is not necessarily of one mind but it is all of one heart.

Unity requires active participation: where there is division over an issue, it is especially important for everybody to be heard. When Friends withhold expressions of dissent in the interest of avoiding controversy, the unity that results is spurious. The collective wisdom of the Meeting can be realized only to the extent that all participate in seeking it.

When Friends come to an issue with conflicting views, they are challenged to pool their knowledge and experience, and to experience the joy of discovering a new understanding that encompasses all of these elements in a far better form than previously imagined. This process requires love, courage, trust, and an ability to truly listen and change.

In coming to unity, Friends draw upon feelings and contemplative insight, not simply upon rational thought. Honest emotions are essential to discernment, but they should not be abused to sway the Meeting's decision. Time is also essential for "seasoning" important decisions. Sometimes decisions must be deferred for reflection and to allow residual unease to surface.

Decisions made in unity are not victories or defeats when Friends remain faithful, preserving the loving unity and higher purpose of the Meeting. Business conducted as a corporate endeavor in a Meeting for Worship enables Friends to move forward with confidence and joy. (See Friends Process for Making Decisions, p. 129).

The Meeting Community

> *I do not think I am alone in my certainty that it's in my relationships with people that the deepest religious truths are most vividly disclosed.*
>
> GEORGE GORMAN, *RELIGION AND LIFE*, 1982
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §10.20

The Religious Society of Friends arose as a community of the Spirit, centered in regular, shared worship. Ostracized and attacked by mainstream English society, Quakers developed a loving social community which, while not immune to struggle and conflict, supported their personal growth, their care for one another, and their work in the larger world.

Now as then, community is essential to Friends' life and spiritual growth. A strong Meeting community offers companionship, resources to care lovingly for those in need, and a place to test and support leadings and concerns. Community is expressed in many ways: by cheerfully joining together to accomplish the work of the Meeting, refraining from gossip and disparaging others, taking part in clearness committees, providing pastoral care, and reflecting Friends values in the larger society. Community is also expressed in commemorative, sociable and playful activities of the Monthly Meeting.

Those who belong to a Meeting community receive its loving care. Each one in turn should attend to the spiritual condition of others. While respecting others' privacy, Friends must be sensitive to one another's needs and willing to ask for assistance in times of trouble.

Conflict and difference are a part of life, a necessary result of the varying needs, aims, and perspectives of individuals and communities. Bringing them into the open is a necessary step towards empathy, understanding, and healing. Individuals and Meetings need to address conflict promptly in a spirit of goodwill and a desire to maintain loving relationship. When resolution is not immediate, the Meeting waits for way to open, while persisting in an earnest search for unity.

Recognizing the universal human needs for embrace, intimacy and sharing, as well as solitude, Friends support each other as individuals, couples, and families, however constructed or defined. The Meeting strives to be present for all its members throughout different stages of their lives and their specific needs — as single people, coupled, or in broader communities — recognizing the Divine in each. The Meeting can be an instrument of "divine assistance," not only in supporting the marriages under its care, but also in supporting single people and all forms of partnership. We all have need for solitude as well as companionship, though these needs differ and are not always arrived at by choice. The Meeting

Community plays a vital role in being sensitive to the needs and changing circumstances of its members.

Families are built on faith and love, not simply legal definitions. Friends experience the joys and struggles of being loving and faithful within families of choice and families of origin. Sharing life with those who matter most to us is a deeply spiritual journey when we struggle to live lives of openness and integrity. To be companions to each other on this common journey is central to the meaning of community.

Children bring special blessings to the Meeting community. Meetings must learn to cultivate the spiritual gifts of their youngest members, to listen to them and learn from them.

> *Jesus said: Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for such belongs to the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.*
>
> LUKE 18:16-17

As Meetings open themselves to the lessons children offer, they must also be attentive to families experiencing the joys and stresses of child rearing. Parents provide for the healthy development of their children's minds, bodies, and spirits. Time and attention needed for this central task should be shielded from less important tasks. Meetings should share these responsibilities with parents and extended families so that children grow in the knowledge that they occupy a valuable place in the Meeting community. All adults in the Meeting should find ways to be involved in the children's lives.

At the same time Friends cherish older people in the Meeting, offering support as they face changing circumstances in their lives, valuing the wisdom, serenity and detachment that advancing age may bring. With gratitude for the memories and blessings of those lives, Friends value older people in new ways as they pass on their

responsibilities, assuring them of their continuing role in the Meeting community. Aging members can be bearers of wisdom, a tranquil enlightenment that recognizes the divine presence in the ordinary, as well as prophecy, which calls us out of the ordinary to a new vision of the world.

The Meeting must find ways to consult its experienced members as it makes decisions. It may ease its expectations of members who no longer find it easy to bring a pot luck dish, or volunteer to do clean up, but whose company it cherishes.

At the same time the Meeting must accompany all members as they experience transitions, change, diminishments of all kinds. These changes present constant challenges: physical, financial and spiritual. The life of the community can deepen and grow in the process of confronting change.

The Quaker community extends beyond our home Meetings. Historically, Friends have maintained contact with the wider world of Quakers through traveling ministry, intervisitation, home hospitality, and participation in the wider gatherings of Friends. Such participation often results in a deepening of individual commitments and a livelier sense of community at the home Meeting.

Friends seek to embrace all people — all God's children — in community. This witness for, and practice of, community informs social concerns for peace and justice in the world.

When Friends are led to actions in the wider world, the Meeting may be called upon not only to help discern the merits of such a leading but also to offer material and spiritual support. (See Clearness and Clearness Committees, p. 139). Early Meetings were both a religious body and an economic unit, coming to the aid of persecuted members who risked imprisonment and loss of jobs and property for acting on their beliefs. Meetings that have united on a course of action, such as providing sanctuary to families fleeing oppression, have often found their faith deepened and their

community life enhanced. Such actions require full participation, which is the essence of community.

LIVING OUR FAITH

George Fox called Quakerism an "experimental" faith. Today, Friends are more likely to call it "experiential," and this in turn implies willingness to consider new insights and perceptions. Friends historical experience has led to shared attitudes and a mode of living in the world that is reflected in Friends' testimonies, which guide the living faith both individually and corporately.

Friends have often completed the study of a problem, whether spiritual or worldly, by offering a set of queries, believing that these may open the way to Truth more effectively than a set of conclusions. This practice dates from the early days of the Quaker movement. Most books of *Faith and Practice* include a set of *Queries*, often accompanied by a set of *Advices* (see page 46). *Advices and Queries* offer challenge and inspiration, while nurturing continued exploration of Friends faith and practice.

Testimonies

> *Another descriptive saying of Friends is that "Quakerism is a way of life," which is to suggest that the testimonies are the moral and ethical fruit of the inward leading of the Spirit. … Because the testimonies have a religious base they might also be called the Quaker "articles of faith," but clearly for Friends it is faith that must be translated into action.*
>
> WILMER A. COOPER,
> *THE TESTIMONY OF INTEGRITY IN THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS*, PENDLE HILL PAMPHLET 296, 1991

For more than three hundred years, Friends have acted upon a set of shared convictions. While the specific details have varied over

time, today's concerns and underlying beliefs are remarkably similar to those of past generations. The word "testimonies" refers to this set of deeply felt, historically rooted attitudes and ways of living in the world. Testimonies bear witness to the Truth as Friends in community perceive it: Truth known through relationship with God. Testimonies are expressions of lives turned toward the Light, outward expressions that reflect the inward experience of divine guidance.

Spiritual evolution of the Religious Society of Friends occurs largely through individual Friends' openness to spiritual insights. Insights widely held by Friends over time, guiding and informing the community, become testimonies.

There is no single list of testimonies. To understand the role of testimonies in Friends' history and spiritual practice, it is first important to understand their essential oneness.

INTEGRITY

Let your lives speak.

INSCRIPTION ON
GEORGE FOX'S MEMORIAL TABLET

The testimony of integrity calls us to wholeness; it is the whole of life open to Truth. When lives are centered in the Spirit, beliefs and actions are congruent, and words are dependable. As we achieve wholeness in ourselves, we are better able to heal the conflict and fragmentation in our community and in the world.

Integrity is a demanding discipline. We are challenged by cultural values and pressures to conform. Integrity requires that we be fully responsible for our actions. Living with integrity requires living a life of reflection, living in consistency with our beliefs and testimonies, and doing so regardless of personal consequences. Not least, it calls for a single standard of truth. From the beginning, Friends have held to this standard, and have often witnessed against the mainstream. When they suffered in consequence of their

witness against secular order, their integration of belief and practice upheld them in adversity.

Speaking the truth in all circumstances† and at all times, as enjoined in the Bible, is shown in the refusal to take oaths. Oaths imply that there are times the truth is not necessarily told and early Friends believed that the system of requiring oaths taught people that lies were otherwise acceptable. Truth telling led to a one-price system in merchandising, with fair value for fair price rather than bargaining or discrimination between buyers.

Friends believe in speaking simply, avoiding misleading words or emotionally manipulative language, which could divert from the discernment of God's will. Commitment to truth requires authenticity and veracity in following one's conscience, illuminated by the Inner Light. When we depart from truth, we separate ourselves from God. Integrity is not simply a habit of speech, but a way of life increasingly aligned with God's will.

UNITY

Friends believe that it is possible for the human spirit to be in direct communion with the Divine. Seeking God's will together, we believe way will open and unity will emerge.

> *The way is one; Christ the truth of God; and he that is in the faith, and in the obedience to the light which shines from his Spirit into the heart of every believer, hath a taste of the one heart and of the one way, and knoweth that no variety of practices, which is of God, can make a breach in the true unity.*
>
> ISAAC PENINGTON, 1659, PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING *FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1997, P. 163.257

† Particular circumstances have occasionally presented Friends with painful and difficult choices. Kenneth Barnes discusses obeying a deeper call when he writes: "The integrity of some Dutch Friends I have met showed itself during the war in their willingness to tell lies to save their Jewish friends from the Gestapo or from starvation." Kenneth C. Barnes, 1972 (Britain Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 1995, §20.44)

One of the queries in continuous use since 1682 asks, "Are love and unity maintained among you?" Early Friends considered themselves part of a great movement that would soon sweep the world. Unity and mutual care in the Quaker community in the face of persecution demonstrated to the world the working of God among us.

Working together to discern and serve God's will both nourishes and benefits from unity. This unity grows from trust in one another and readiness to speak out, confident that together, Friends will find the truth.

> *True unity may be found under great apparent differences. This unity is spiritual, it expresses itself in many ways, and we need divine insight that we may recognize its working. We need forbearance, sympathy and love, in order that, while remaining loyal to the truth as it comes to us, we may move forward with others to a larger and richer experience and expression of the will of God*
>
> LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1916

EQUALITY

> *There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
>
> GALATIANS 3:28, *THE NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE*

Friends testimony on equality is rooted in the holy expectation that there is that of God in everyone, including adversaries and people from widely different stations, life experiences, and religious persuasions. All must therefore be treated with integrity and respect. The conviction that each person is equally a child of God opened the way for women to be leaders in the Religious Society of Friends: both women and men ministered in Friends Meetings from earliest days.

The testimony of equality does not imply that all individuals in a particular role are the same; it recognizes that the same measure of God's grace is available to everyone. John Woolman exemplified this belief in his travel among Native Americans:

> *Love was the first motion, and thence a concern arose to spend some time with the Indians, that I might feel and understand their life and the spirit they live in, if haply I might receive some instruction from them, or they be in any degree helped forward by my following the leadings of Truth amongst them.*
>
> JOHN WOOLMAN, *JOURNAL*, 1763
> ED. J. G. WHITTIER, 1871, P.192

Before Friends became pacifists, they were dismissed from the army for refusing to treat officers as superior. George Fox and other early Friends demonstrated their conviction that all persons were of equal worth by refusing to take off their hats to those who claimed higher rank, and by addressing everyone with the singular "thou" (or "thee" in America) rather than the honorific plural "you."

Friends recognize that unjust inequities persist throughout society, and that difficult work remains to rid ourselves and the Religious Society of Friends from prejudice and inequitable treatment based upon gender, class, race, age, sexual orientation, physical attributes, or other categorizations. Both in the public realm — where Friends may "speak truth to power" — and in intimate familial contexts, Friends' principles require witness against injustice and inequality wherever it exists.

SIMPLICITY

Simplicity is the right ordering of our lives, placing God at the center. When we shed possessions, activities, and behavior that distract us from that center, we can focus on what is important. Simplicity does not mean denying life's pleasures, but being open to the promptings of the Spirit. We Friends seek to take no more than

our share and to be sensitive to the needs of others, especially future generations.

Early Friends believed that the rituals and elaborate ceremony of the church were distractions from true religious experience. Seeking to emphasize substance rather than form, they gathered to worship simply in silence. To this day Friends in unprogrammed Meetings worship without outward sacraments.

Maintaining a simple life requires discipline and resolve to avoid getting lost in worldly distractions or undertaking too many activities, even in the service of good causes. When Friends truly practice simplicity, their lives and homes are orderly and they find time for prayer and service.

In earlier times, and in their concern to avoid frivolity, Friends devalued art and music. Later Friends recognized that music and art can enrich life in the Light. Simplicity need not entail meagerness or crudeness. A simple rendering of speech, writing, or artifacts often enhances that which is genuine and unmasks that which is not.

> *Simplicity, when it removes encumbering details, makes for beauty in music, in art, and in living. It clears the springs of life and permits wholesome mirth and gladness to bubble up; it cleans the windows of life and lets joy radiate. It requires the avoidance of artificial or harmful social customs and conventions but it opens wide the door to cultivate and express to all sincere cordiality, kindness and friendliness. This sort of simplicity removes barriers and eases tensions. In its presence all can be at ease.*
>
> PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING
> *FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1961, PP. 22-24.

> *We utterly deny all outward wars, and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world.… The spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for kingdoms of this world.*
>
> GEORGE FOX, DECLARATION TO CHARLES II, 1660
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §24.04

> *A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it.*
>
> WILLIAM PENN, 1693
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995, §24.03

Based upon love and concern for the wellbeing of all, Friends work for reconciliation and active nonviolent resolutions of conflict. Friends have traditionally supported conscientious objectors to military service, while holding in love, but disagreeing with, those who feel that they must enter the armed forces. Friends oppose all war as inconsistent with God's will.

Recognizing that violence and war typically arise from unjust circumstances, Friends address the causes of war by working to correct social injustice, and by strengthening communities, institutions and processes to provide nonviolent alternatives to military force. We testify against structural violence implicit in disparities of wealth and income and against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, class, sexual orientation, and other divisions of people. John Woolman implored Friends to seek out the seeds of war in themselves:

Oh that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the light and therein examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates. May we look upon our treasures, the furniture of our houses, and our garments, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these possessions?

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1763

The work of peace is the work of sustaining relationships of mutual human regard, of seeing and speaking to that of God in everyone, of seeking peace within ourselves, the family, the community and the world. The Kingdom of God is both present in each of us and a goal yet to be fulfilled. The task may never be done, but sustained by God's love we are called to pursue it.

COMMUNITY

Friends' testimonies on integrity, unity, equality, simplicity, and peace come together in our testimony on community, which calls us to sustain caring relationships for all. In today's interconnected world, human survival depends more than ever on discerning and actualizing the truth of our corporate experience, on mutual regard and support, on nurturing our relationships with one another, with society, and with the environment as a whole.

We need to find the courage to assert and act upon the hope, however naïve, that community can be found, because only by acting "as if" can we create a future fit for human habitation… Community means more than the comfort of souls. It means, and always has meant, the survival of the species…

PARKER PALMER, *A PLACE CALLED COMMUNITY*,
PENDLE HILL PAMPHLET 212, 1977

Without mutual regard and concern, without the trust that comes from the observance of mutual expectations developed and sustained over time, without commitment to a collective search for unity around that of the Divine that each of us shares, there is

separation, and separation is the root of conflict. Community is the necessary foundation for social justice and peace. As we live in a community which is committed to honor that of God in all, we are, as individuals, strengthened in the work to which we are called.

The Quaker exhortation to "know one other in that which is eternal" is an exhortation to a mutual knowing in which we are affected by, and responsive to, one another. We come to know one another as we seek our collective, Spirit-led Truth — our shared sense of the common good within which we discover who we are and where we each fit in the larger scheme of things. We see and speak from that of God in ourselves to that of God in all others when we discover and acknowledge our common ground and common good. We see Jesus' command to love one another as a command to be in community. We testify against all appeals to divisiveness.

Within Friends' spiritual community, the collective search for truth, undertaken in the Meeting for Worship, is the foundation for the beloved community to which Friends aspire. Gathered together in the Light, the work of community involves empathic searching for the Divine in self and other. It nourishes our witness to the world.

> *Love, trust, fellowship, selflessness are all mediated to us through our interdependence. Just as we could not live physically without each other, we cannot live spiritually in isolation. We are individually free but also communally bound. We cannot act without affecting others and others cannot act without affecting us. We know ourselves as we are reflected in the faces, action and attitudes of each other.*
>
> JANET SCOTT, *WHAT CANST THOU SAY?* SWARTHMORE LECTURE, FRIENDS HOME SERVICE, 1980, PP.41-42

The Spirit calls Friends to acknowledge their connection to one another and to all creation. This understanding strengthens us to

minister to one another and the wider community, to test individual leadings, and to witness to the truth as it is revealed to us.

Living by faith is not a private matter. It calls us outward to the needs of the community at large. The Spirit we follow is present in each individual human being. To be true to that Spirit, we must recognize and nourish the spiritual worth of all people, particularly those who have been devalued or excluded. Following the Spirit's leadings together, we hope to overcome the causes of racism, sexism, homophobia, and the neglect or disrespect of children, the poor, and the socially marginalized, in the world and in ourselves.

Advices and Queries†

Friends are committed to a way of worship that allows God continually to teach and transform us. The *Advices and Queries* remind us of the essential faith and principles of the Religious Society of Friends. They challenge and inspire us in our personal lives and in our corporate life. If the ideal of Christian discipleship seems impossibly demanding, and we become disheartened at times, we should remember that we seek it not with our own strength, but with the strength of the Light within.

The *Advices and Queries* are intended for use in Monthly Meetings as well as for personal devotions. Some Meetings read one section each month, during Meeting for Business or at other times, or publish them in Meeting newsletters. They may be used as a basis for annual reports on the State of the Meeting. Committees may find certain queries helpful in evaluating their activities.

As we speak to what we know to be true in our lives and listen to each other in humility and understanding, we trust in the Spirit that transcends our human effort and comprehension. So these *Advices and Queries* are offered for the comfort and discomfort of Friends, with the hope that we may be more faithful and find deeper joy in God's service.

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† Some queries are intended for individuals. Italicized queries are intended for the Meeting collectively.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP

The heart of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for Worship. In direct communion with God, we offer ourselves for God's will. Our daily lives are linked with the Meeting for Worship, the Meeting for Worship with our daily lives.

Come regularly to Meeting for Worship, even when you are angry, tired, or spiritually cold. Bring your joys and your hurts, and the needs of other people. Accept and support each other in the community where God dwells among us. As you do so, you may find the grace of prayer.

At times the Spirit may prompt you to speak in Meeting. Wait patiently to know that the sense and the time are right. When you are sure, have confidence that the words will be given to you. Listen to the ministry of others with an open spirit. If it is not God's word for you, it may be for others. After a message has been given, allow time to ponder its meaning and to let the Meeting return to silent worship. In speech and in silence, each person contributes to the Meeting.

> Do I come to Meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship?
>
> In both silent and vocal ministry, do I respond to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, without pre-arrangement and in simplicity and truth?
>
> Am I careful not to speak at undue length or beyond personal spiritual experience?
>
> *Do we meet in expectant waiting for the promptings of the Divine Spirit?*
>
> *Are we drawn together in a living silence by the power of God in our midst?*

SPIRITUAL LIFE

The life of the spirit gains depth and vigor through devotional practices, prayer, study and meditation. Take time regularly for individual and family worship, discussions, readings from sacred texts, and other spiritual refreshment in order to live a more centered life and to bring a deeper presence to the Meeting for Worship.

Friends believe that the spiritual path is best found in community. Create opportunities in your Meetings for people of all ages to explore and express their evolving relationship with the Divine, their spiritual highs and their doubts. If different metaphors and language interfere with communication, listen more deeply, honoring the Spirit in which the thought and words have their beginnings.

> Do I live in thankful awareness of God's constant presence in my life?
>
> Am I sensitive and obedient to the leadings of the Holy Spirit?
>
> When do I take time for contemplation and spiritual refreshment?
>
> What steps am I taking to center my life and to stay open to continuing revelation?
>
> *Do we share our spiritual lives with others in the Meeting, seeking to know one another in that which is eternal?*
>
> *Does the Meeting provide religious education including study of the Bible and Friends' history and practices?*

MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS

Come to Meeting with hearts and minds prepared to be open and faithful to the leadings of the Spirit. Then the conduct of business will lead to truth, unity, and love.

When a matter is before the Meeting for Business, each person present contributes to the corporate search for a decision that accords with the will of God. Inaction is a form of action. Silent worship in the Meeting for Business contributes to the process of achieving unity.

Listen attentively to others' words and use the silence between messages to reflect carefully on what you might contribute. When you are clear, speak simply what is in your heart, without repeating what has already been offered. While making your insights clear, lay aside personal opinions and attend to what God requires.

> Do I attend Meeting for Business regularly?
>
> Do I speak in Meeting for Business only when I am led to speak?
>
> *Is the Meeting for Business held as a Meeting for Worship in which we seek divine guidance for our actions?*
>
> *Are we tender and considerate of different views, coming to a decision only when we have found unity?*
>
> *Do we give prayerful support for our clerks that they may be sensitive to the movement of the Spirit among us?*

STEWARDSHIP AND VOCATION

John Woolman said, "As Christians all we possess are the gifts of God… To turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of Universal Love becomes the business of our lives." The principle of stewardship applies to all we have and are. As individuals, we are called to use our time, our various abilities, our strength, our money, and our material possessions with care, managing them wisely and sharing them generously.

From the indwelling Seed of God, we discover our particular gifts and discern the service to which we are called. In making

choices about occupation or education, consider the way that offers the fullest opportunity to develop your individual abilities and contribute to the world community while providing for yourself and your family. In daily work, manifest a spirit of justice and understanding, and thus give a living witness to the truth.

Be ready to limit engagements, to withdraw for a time, or even to retire from an activity that inhibits your ability to follow a higher call. Try to discern the right moment to accept new responsibilities as well as to relinquish responsibility that can pass to others. Be open to your calling in different stages of life. Meetings need the strength and vigor of young people as well as the experience and wisdom of elders. Although they may not be able to contribute great financial support, their energy and insight invigorate the community. As people begin careers and families, they may need the spiritual and experienced help of the Meeting. Later, when families are growing up and careers are established, greater participation in the Meeting and greater financial support may become possible. Welcome the approach of old age, your own and others', as an opportunity for wisdom and greater attachment to the Light. Meetings should be ready with material and spiritual support for those suffering from unemployment or facing difficult vocational decisions.

> How have I been faithful to the leadings of the Spirit in choosing work or vocation?
>
> What am I doing with my talents, time, money, and possessions? Am I sharing them according to the Light I am given?
>
> Is my conduct at the workplace consistent with my life as a Friend?
>
> How does my daily work enhance my spiritual life?
>
> *How does the Meeting help and support members who are in job transitions?*

> *It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the Great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part thereof?*
>
> WILLIAM PENN, *SOME FRUITS OF SOLITUDE*, 1693

God is revealed in all Creation. We humans belong to the whole interdependent community of life on earth. Rejoice in the beauty, complexity, and mystery of creation, with gratitude to be part of its unfolding. Take time to learn how this community of life is organized and how it interacts. Live according to principles of right relationship and right action within this larger whole.

Be aware of the influence humans have on the health and viability of life on earth. Call attention to what fosters or harms earth's exquisite beauty, balances and interdependencies. Guided by Spirit, work to translate this understanding into ways of living that reflect our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

> In what ways do I express gratitude for the wondrous expressions of life on Earth?
>
> Do I consider the damage I might do to the Earth's vulnerable systems in choices I make of what I do, what I buy, and how I spend my time?
>
> *In our witness for the global environment, are we careful to consider justice and the well-being of the world's poorest people?*
>
> *Does our way of life threaten the viability of life on Earth?*

SOCIAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

In the words of William Penn, "True godliness don't draw men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavors to mend it." Elsewhere he commented: "It is a reproach to religion and government to suffer so much poverty and excess."

Poverty within a wealthy society is unjust, cruel, and often linked to skin color, gender, and language. We must examine our own privilege and role in the economic order that deepens this disparity. Friends should be alert to oppression and injustice, and persistent in working against them.

We value our part in shaping the laws of our country. Our task is to see that laws serve God's purposes and build a just social order. Our first allegiance should be to God, and if this conflicts with any compulsion of the state, we serve our country best by remaining true to our higher loyalty.

If, by divine leading, our attention is focused on a law that is contrary to God's law, we must proceed with care. Before acting, Friends should pray for further guidance and speak with the Meeting, family members, and all those who might be affected by the decision. If a decision involves disobedience to the law, we should make the grounds of our action clear to all concerned and be prepared to suffer any penalties without evasion. As a community, we must care for those who suffer for conscience's sake.

> What am I doing to carry my share of responsibility for the government of our community, nation, and world?
>
> Am I persistent in my efforts to promote constructive change?
>
> *How do we attend to the suffering of others in our local community, in our state and nation, and in the world community?*
>
> *Do we try to understand the causes of suffering, and do we address them as a Meeting?*

How do we, individually and as a Meeting, support the organizations that work to bring the testimonies of Friends into reality in our society?

REACHING OUT

Friends fellowship begins and is nurtured within the home and Meeting. It reaches greater fulfillment as we carry our beliefs into the wider community.

Share your Quaker faith. Take time to learn about other people's experiences of the Light and, as you learn, give freely from what you have gained. Respect the experiences and opinions of others, but do not be afraid to say what you value. Welcome the diversity of culture, language, and expressions of faith in your Monthly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting, and the world community of Friends. Encourage discourse with Friends of pastoral and programmed traditions, and with members of other faiths.

Friends have a long history of involvement in public and private education, sharing our values with the world and nurturing future generations. Be mindful of the needs of children in your community and of avenues for deepening understanding between peoples.

How does my life reflect Friends beliefs and thus encourage others to be interested in the Religious Society of Friends?

Do I respond openly to inquiries about Quaker experience and belief?

What does our Meeting do to make others aware of Friends principles and practices?

What are we doing to help people of various races, cultures, and backgrounds feel at home among us and we among them?

How do we encourage newcomers to return and participate in activities of the Meeting?

In what ways do we participate in the life of the interfaith community and in the wider fellowship of Friends?

SIMPLICITY

Life is meant to be lived from a Center, a divine Center… a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It takes no time, but it occupies all our time.

THOMAS R. KELLY, *TESTAMENT OF DEVOTION*, 1941

A life centered in God will be directed toward keeping communication with God open and unencumbered. Simplicity is best achieved through a right ordering of priorities, maintaining humility of spirit, avoiding self-indulgence, resisting the accumulation of unnecessary possessions, and avoiding over-busy lives.

Elise Boulding writes in *My Part in the Quaker Adventure*, "Simplicity, beauty, and happiness go together if they are a by-product of a concern for something more important than ourselves."

Do I center my life in an awareness of God's presence so that all things take their rightful place?

Do I live simply, and promote the right sharing of the world's bounty?

Do I keep my life uncluttered with things and activities, avoiding commitments beyond my strength and light?

How do I maintain simplicity, moderation, and honesty in my speech, my manner of living, and my daily work?

Do I recognize when I have enough?

Is the life of our Meeting so ordered that it helps us to simplify our lives?

INTEGRITY AND PERSONAL CONDUCT

Integrity has always been a goal of Friends. It is essential to trust, to all communication between people and between people and God. Integrity grounds our beliefs, thoughts, and actions in our spiritual center and makes us whole.

Friends believe that we are called to speak the truth. A single standard of truth requires us to conduct ourselves in ways that are honest, direct, and plain, and to make our choices, both large and small, in accord with the urgings of the Spirit. It follows that we object to taking an oath, which presupposes a variable standard of truth. Be true to your word.

> … *let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay.*
>
> JAMES 5:12
> *KING JAMES VERSION*

From early days Friends have opposed gambling and practices based on chance. These activities profit from the inevitable loss of others, promote greed, and conflict with good stewardship. Public lotteries have not furthered their purported benefit to the public good. All addictions are of concern. As the use of alcohol and tobacco all too often entail serious risks to self and others, Friends who serve alcohol at home should be diligent in offering alternatives. Alcohol should not be served at Meeting gatherings.

Find recreation that brings you joy and energy. Be aware of how your choices affect yourself and others.

> How do I strive to maintain the integrity of my inner and outer lives?
>
> Do I act on my principles even when this entails difficult consequences?
>
> Am I honest and truthful in all that I say and do, even when a compromise might be easier or more popular?

Am I reflective about the ways I gain my wealth and income and sensitive to their impacts on others?

Is my life so filled with the Spirit that I am free from the misuse of alcohol and other drugs, and of excesses of any kind?

Do we, in our Meeting, hold ourselves accountable to one another as do members of a healthy family?

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In daily relationships with others, both inside and outside the home, our lives as Friends speak immediately and lastingly. In these relationships, our faith may also be severely tested. We are called to respond to that of God in everyone: we are all children of God.

Friends celebrate any union that is dedicated to mutual love and respect, regardless of the unique make-up of the family. We strive to create homes where the Spirit of the Divine resides at the center and where the individual genius of each member is respected and nurtured.

Human sexuality is a divine gift, forming part of the complex union of body, mind and spirit that is our humanity. In a loving adult relationship in a context of mutual responsibility, sexuality brings delight, fulfillment and celebration.

The presence of children carries a special blessing as well as responsibility. Children bring unique spiritual gifts — wonder, resiliency, playfulness and more. Recognize and honor the Divine Light within children and treat them with the dignity and respect that is due to all people. Listen to and learn from children; share with them those values and practices that are central to our own lives. Special care must be given to resolving problems between adults and children in a manner that gives equal weight to the feelings and needs of both children and adults. Tender parenting is one of the critically important peace vocations in our society. Make

every effort to offer all parents the personal and institutional support that this challenging work requires.

Take a strong stand against any form of abuse, whether that abuse is minor or severe, and whether it is emotional, physical or sexual in nature. The terrible impact of abuse on the most vulnerable members of our families creates lifelong suffering for its victims and is a major source of violence in our society. Perpetrators are themselves usually victims of similar violence and should be approached with compassion as well as firmness.

> Do I make my home a place of friendliness, joy, and peace, where residents and visitors feel God's presence?
>
> Are my sexual practices consistent with my spiritual beliefs and free of manipulation and exploitation?
>
> What barriers keep me from responding openly and lovingly to each person?
>
> *Do we open our thoughts, beliefs, and deep understandings to our children and others who share our lives and our hospitality?*
>
> *Do we provide our children and young adults with a framework for active, ongoing participation in the Meeting?*

PEACE

Friends oppose all war as inconsistent with God's will. As every person is a child of God, we recognize God's Light also in our adversaries. Violence and injustice deny this reality and violate the teachings of Jesus and other prophets.

Friends challenge their governments and take personal risks in the cause of peace. We urge one another to refuse to participate in war as soldiers, or as arms manufacturers. We seek ways to support those who refrain from paying taxes that support war. We work to end violence within our own borders, our homes, our streets, and

our communities. We support international order, justice, and understanding.

Become an instrument of peace. At every opportunity, be peacemakers in your homes, workplaces and communities. Steep yourself in the power of the universal Spirit. Examine your actions for the seeds of violence, degradation and destructiveness. Overcome the emotions that lie at the root of violence and nurture instead a spirit of reconciliation and love. Come to know the oneness of all creation and oppose the destruction of the natural world.

> Do I live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars?
>
> How do I nourish peace within myself as I work for peace in the world?
>
> Do I confront violence wherever it occurs, even when my personal relationships are involved?
>
> Where there is distrust, injustice, or hatred, how am I an instrument of reconciliation and love?
>
> *What are we doing to remove the causes of war and destruction of the planet, and to bring about lasting peace?*
>
> *Do we reach out to all parties in a conflict with courage and love?*

THE MEETING COMMUNITY

Meetings for Worship and Business are the center of our spiritual community. There, as we come to know each other in the Spirit, we build the "beloved community."

Mutual respect and care in the Meeting form the foundation from which we can test, support, and exercise leadings of the Spirit. At its best, the Meeting community provides a framework for us to learn and practice mutual care, which strengthens us as we act in the world.

All members of the Meeting community should share in the care of one another. While respecting privacy, we must be aware of and sensitive to each other's needs. We must also be willing to ask for assistance when we are in need.

> Do I strive to be inclusive in my relationships within the Meeting?
>
> Do I care for the reputation of others, refraining from gossip or disparaging remarks?
>
> Am I committed to the difficult work of forgiveness, and affirming God's love for the whole community?
>
> *How are love and unity maintained among us?*
>
> *Do we practice the art of listening, even beyond words?*
>
> *How have we been sensitive to the personal needs and difficulties of members and attenders, young and old?*
>
> *Do we visit one another in our homes and keep in touch with distant members?*

Concerns and Leadings

Concerns and leadings grow out of the spiritual experience and contemplative practice of the Meeting. They are the living fruit of Friends' faith that the Spirit will lead us forward into right action in the world.

The impetus for action is often a concern: a pull toward a specific issue, an experience of the stirring of the Spirit about a particular topic, individual or group. A concern may thrust itself suddenly into the life of a Friend or may grow out of a long-standing interest. A concern may be short lived or it may inform and direct Friends throughout their lives. For some, this call is experienced in terms of Christian discipleship: "Sell all that you have and distribute it to

the poor… and come follow me." (Luke 18:22) In the Hebrew scriptures a call can be seen in the prophets, such as Isaiah 6:8 "Here am I, send me."

When it initially arises, a concern may not yet be linked to a proposed course of action, but may simply be a troubled sense that something is needed or something is awry. Action, when it follows, is often the result of a sense of being drawn or called by God in a particular direction or toward a particular course of action. Friends speak of "feeling led" or "being called." The response may be short-term and specific, or it may involve transformation of one's life and the life of the Meeting.

A leading, the experience of feeling called by God to act, takes many different forms, and always requires careful discernment. In Meeting for Worship as one considers whether a message is intended as vocal ministry, the central task is to discern whether one is called by God to give the message. One who is called to serve on a challenging committee may need the Nominating Committee's help with discerning the appropriateness of the selection. Another may be called to speak truth to someone who does not want to hear what we have to say. In each case, Friends want to be clear about the calling before acting.

At times a call may take a more profound hold, causing us to make significant life changes, to take risks, or to engage in specific social or political actions. Friends under the weight of such a concern should rely on the Meeting to help them discern the right course of action. Friends' long-standing practice confirms the rightness of testing a leading with the Monthly Meeting, which customarily appoints a clearness committee to meet with the concerned individual. Together, the clearness committee and the initiating individual seek to join the mystical with the practical and to test the validity of the concern. (See Clearness and Clearness Committees p. 139.)

Achieving clarity about a concern is a particular exercise in discernment. It is a process that begins with considerable private reflection and the asking of some tough questions. Is this a desire that someone else do something or it is really a call to act oneself? Is it genuinely from God?

BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE, 1995, §13.05

During the clearness process, the Meeting has a duty to consider the matter carefully and sympathetically. The concerned Friend has a duty to participate in the discernment. Does the concern spring from the movement of the Spirit in the life of the concerned Friend? Is it consistent with Friends' testimonies? If not, can the committee confirm that it nonetheless flows from that same Light that has steadfastly inspired Friends?

If the committee affirms the spiritual leading of the concerned Friend, the committee then considers how it is led further to act. If the concern is confined to the individual and does not directly involve the Meeting, then clarity may be the primary gift of the Meeting. However, an individual's need for careful discernment often comes during a period of change, and it is always appropriate to offer ongoing spiritual support to the concerned Friend. The existing clearness committee often takes responsibility for this support.

The Meeting should determine what additional forms of support it wishes to offer, ranging from childcare and financial assistance to releasing the Friend from other responsibilities. The Meeting may support the leading of the concerned Friend; it may also wish to take on the leading as its own. This may relieve the concerned Friend of the burden of leadership; more often it affirms and validates the importance of the initial concern.

The clearness committee, after listening carefully and laboring faithfully with the concerned Friend, may conclude the Friend's calling is not divinely inspired. This may lead the Friend to feel relieved of the concern and lay it down. Some Friends may choose to carry on, without the support of the Meeting, taking care to represent the concern as a personal one. Any Friend may choose to labor further with the Meeting and the clearness committee, in pursuit of unity. The clearness process should substantially assist the concerned Friend; it may inspire the Meeting. Ideally it will do both.

Depending on the nature and scope of the concern, the Monthly Meeting may wish to present it as a minute to the Quarterly Meeting. Similarly, the Quarterly Meeting may seek to engage a wider circle of Friends by bringing it before the Yearly Meeting.

Laboring with Concerns

At different times, Friends have felt strongly moved to apply a historic testimony to a particular issue of their own day. Elizabeth Fry's work for prison reform and John Woolman's outspoken concern for the abolition of slavery are familiar examples from earlier times. Within Pacific Yearly Meeting, people have raised serious concerns on topics such as the environment, population, economic justice, abortion, gambling, and the right to die with dignity. Pacific Yearly Meeting Friends have not found unity to formulate testimonies on these issues.

A concern for the environment coalesced at the annual session of Pacific Yearly Meeting in 1985. Many Friends see a testimony on harmony with nature emerging. The following is included to exemplify and acknowledge this subject on which Friends are laboring.

TOWARD A TESTIMONY OF HARMONY WITH NATURE

Several early Quakers wrote of their mystical understanding of our harmony with all creation, and many Friends have held themselves to be stewards of nature, taking little and using it wisely.

We now find ourselves called toward a new testimony. We must witness to the planetary crisis of our times and to our own role in it. We can no longer turn away from the harm done to fragile biological systems.

We know that our power as human beings to alter nature for good and ill makes us responsible in a way that is different from other creatures. Our way of living needs to change in a profound ways, and we who are affluent must curb our demands.

At the same time, we cannot turn away from the modern world. However simply we may each try to live as individuals, we are almost wholly dependent upon the society that causes the destruction we abhor. We cannot simply abandon all of its benefits.

Friends seek that which urges not our dominance over nature but our care for and unity with it. This calls for a deeper understanding of ourselves as continuous with nature. Friends do not seek to dominate nature but rather to live in harmony with it. This calls for a deeper understanding of the fundamental patterns of organization and interaction that govern life on Earth. Our task is to turn toward the Light for guidance about the meaning of these patterns for human beings, and to discern the values and behaviors that will lead us to be in harmony with them.

Cultivating a deeper awareness of our connections with all of Creation enables us to live more Spirit-filled lives. Every person, animal, and every other entity has its own wondrous reality, its own authenticity. Such awareness brings us great joy, it reminds us of the sacred in all of nature, leads to greater clarity and acceptance of ourselves as creatures of the Source of life, and helps us avoid the traps of busyness and striving after material things. As we seek to live in the awareness of connectedness, we become more sensitive to the consequences of our words, deeds, and attitudes, and we enter a deeper, more joyous relationship with the Divine. We call upon Friends, individually and corporately, to live in a more loving relationship with the Earth and all its inhabitants. We may be led to transform our understanding, our hearts, and our lives.

PART III
TESTIMONY AND EXPERIENCE OF FRIENDS

Historians have observed that the years 1655-1660 were critical in forming the Quaker organization. There was serious question about who could speak for Friends. How can Friends further Truth? A meeting of Elders was convened to address this concern. The Letter they signed is "the oldest church advice from any general body of Friends." Below, in full, are the original advices from the Elders at Balby as in William C. Braithwaite's *The Beginnings of Quakerism*:

From an epistle to 'brethren in the north' issued at a Meeting of Elders at Balby, 1656:

1 *The settled meetings to be kept each first-day. General Meetings, as a rule to be on some other day of the week.*

2 *As any are brought in to the Truth new meetings are to be arranged to suit the general convenience, without respect of persons.*

3 *Persons ceasing to attend meetings are to be spoken to. Persons who walk disorderly are to be spoken to in private, then before two or three witnesses; then, if necessary, the matter is to be reported to the Church. The Church is to reprove them for their disorderly walking, and, if they do not reform, the case is to be sent in writing "to some whom the Lord hath raised up in the power of the Spirit of the Lord to be fathers,—His children to gather in the light" so that the thing may be known to the body and be determined in the light.*

4 *Ministers to speak the word of the Lord from the mouth of the Lord, without adding or diminishing. If anything is spoken out of the light so that "the seed of God" comes to be burdened, it is to be dealt with in private and not in the public Meetings, "except there be a special moving so to do."*

5 *Collections to be made for the poor, the relief of prisoners, and other necessary uses, the moneys to be carefully accounted for, and applied as made known by the overseers in each meeting.*

6 *Care to be taken "for the families and goods of such as are called forth in the ministry, or are imprisoned for the Truth's sake; that no creature be lost for want of caretakers."*

7 *Intentions of marriage to be made known to the Children of Light, especially those of the meeting where the parties are members. The marriage to be solemnized in the fear of the Lord, and before many witnesses, after the example of scripture, and a record to be made in writing, to which the witnesses may subscribe their names.*

8 *Every meeting to keep records of births, and of burials of the dead that died in the Lord. Burials to be conducted according to scripture, and not after customs of "heathen."*

9 *Advice to husbands and wives, as in 1 Pet. iii: 7. Advice to parents and children, as in Eph. vi: 1-4.*

10 *Advice to servants and masters, as in Eph. vi: 5-9.*

11 *Care to be taken "that none who are servants depart from their masters, but as they do so in the light: nor any master put away his servant but by the like consent of the servant; and if any master or servant do otherwise in their wills, it is to be judged by Friends in the light."*

12 *Needs of widows and fatherless to be supplied:—such as can work and do not to be admonished, and if they refuse to work, neither let them eat. The children of needy parents to be put to honest employment.*

13 *Any called before outward powers of the nation are to obey.*

14 *"That if any be called to serve the Commonwealth in any public service which is for the public wealth and good, that with cheerfulness it be undertaken and in faithfullness discharged unto God, that therein patterns and examples in the thing that is righteous ye may be to those that are without."*

15 *Friends in callings and trades are to be faithful and upright, and keep to yea and nay. Debts to be punctually paid, that nothing they may owe to any man but love one to another.*

16 *None to speak evil of another, nor grudge against another, nor put a stumbling-block in his brother's way.*

17 *None to be busybodies in other's matters.*

18 *Christian moderation to be used towards all men.*

19 *The elders made by the Holy Ghost are to feed the flock, taking the oversight willingly, not as lords, but as examples to the flock.*

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all with the measure of light which is pure and holy may be guided, and so in the light walking and abiding these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, — not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

Braithwaite comments further:

> *Such is the oldest church advice on Christian practice issued by any general body of Friends. … There is, on the one hand, a tacit acceptance of the main body of Quaker experience and practice, which is assumed to be a ground of union common to all; and, on the other, a refusal to multiply regulations beyond what seemed practically necessary.* (pp. 313 & 314)

The quotations that follow speak to the condition of Friends in Pacific Yearly Meeting. Some are drawn from those repeated in past editions of our Faith and Practice. Many come from Friends who have graciously submitted them as testimony of experience in their own lives and Meetings. Their chronological order in each section may reflect how Friends walk in the Light throughout changing times.

Faith and Experience

FAITH

1 As you have received the light from Christ Jesus, the fountain and fullness of all light and life, so abide in the light, dwell in the light, walk in the light, have your being and habitation in the light. Life and immortality moves in the light, so wait every one in your measure for the manifestation of God, his will is revealed in the light.

MARGARET FELL, 1658

2 If but one man or woman were raised up by His power to stand and live in the same spirit that the Apostles and Prophets were in, who gave forth the Scriptures, that man or woman should shake all the country in their profession for ten miles round.

GEORGE FOX

3 The sum and substance of true religion does not stand on getting a notion of Christ's righteousness, but in feeling the power of the endless life, receiving the power, and being changed by the power. And where Christ is, there is his righteousness.

ISAAC PENINGTON

4 Answer the Witness of God in every man, whether they are heathen that do not profess Christ, or whether they are such as do profess Christ that have the form of godliness and be out of the Power.

GEORGE FOX

5 The gospel religion is very precious, being inwardly felt and experienced in the life and power of it, but a bare profession of it, out of the life and power of godliness, is of no value in the sight of God, nor is it of any profit or advantage to the soul.

ISAAC PENINGTON

6 The humble, meek, merciful, just, pious, and devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death has taken off the mask they will know one another, though the divers liveries they wear here makes them strangers. This world is a form; our bodies are forms; and no visible acts of devotion can be without forms. But yet the less form in religion the better, since God is a Spirit; for the more mental our worship, the more adequate to the nature of God; the more silent, the more suitable to the language of the Spirit.

WILLIAM PENN, 1693

7 The unity of Christians never did nor ever will or can stand in uniformity of thought and opinion, but in Christian love only.

THOMAS STORY, 1737

8 There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages hath had different names. It is, however, pure and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren in the best sense of the expression.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1746

9 When the pride of the heart is laid low, when the activity of human reasoning is quieted, when the soul is reduced to a state of silent subjection in the presence of its Creator, then is this "still small voice" intelligibly heard, and the word of the Lord, as it is inwardly revealed to us, becomes "a lamp" unto our "feet" and "a light" unto our "paths."

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY

10 Meister Eckhart wrote, "As thou art in church or cell, that same frame of mind carry out into the world, into its turmoil and its fitfulness." Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-torn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself. Yielding to these persuasions, gladly committing ourselves in body and soul, utterly and completely, to the Light Within is the beginning of true life.

THOMAS R. KELLY, 1941

11 I should like to change the name 'seekers' to 'explorers'. There is a considerable difference there: we do not 'seek' the Atlantic, we explore it. The whole field of religious experience has to be explored, and has to be described in a language understandable to modern men and women.

OLE OLDEN, 1955

12 We all know the fruits of the Spirit, and recognise the beauty of holiness in our own ancestral tree. … the flowers of unselfish living may be found growing in other men's (people's) gardens and rich fruits of the spirit may be tasted from other men's trees. They spring from the same Holy Spirit of Truth, the same seed of God, whose power moves us through Christ.

MARJORIE SYKES, 1959

13 The first Friends had an apocalyptic vision of the world transformed by Christ and they set about to make it come true. The present generation of Quakers shares this conviction of the power of the spirit, but it is doubtful whether it will transform the world in our lifetime, or in that of our children or children's children. For us it is not so important when the perfect world will be achieved or what it will be like. What matters is living our lives in the power of love and not worrying too much about the results. In doing this, the means become part of the end. Hence we lose the sense of helplessness and futility in the face of the world's crushing problems. We also lose the craving for success, always focusing on the goal to the exclusion of the way of getting there. We must literally not take too much thought for the morrow but throw ourselves whole-heartedly into the present. That is the beauty of the way of love; it cannot be planned and its end cannot be foretold.

WOLF MENDL, 1974

14 There is just one further analogy between families and religious movements that must be noted. Families die out. So do religious movements. But here the analogy ends. For the end of a family line is usually a natural thing — too few marriages, too few children, epidemic disease. A religious movement, however, dies only when the Spirit that gave it birth is lost to the movement, when the movement itself turns away from the eternal Spirit which is its reason for being.

GORDON M. BROWNE, JR., 1986

15 … I am clear that we are a branch of the Christian church, even if to the majority of orthodox Christians our particularities may put us beyond the pale. Our capacity to hold within our fellowship those who cannot declare themselves Christian is part of our particular witness, not least to the Churches.

QUOTED BY ROGER STURGE, 1998

EXPERIENCE

16 But as I had forsaken the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those esteemed the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. When all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do, then, oh, then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.' … and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy. Then the Lord let me see why there was none upon the earth that could speak to my condition, namely, that I might give him all the glory. For all are concluded under sin, and shut up in unbelief, as I had been, that Jesus Christ might have the pre-eminence, who enlightens, and gives grace, and faith, and power. Thus when God doth work, who shall let [prevent] it? and *this I knew experimentally*.

GEORGE FOX, 1647

17 My desire after the Lord grew stronger, and zeal in the pure knowledge of God, and of Christ alone, without the help of any man, book, or writing. For though I read the Scriptures that spoke of Christ and of God, yet I knew him not, but by revelation, as He who hath the key did open, and as the Father of Life drew me to His Son by His Spirit. Then the Lord gently led me along, and let me see His love, which was endless and eternal…

GEORGE FOX, 1647

18 My relations made this cross very heavy; but as at length I happily gave up, divested of reasonings, not consulting how to provide for the flesh, I received strength to attend the meetings of these despised people which I never intended to meddle with, but found truly of the Lord, and my heart owned them. I longed to be one of them, and minded not the cost or pain; but judged it would be well worth my utmost cost and pain to witness such a change as I saw in them — such power over their corruptions. I had heard objected against them, that they wrought not miracles; but I said that they did great miracles, in that they turned them that were in the world and the fellowship of it, from all such things. Thus, by taking up the cross, I received strength against many things which I had thought impossible to deny.

MARY PENINGTON C. 1625-1682

19 I found that there were two thirsts in me — the one after the creatures, to get help and strength there, and the other after the Lord, the Creator, and His Son Jesus Christ. I saw all the world could do me no good. If I had had a king's diet, palace, and attendance, all would have been as nothing, for nothing gave me comfort but the Lord by His power. … And I went back into Nottinghamshire, and there the Lord shewed me that the natures of those things which were hurtful without were within, in the hearts and minds of wicked men. The nature of dogs, swine, vipers, of Sodom and Egypt, Pharaoh, Cain, lshmael, Esau, etc. The natures of these I saw within, though people had been looking without. And I cried to the Lord, saying, 'Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?' And the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions, how else should I speak to all conditions; and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. And in that also I saw the infinite love of God; and I had great openings.

GEORGE FOX, 1647

20 My dear hearts, be faithful every one in your particular measure of God, which he hath given you, and in the Invisible wait in silence, and patience, and obedience, in that which opens the mystery of God.

MARGARET FELL, 1654

21 It is ordered by the providence of the Lord, and by his power, to move in the hearts of some Friends that are poor in the outward to go for New England, a place so far remote as that their passage will come to a great sum of money…which will cost when they come at London for their passage in the ship, five pounds a piece. …All these things being considered, you may all in the eternal light see it convenient, just, and equal that there be some general help made for them…who is willing to offer up their bodies, and their lives, for the service and will of the Lord, and to answer his motion in their hearts, without which they cannot have peace with God.

MARGARET FELL, 1657

22 At last after all my distresses, wanderings and sore travails, I met with some writings of this people called QUAKERS, which I cast a slight eye upon and disdained, as falling very short of that wisdom, light, life, and power, which I had been longing for, and searching after. … After a long time I was invited to hear one of them. … And indeed, when I came, I felt the presence and power of the Most High among them, and words of truth from the Spirit of truth reaching to my heart and conscience, opening my state as in the presence of the Lord. Yea, I did not only feel words and demonstrations from without, but I felt the dead quickened, the seed raised; insomuch that my heart (in the certainty of light and clearness of true sense) said, This is he, there is no other: this is he whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood; who was always near me, and had often begotten life in my heart; but I knew him not distinctly, nor how to receive him, or dwell with him …

ISAAC PENINGTON, 1667

23 But some may desire to know what I have at last met with? I answer, I have met with the Seed. Understand that word, and thou wilt be satisfied, and inquire no further.

ISAAC PENINGTON, 1667

24 I joyfully entered prisons as palaces, telling mine enemies to hold me there as long as they could: and in the prisonhouse I sung praises to my God, and esteemed the bolts and locks put upon me as jewels, and in the name of the eternal God I always got the victory, for they could keep me no longer than the determined time of my God.

WILLIAM DEWSBURY, 1688

25 Now I was come up in spirit through the flaming sword, into the paradise of God. All things were new; and all the creation gave unto me another smell than before, beyond what words cannot utter. I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness; being renewed into the image of God by Christ Jesus, to the state of Adam, which he was in before he fell. The creation was opened to me.

GEORGE FOX, 1694

26 In a time of sickness with the pleurisy a little upward of two years and a half ago, I was brought so near the gates of death that I forgot my name. Being then desirous to know who I was, I saw a mass of matter of a dull gloomy colour, between the south and the east, and was informed that this mass was human beings in as great misery as they could be and live, and that I was mixed in with them, and henceforth might not consider myself as a distinct or separate being. In this state I remained several hours. I then heard a soft, melodious voice, more pure and harmonious than any voice I had heard with my ears before, and I believed it was the voice of an angel who spake to other angels. The words were, "John Woolman is dead." I soon remembered that I once was John Woolman, and being assured that I was alive in the body, I greatly wondered what that heavenly voice could mean. … at length I felt divine power prepare my mouth that I could speak, and then I said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." [Gal. 2:20] Then the mystery was opened, and I perceived that there was joy in heaven over a sinner who had repented and that that language John Woolman is dead meant no more than the death of my own will.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1772

27 The first gleam of light, "the first cold light of morning" which gave promise of day with its noontide glories, dawned on me one day at Meeting, when I had been meditating on my state in great depression. I seemed to hear the words articulated in my spirit, "Live up to the light thou hast, and more will be granted thee." Then I believed that God speaks to man by His Spirit.

CAROLINE FOX, 1841

28 One thing I understand now is that one's intellect alone won't pull one through, and that the greatest service it can perform is to open a window for that thing we call the divine spirit. If one trusts to it alone it's like trusting to an artificial system of ventilation — correct in theory but musty in practice. How I wish it were as easy to throw everything open to the spirit of God as it is to fresh air.

HILDA CLARK, C.1908

29 Once my Divine Master sent me on His errands, and I knew His will was good, and was happy in trying to do it. And now He has shut me up to an invalid life, and tells me to sit in my wheeled chair, and to be content to let others do His errands and carry on His work, and I know His will is good just the same, and am happy in trying to accept it.

HANNAH WHITALL SMITH, 1911

30 I was not "christened" in a church, but I was sprinkled from morning to night with dew of religion. We never ate a meal together which did not begin with a hush of thanksgiving; we never began a day without "a family gathering" at which my mother read a chapter of the Bible, after which there would follow a weighty silence. … My first steps in religion were thus acted. It was a religion we did together. Almost nothing was said in the way of instructing me. We all joined together to listen for God, and then one of us talked to him for the others. In these simple ways my religious disposition was being unconsciously formed and the roots of my faith in unseen realities were reaching down far below my crude and childish surface thinking.

RUFUS M. JONES, 1926

31 Experience is the Quaker's starting-point. This light must be my light, this truth must be my truth, this faith must be my very own faith. The key that unlocks the door to the spiritual life belongs not to Peter, or some other person, as an official. It belongs to the individual soul, that finds the light, that discovers the truth, that sees the revelation of God and goes on living in the demonstration and power of it.

RUFUS M. JONES

32 In practice we find that divine leading is inseparable from a righteous adjustment of our lives to our mundane surroundings, and especially to the lives of others. Experience has shown that we cannot draw a line between religious and secular affairs. The service of God may be found in seeking work for the workless and in searching for the underlying causes of poverty and unemployment as much as in preaching the Gospel in England or abroad.

SHIPLEY N. BRAYSHAW, 1933

33 I have never outgrown a sort of naive surprise and delight which I felt when I found out that there is one single thing that one can have without limit and not deprive anyone else — the love of God, His Presence.

MILDRED BINNS YOUNG, 1961

DISCERNMENT AND GUIDANCE

34 If you build upon anything or have confidence in anything which stands in time and is on this side eternity and (the) Being of beings, your foundation will be swept away, and night will come upon you, and all your gathered-in things and taken-on and imitated will all fail you. … Why trim you yourselves with the saints' words, when you are ignorant of the life? Return, return to Him that is the first Love, and the first-born of every creature, who is the Light of the World. … Return home to within, sweep your houses all, the groat is there, the little leaven is there, the grain of mustard seed you will see, which the Kingdom of God is like; … and here you will see your Teacher not removed into a corner, but present when you are upon your beds and about your labor, convincing, instructing, leading, correcting, judging and giving peace to all that love and follow Him.

FRANCIS HOWGILL, 1656

35 There is a Spirit that I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations, as it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other, for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned; and takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention,

and keeps it by lowliness of mind. In God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it, or can own its life. It's conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it, nor doth it murmur at grief and oppression. It never rejoiceth but through sufferings: for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with them who lived in dens and desolate places in the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection and eternal holy life.

JAMES NAYLER, 1660

36 My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man; I have no need to fear, God will make amends for all.

WILLIAM PENN, 1668

37 The Cross of Christ … truly overcomes the world, and leads a life of purity in the face of its allurements; they that bear it are not thus chained up, for fear they should bite; nor locked up, lest they should be stole away; no, they receive power from Christ their Captain, to resist the evil, and do that which is good in the sight of God; to despise the world, and love its reproach above its praise; and not only not to offend others, but love those that offend them. … True godliness don't turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it, and excites their endeavors to mend it; not hide their candle under a bushel, but set it upon a table in a candlestick.

WILLIAM PENN, 1682

38 Men may tire themselves in a labyrinth of search, and talk of God: but if we would know him indeed, it must be from the impressions we receive of him; and the softer our hearts are, the deeper and livelier those will be upon us.

WILLIAM PENN, 1692

39 And one day being under a strong exercise of spirit, I stood up and said some words in a meeting, but not keeping close to the divine opening, I said more than was required of me; and being soon sensible of my error, I was afflicted in mind some weeks without any light or comfort, even to that degree that I could take satisfaction in nothing. I remembered God and was troubled, and in the depths of my distress he had pity upon me and sent the Comforter. I then felt forgiveness for my offense, and my

mind became calm and quiet, being truly thankful to my gracious Redeemer for his mercies. And after this, feeling the spring of divine love opened and a concern to speak, I said a few words in a meeting, in which I found peace. This I believe was about six weeks from the first time, and as I was thus humbled and disciplined under the cross, my understanding became more strengthened to distinguish the language of the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart and taught [me] to wait in silence sometimes many weeks together, until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to stand like a trumpet through which the Lord speaks to his flock.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1740

40 They fail to read clearly the signs of the times who do not see that the hour is coming when, under the searching eye of philosophy and the terrible analysis of science, the letter and the outward evidence will not altogether avail us; when the surest dependence must be on the light of Christ within, disclosing the law and the prophets in our own souls, and confirming the truth of outward Scripture by inward experience.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER, 1870

41 We who are members of the Society of Friends have little to fall back on except as our experience with truth. We cannot resort to ritual or creed or ecclesiastical decisions for guidance. We must find our way by seeing the hand of God at work in the weaving of the fabric of daily life.

CLARENCE E. PICKETT

42 There is a need in us to be controlled, to receive, to worship, and adore. If our service is to be real it is that we have received something in worship and pass it on; we do not imitate, we express the Spirit in us. To live by the rule is one of the most disastrous things we can do. If you try deliberately to be loving and kind because you think you should imitate, you put on something from the outside; you waste your life; and worse — you do great damage. If you live in the Spirit you live from the center within you. In worship we search for the Center in ourselves and in one another, "from whence cometh our help."

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1954

43 The concern arises as a revelation to an individual that there is a painful discrepancy between existing social conditions and what God wills for society and that this discrepancy is not being adequately dealt with. The

next step is the determination of the individual to do something about it — not because he is particularly well fitted to tackle the problem, but simply because no one else seems to be doing it.

DOROTHY H. HUTCHINSON, 1961

44 The character of Jesus Christ, the tone of his voice over the centuries, so to speak, has made a tremendous appeal to me. I think it very likely that a great deal of legend has gathered round the story of his life; and yet many of his sayings ring so true today that they — to use an old-fashioned Quaker phrase — they speak to my condition. I rejected a good deal of my religious upbringing during the process of thinking for myself in my teens and later; I found it impossible to accept as true much that I had been told I must believe about Jesus; but thinking for myself brought me closer to Jesus, for he had the simplicity of approach that I wanted. He didn't just talk about God, he talked with God; and he taught his friends to do the same.

KATHLEEN LONSDALE, 1962

45 Lift us above frustration with our lack of quick solutions to social and political problems. Move us so that our actions may be clear and wise. Let us not despair of mankind and surely not of each other. May we be open always to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1965

46 Whenever we are driven into the depths of our own being, or seek them of our own will, we are faced by a tremendous contrast. On the one side we recognize the pathetic littleness of our ephemeral existence, with no point or meaning in itself. On the other side, in the depth, there is something eternal and infinite in which our existence, and indeed all existence, is grounded. This experience of the depths of existence fills us with a sense both of reverence and of responsibility, which gives even to our finite lives a meaning and a power which they do not possess in themselves. This, I am assured, is our human experience of God.

JOHN MACMURRAY, 1967

47 The inward experience must be checked by accordance with the mind of Christ, the fruits of the Spirit, the character of that willed caring which in the New Testament is called Love. … if God is known in measure by every person, our knowledge of him will be largely gained through the

experience of others who reverently and humbly seek him. In the last resort we must be guided by our own conscientiously held conviction — but it is in the last resort. First, we must seek carefully and prayerfully through the insights of others, both in the past and among our contemporaries, and only in the light of this search do we come to our own affirmation.

L. HUGH DONCASTER, 1972

48 To be without ordained clergy is not to be without either leadership or ministry. The gifts of the Spirit include both. For us, calls to particular ministries are usually for a limited period of time, and these gifts pertain to the task rather than the person. In one lifetime a person may be called to a number of ministries, each with its own charism.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE,* 1987

49 In 1657, George Fox counseled Friends not to travel and prophesy as a way of life but, once their message had been delivered, to go home, stay home, and lead a sanctified life 'in the flesh.' … The fact that prophetic preaching was a transient experience and not a permanent office or lifestyle meant that all Quakers, men and women, had to integrate moments of being 'in the power' with other aspects of their social and personal existence 'in the body.'

PHYLLIS MACK, 1992

50 A Quaker social concern seems characteristically to arise in a sensitive individual or very small group — often decades before it grips the Society of Friends as a whole and as much as a century or more before it appeals to the secular world. … Good enduringly practiced must overcome evil.

STEPHEN CARY, 1997

51 Our commitment is to notice the stirrings within ourselves and to let them carry us to new levels of expression and service.

PAUL NIEBANCK, 1981

52 One of my final observations … has to be about the extraordinary ordinariness of many of these women. They wanted their mundane daily lives to be impregnated with the experience of the Spirit and its fruits of love and peace and harmony. They went out into the streets,

faced physical abuse and cried their message over baying opposition, then they went home to check the household accounts and feed and comfort their children. They foresaw the millennium, wrote letters to the King and served beef and beer at supper.

CHRISTINE TREVETT, 1991

53 How can we hope to prepare our hearts and minds for humble worship by speeding to Meeting hermetically sealed in a tonne of glass, metal and plastic? Cars inevitably "protect" passengers from the real world: wind, rain, the wait for a bus and the need to communicate with people. This amounts to a spiritual challenge for Friends. Our need to seek an earthly humility adds other dimension to our need for a sane approach for transport and clean air.

DAVID BOYD, 1994

SCRIPTURE AND THE INWARD TEACHER

54 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed on him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

JOHN 8: 31-32

55 Now the Lord God opened to me by his invisible power how that every man was enlightened by the divine light of Christ; and I saw it shine through all, and that they that believed in it came out of condemnation and came to the light of life and became the children of it, but they that hated it, and did not believe in it, were condemned by it, though they made a profession of Christ. This I saw in the pure openings of the Light without the help of any man, neither did I then know where to find it in the Scriptures; though afterwards, searching the Scriptures, I found it. For I saw in that Light and Spirit which was before Scripture was given forth… that all must come to that Spirit, if they would know God, or Christ, or the Scriptures aright.

GEORGE FOX, 1648

56 There is that near you which will guide you. O! wait for it, and be sure to keep to it. …

ISAAC PENINGTON, 1678

57 That which the people called Quakers lay down as a main fundamental in religion is this, that God through Christ hath placed a principle in every man to inform him of his duty, and to enable him to do it; and that those that live up to this principle are the people of God, and those that live in disobedience to it are not God's people, whatever name they may bear or profession they may make of religion. This is their ancient, first, and standing testimony. With this they began, and this they bore and do bear to the world.

WILLIAM PENN

58 As to John's revelations, they are some of that apostle's last writings, written at a time when he was far advanced in deep experience; and we find that the most deep and mysterious writings of the prophets and apostles are often couched in allegorical similes; therefore, it requires our coming to the same experience, rightly to comprehend or understand them; and hence, when I meet with parts or passages of scripture that I do not understand, I leave them until I may arrive at a state of deeper experience, by which means I have come clearly to comprehend and understand some things that, at a previous time, seemed mysterious to me.

ELIAS HICKS, 1820

59 Our society has had opportunity to learn, by sorrowful lessons, the danger of exalting too exclusively the Christ within, on one hand, and Christ without, on the other. We have need ever to guard alike against that refined and emasculated spirituality, which undervalues the Bible and the outward means of grace, and even the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God, and that no less fatal outwardness and superficiality which would substitute profession, and prescription, and ritual, for saving faith and all the soul-renewing and life-transforming verities of Christian experience, realized through the imparted energy of the Spirit of Christ within.

JOEL BEAN, 1880

60 To *live* the Sermon on the Mount, and the rest of the Gospel teaching, and in all things to listen for the living voice of the Good Shepherd, watching constantly that no human tradition direct our attention from it — this is our acknowledged aim and bond of union as a

society. Our conviction of its sufficiency is the ground of our existence as a separate body.

CAROLINE STEPHEN, 1894

61 We must be alert that the warm coziness which we find enveloping us at Yearly Meeting and in our Monthly Meetings does not snare us into imagining that this is all of Quakerism. A vital religion is one which goes from an encounter with the love of God to an encounter in service to that love, no matter how hopeless the situation may be.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1967

62 … I began to read the Bible in what I sometimes call the Quaker way — that is, reading with both the analytical mind and the intuitive mind leaving plenty of space for the Holy Spirit. On the one hand Biblical scholarship and all the light science can provide; on the other hand, savoring and resting in the meaning, pausing from time to time to stare off into space…

WILLIAM TABER, 1984

63 We understand the Bible, as a record arising from similar struggles to comprehend God's ways with people. The same Spirit which inspired the writers of the Bible is the Spirit which gives us understanding of it: it is this which is important to us rather than the literal words of scripture. Hence, while quotations from the Bible may illuminate a truth for us, we would not use them to prove a truth.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987

64 All the beautiful psalms and other heavenly verses come from a source of inspiration. When we insist on waiting on that Source for ourselves, until we "meet" it, then, at such time, what we feel and say and do comes freshly from that Source. By such firsthand experience, we understand how those heavenly verses came to be written. When we prepare to read them next time, we sit by the Source and understand them better than before.

FRANCIS HOLE, 1995

Living Our Faith

INTEGRITY

65 Again, you have heard that it was said to people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.' But I tell you, Do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne, or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No' be 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

MATTHEW 5:33-37

66 People swear to the end they may speak the truth, Christ would have them speak the truth to the end they might not swear.

WILLIAM PENN

67 … be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering to that of God in every one; whereby in them ye may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you.

GEORGE FOX, 1656

68 It is not opinion or speculation, or notions of what is true, or assent to or the subscription of articles and propositions, though never so soundly worded, that … makes a man a true believer or true Christian. But it is a conformity of mind and practice to the will of God, in all holiness of conversation, according to the dictates of this Divine principle of Light and Life in the soul which denotes a person truly a child of God.

WILLIAM PENN, 1692

69 Scrupling to do writings relative to keeping slaves having been a means of sundry small trials to me, in which I have so evidently felt my own will set aside that I think it good to mention a few of them. Tradesmen and retailers of goods, who depend on their business for a living, are naturally inclined to keep the good will of their customers; nor is it a pleasant thing for young men to be under a necessity to question the judgment or honesty of elderly men, and more especially of such who have

a fair reputation. Deep-rooted customs, though wrong, are not easily altered, but it is the duty of everyone to be firm in that which they certainly know is right for them.

JOHN WOOLMAN, C. 1755

70 And now an exercise revived on my mind in relation to lotteries, which were common in those parts. … the matter was zealously handled by some on both sides [in a meeting for business]. In this debate it appeared very clear to me that the spirit of lotteries was a spirit of selfishness, which tended to confusion and darkness of understanding. … And in the heat of zeal, I once made reply to what an ancient Friend said, which when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity and after this I spoke no more on the subject. At length a minute was made, a copy of which was to be sent to their several Quarterly Meetings, inciting Friends to labor to discourage the practice amongst all professing with us.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1760

71 A deep reverence for human life is worth more than a thousand executions in the prevention of murder. The law of capital punishment, while pretending to support this reverence, does in fact destroy it.

JOHN BRIGHT, 1868

72 The Friend had a life within him to wait on and to obey, not chiefly a creed to believe; and it was this life which developed in the Quaker groups a common body of truths to which they sought to bear unflinching witness. Accordingly they accumulated 'testimonies' rather than Articles of Faith.

WILLIAM C. BRAITHWAITE

73 While seeking to interpret our Christian faith in the language of today, we must remember that there is one worse thing than failure to practice what we profess, and that is to water down our profession to match our practice.

FRIENDS WORLD CONFERENCE, 1952

74 The sick and those caring for them have need of our prayers. But let us not imagine … that a few sentimental good wishes from a distance are all that is needed. Whenever we intercede in prayer we must be prepared for

an answer which places a practical obligation upon us. A prayer is always a commitment.

THOMAS F. GREEN, 1952

75 The Society of Friends bears testimony against membership in any secret organizations. While some of these are less objectionable than others, wherever the obligation to secrecy exists, Friends should not join. We believe no one has any moral right to pledge obedience by oath or affirmation to the dictates of another and thus surrender independence of judgment. Secret societies are capable of producing much evil and incapable of producing any good which might not be effected by safe and open means.

IOWA YEARLY MEETING (CONSERVATIVE), 1953

76 Gambling by risking money haphazardly disregards our belief that possessions are a trust. The persistent appeal to covetousness … is fundamentally opposed to the unselfishness which was taught by Jesus Christ and by the New Testament as a whole. The attempt, which is inseparable from gambling, to make profit out of the inevitable loss and possible suffering of others is the antithesis of that love for one's neighbour on which our Lord insisted. Moreover, we must consider the moral and spiritual plight of those who by indulgence in gambling become suddenly possessed of large financial resources for which they have rendered no service to the community.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1959

77 We are faced at every hand with enticements to risk money in anticipation of disproportionate gain through gambling. Some governments employ gambling as a means of raising revenue, even presenting it as a civic virtue. The Religious Society of Friends continues to bear testimony against betting, gambling, lotteries, speculation, or any other endeavour to receive material gain without equivalent exchange, believing that we owe an honest return for what we receive.

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING, 1988

78 I had a hazy notion of what happened in a meeting … but it was really out of curiosity that I went. I suppose, in honesty, it was the Testimonies that first attracted me to Quakerism. Very briefly, these say that

in all circumstances, no matter how trying, we are under a religious obligation to speak and live truthfully, peaceably and simply.

JOHN PUNSHON, 1987

79 Some of our greatest difficulties arise when we revert to the easy idea of 'Quaker principles' or 'Quaker values' rather than discernment. In an effort to avoid the laborious and uncertain, intuitive process of discernment, modern Friends often advert to Quaker principles or values. The principles are usually a reduction of one of the testimonies to a generalized moral obligation rather than to a statement of the vision of life attuned to Divine Love that comes of the gathered meeting.

PATRICIA LORING

EQUALITY

80 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

GALATIANS 3:28

81 My employer, having a Negro woman, sold her and directed me to write a bill of sale, the man being waiting who bought her. The thing was sudden, and though the thoughts of writing an instrument of slavery for one of my fellow creatures felt uneasy, yet I remembered I was hired by the year, that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an elderly man, a member of our Society, who bought her; so through weakness I gave way and wrote it, but at the executing it, I was so afflicted in my mind that I said before my master and the Friend that I believed slavekeeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian religion. This in some degree abated my uneasiness, yet as often as I reflected seriously upon it I thought I should have been clearer if I had desired to be excused from it as a thing against my conscience, for such it was.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1742

82 Now more aware of the socially inflicted suffering of people who love others of the same sex, we affirm the power and joy of non-exploitive, loving relationships. As a Society and as individuals, we oppose arbitrary social, economic, or legal abridgment of the right to share this love.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1972

83 The Spirit has led us from our foundation to recognize the equality of women and men in the people of God. Early Friends taught that the redemptive activity of Christ restored men and women to their position before the fall, as equal help-meets both made in the image of God. Though we have not been immune from influences in our surrounding culture, we have sought to practise this equality in our structures. We know that the spirit gives as wide and diverse gifts to women as to men and acts as effectively through women as through men. In our mind, a church which does not fully recognise and encourage the gifts and ministries of all its people is imperfectly realising the body of Christ.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987

SIMPLICITY

84 There was a care on my mind so to pass my time that nothing might hinder me from the most steady attention to the voice of the true shepherd.

JOHN WOOLMAN

85 True simplicity consists not in the use of particular forms, but in foregoing over-indulgence, in maintaining humility of spirit, and in keeping the material surroundings of our lives directly serviceable to necessary ends, even though these surroundings may properly be characterized by grace, symmetry, and beauty.

PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING, 1927

86 We especially admonish our younger members against college societies whose proceedings are hedged with secrecy. … The Society of Friends is opposed to ceremonialism … and the exclusiveness of secret societies gives to the fellowship which they promote a flavor of selfishness.

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING, 1930

87 Most of us need from time to time the experience of something spacious or space-making, when Time ceases to be the enemy, goad-in-hand, and becomes our friend. To read good literature, gaze on natural beauty, to follow cultivated pursuits until our spirits are refreshed and expanded, will not unfit us for the ups and downs of life, whether of personal or church affairs. Rather will it help us to separate the essential

from the unessential, to know where we are really needed and get a sense of proportion. We shall find ourselves giving the effect of leisure even in the midst of a full and busy life. People do not pour their joys or sorrows into the ears of those with an eye on the clock.

CAROLINE GRAVESON, 1937

88 I wish I might emphasize how a life becomes simplified when dominated by faithfulness to a few concerns. Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. … And we learn to say No as well as Yes by attending to the guidance of inner responsibility. Quaker simplicity needs to be expressed not merely in dress and architecture and the height of tombstones but also in the structure of a relatively simplified and coordinated life-program of social responsibilities.

THOMAS R. KELLY, 1941

89 … over the margins of life comes a whisper, a faint call, a premonition of richer living which we know we are passing by. Strained by the very mad pace of our daily outer burdens, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness, because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer and deeper than all this hurried existence, a life of unhurried serenity and peace and power. If only we could slip over into that Center! … There is a divine Abyss within us all, a holy Infinite Center, a Heart, a Life who speaks in us and through us to the world.

THOMAS R. KELLY, 1941

90 Why with all our labor-saving devices and fast transport, are we so short of time? Is it because we are greedy of experience for its own sake? — to see more, go farther, earn more, learn more, than is feasible in one short lifetime? The human soul needs time, needs to take time, unless experience is to become mere accumulation, bearing bad fruit, like any other kind of ambition.

MILDRED BINNS YOUNG, 1966

91 One of the signs of spiritual growth is the simplification of life. This does not mean that daily routines cease, although inconsequential items do become less insistent. What counts is not so much concerned with outer complexities as with the inner conglomeration of desires, thoughts and aspirations that confuse and irritate the mind. When the center of consciousness becomes well established, this welter of mental distraction

diminishes. The wayward themes seem to become harmonized; impulses relate themselves to a total pattern. … When the Inner Light shines brightly nothing can intercept that steady beam. It is not necessary to adjust the vision. It just happens.

JOSEPHINE WHITNEY DUVENECK

PEACE

92 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

MATTHEW 5:44

93 But I told them [the Commonwealth Commissioners] I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars, and I knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust according to James's doctrine. … But I told them I was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were.

GEORGE FOX, 1651

94 All bloody principles and practices, we, as to our own particulars, do utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretense whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world. … That the spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world.

GEORGE FOX, 1660

95 I speak not against any magistrates' or people's defending themselves against foreign invasions, or making use of the sword to suppress the violent and evil-doers within their borders — for this the present estate of things may and doth require, and a great blessing will attend the sword where it is borne uprightly to that end, and its use will be honourable; … but yet there is a better state, which the Lord hath already brought some into, and which nations are to expect and travel towards. … There is to be a time, when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war any more." When the power of the Gospel spreads over the whole earth, thus shall it be throughout the earth; and, where the power of the Spirit takes hold of and overcomes any heart at present, thus will it be at present with that heart. This blessed state, which shall be brought forth in the general [society] in God's season, must begin in particulars [that is, in individuals]…

ISAAC PENINGTON, 1661

96 Whoever can reconcile this, Resist not evil, with Resist violence by force; again, Give also thy other cheek, with Strike again; also Love thine enemies, with Spoil them, make a prey of them, pursue them with fire and the sword; or, Pray for those that persecute you, and those that calumniate you, with persecute them by fines, imprisonments and death itself; … whoever, I say, can find a means to reconcile these things, may be supposed also to have found a way to reconcile God with the devil, Christ with Antichrist, light with darkness, and good with evil. But if this be impossible, as indeed it is impossible; so will also the other be impossible; and men do but deceive both themselves and others, while they boldly adventure to establish such absurd and impossible things.

ROBERT BARCLAY, 1678

97 Common folk, not statesmen, nor generals, nor great men of affairs, but just simple men and women, if they devote themselves … can do something to build a better peaceful world.

HENRY CADBURY, 1947

98 We affirm our unchanging conviction that our first allegiance is to God, and if this conflicts with any compulsions of the State, we serve our countries best by remaining true to our higher loyalty.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1953

99 The Quaker belief in peace is not just a negative refusal of war, but also an endeavor to appeal to "that of God" in other men regardless of nationality, race, or social status. This appeal may not at first appear successful, but it is the only appeal which can be successful in the long run.

HOWARD BRINTON, 1972

100 And we recognise that discipleship of Jesus carries ethical implications not only in personal life but "in all realms of life," which indeed

is why, throughout our history, we have been concerned with peace, justice and social questions.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987

101 … [we must remember] truth without love is violence. And love without truth is sentimentality.

MURIEL BISHOP, 1990

COMMUNITY

102 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

JOHN 15:12

103 And now also some ancient women-friends did meet together, to consider what appertained to them as their most immediate care and concern to inspect the circumstances and conditions of such who were imprisoned on truth's account, and to provide things needful to supply their wants. And what did or might more immediately concern men-friends, the women would acquaint them there with. These women did also inquire into, and inspect the wants and necessities of the poor, who were convinced of the truth. And they sat not still until the cry of the poor came to their houses.

WILLIAM CROUCH, 1712

104 A care has lived in my mind that more time might be employed by parents at home, and by tutors at school, in weightily attending to the spirit and inclination of children, and that we may so lead, instruct, and govern them in this tender part of life that nothing may be omitted in our power to help them in their way to become children of Our Father who is in Heaven.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1758

105 That divine Light which enlightens man, I believe, does shine often in the minds of children very early; and to humbly wait for Wisdom that our conduct toward them may tend to forward their acquaintance with it and strengthen them in obedience thereto appears to me to be a duty toward them.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

106 To watch the spirit of children, to nurture them in Gospel Love, and labor to help them against that which would mar the beauty of their minds, is a debt we owe them; and the faithful performance of our duty not only tends to their lasting benefit and our own peace, but also to render their company agreeable to us…

JOHN WOOLMAN, *JOURNAL*, 1758

107 Is Christianity capable of contributing to the overcoming of tensions and showing the way to their solution? I am convinced that we can find a clear, positive answer by investigating how Christ himself met the tensions of his time; for him tensions which separate people simply do not exist. Jesus knows no fear, nothing holds him apart from other people. His fearlessness, however, flows from his communion with God. But this communion with God can be achieved by all men. Thus he sees in the other man only his brother, his neighbor. Next to the love of God, the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is for Jesus the most essential of all commandments.

MARGARETHE LACHMUND, 1958

108 Friends are most in the Spirit when they stand at the crossing point of the inward and outward life. And that is the intersection at which we find community. Community is a place where the connections felt in the heart make themselves known in bonds between people, and where tuggings and pullings of those bonds keep opening up our hearts.

PARKER PALMER, 1977

109 The meeting must be at heart a spiritual quest and the people who are members must be seekers after a life of the spirit. This doesn't mean that they will do nothing else, but, everything else should be grounded in this spiritual seeking.

ROBERT GRISWOLD, 2000

HARMONY WITH NATURE

110 It were happy if we studied nature more in natural things, and acted according to nature, whose rules are few, plain and most reasonable. … The heavens, earth, and waters with their respective, various, and numerous inhabitants, their productions, nature, seasons, sympathies, and

antipathies, their use, benefit and pleasure, would be better understood by us; and an eternal wisdom, power, majesty, and goodness very conspicuous to us through those sensible and passing forms, the world wearing the mark of its Maker, Whose stamp is everywhere visible and the characters very legible to the children of wisdom.

WILLIAM PENN

111 I have known landholders who… being intent on paying their debts by raising grain, have by too much tilling, so robbed the earth of its natural fatness, that the produce thereof hath grown light. … The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious Creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.

JOHN WOOLMAN

112 We are a part, a dependent part, of a living whole. There can be no true health (or "wholeness" — the two words mean the same) in humanity unless, at the same time, we look to the health of the whole earth-family of living creatures. For far too long in our blind selfishness, we have misused the verses in Genesis and the Psalms which tell us how God gave man "dominion" over the works of his hands. Our "dominion" has become a power-drunk tyranny. Let us listen to John Ruskin: "God has lent us the earth for our life: it is a great entail. It means as much to those who come after us, as to us; and we have no right, by anything we do or neglect, to deprive them of benefits which it was in our power to bequeathe."

MARJORIE SYKES, 1970

113 When I steward the earth, I believe I am caring for God's body. This belief gives me a gentle push to work harder. For me that push works better than if I see my environmental work as mere civic responsibilities.

JUDITH BROWN

114 HEALING — the healing of a cut or wound of any kind is an experience of personal miracle. The healing moves from inside out and takes as long as it needs to knit the rupture together. It may take days or weeks … that is why we do not see it as a miracle. But it is a job of inner work doing its work with patience. We often overlook the mystical work of our own bodies.

ROBERT W. EDWARDS, 1924-1981

115 Gospel order is the order established by God that exists in every part of creation, transcending the chaos that seems too often prevalent. It is the right relationship of every part of creation, however small, to every other part and to the Creator. … [It] enables the individual aspects of creation to achieve that quality of being which God intended from the start, about which God could say that 'it was very good.' … Gospel order is not God … but it is an organizing principle by which Friends come to a clearer understanding of our relationship to God in all of the divine manifestations and the responsibilities of that relationship. … It has been the experience of Friends that no part of their lives as individuals or as a faith community is separate from their vision of gospel order.

LLOYD LEE WILSON, 1993

116 It is as if the Divine Presence said to us, "Ever seek balance. …You are to love and appreciate yourself, other persons, plants and creatures around you, stars, earth, snow, rocks. Do not 'fall in love' with any of these to be possessed by them and swallowed up; neither turn away from them, nor renounce them."

FRANCIS HOLE, 1995

Corporate Search and Practice

MEETING FOR WORSHIP

117 … as iron sharpeneth iron, the seeing of the faces one of another, when both are inwardly gathered unto the life, giveth occasion for the life secretly to rise, and pass from vessel to vessel. And as many candles lighted, and put in one place, do greatly augment the light, and make it more to shine forth, so when many are gathered together into the same life, there more of the glory of God, and his power appears, to the refreshment of each individual…

ROBERT BARCLAY, 1671

118 On one never-to-be-forgotten Sunday morning, I found myself one of a small company of silent worshippers, who were content to sit down together without words, that each one might feel after and draw near to the Divine Presence, unhindered at least, if not helped, by any human utterance. Utterance I knew was free, should the words be given; and, before

the meeting was over a sentence or two were uttered in great simplicity by an old and apparently untaught man, rising in his place amongst the rest of us. I did not pay much attention to the words he spoke, and I have no recollection of their purport. My whole soul was filled with the unutterable peace of the undisturbed opportunity for communion with God, with the sense that at last I had found a place where I might, without the faintest suspicion of insincerity, join with others in simply seeking His presence. To sit down in silence could at least pledge me to nothing; it might open to me (as it did that morning) the very gate of heaven.

CAROLINE STEPHEN, 1872

119 We highly prize silent waiting upon the Lord in humble dependence upon him. We esteem it to be a precious part of spiritual worship, and trust that no vocal offering will ever exclude it from its true place in our religious meetings. Let not the silence … be spent in indolent or vacant musing but in patient waiting in humble prayerful expectancy before the Lord.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1886

120 Silence is often a stern discipline, a laying bare of the soul before God, a listening to the "reproof of life." But the discipline has to be gone through, the reproof has to be submitted to, before we can find our right place in the temple. Words may help and silence may help, but the one thing needful is that the heart should turn to its Maker as the needle turns to the pole. For this we must be still.

CAROLINE STEPHEN, 1908

121 In the united stillness of a truly "gathered" meeting there is a power known only by experience, and mysterious even when most familiar. There are perhaps few things which more readily flow "from vessel to vessel" than quietness. The presence of fellow-worshippers in some gently penetrating manner reveals to the spirit something of the nearness of the Divine Presence. "Where two or three are gathered together in His Name" have we not again and again felt that the promise was fulfilled and that the Master Himself was indeed "in the midst of us"? And it is out of the depths of this stillness that there do arise at times spoken words which, springing from the very source of prayer, have something of the power of prayer —

something of its quickening and melting and purifying effect. Such words as these have at least as much power as silence to gather into stillness.

CAROLINE STEPHEN, 1908

122 From its earliest days the Society of Friends has emphasized the importance to the Christian community of a living ministry, freely given in the service of God and man, a task calling for dedication of life and often for the sacrifice of other claims, because it involved not the pursuit of a profession, but obedience to a vocation.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1931

123 The Meeting for Worship raises to the highest plane the relationship of the individual to the group. Since in meeting together for worship we seek as a group to worship God — for this is the essential difference between corporate worship and private devotion — this fact must be consciously or unconsciously present to all taking part, and it would seem a good plan that in the early part of the meeting it should be consciously present that each should lift up the group to God in prayer.

W. RUSSELL BRAIN, 1944

124 In 1948, during the formative meeting of the Assembly of the World Council of Churches, a "sample" Quaker Meeting for Worship was held, with most attending for the first time. The following card was in the pews, in German, French, and English: "WORSHIP, according to the ancient practice of the Religious Society of Friends, is entirely without any human direction or supervision. … It is not wholly accurate to say that such a Meeting is held on the basis of Silence; it is more accurate to say that it held on the basis of 'Holy Obedience.' Those who enter such a Meeting can harm it in two specific ways: first, by an advance determination to speak; and second, by advance determination to keep silent. The only way in which a worshipper can help such is by an advance determination to try to be responsive in listening to the still small voice and doing whatever may be commanded. Such a Meeting is always a high venture of Faith and it is to this venture we invite you this hour."

D. ELTON TRUEBLOOD, 1966

125 True ministry is not simply an expression of views of truth or ideals of conduct. It arises out of personal communion with God in the atmosphere of fellowship with others, whether before or at the time of meeting with them. It should have in it a direct message adapted to their present spiritual needs. To find the right words for a gathered company, whether of vocal prayer or testimony, we need to wait for that sense of call that comes to us from God through the fellowship of hearts that are bound into harmony by the flowing through them of the tides of His living presence. Hence, whatever may have been on our minds beforehand — whatever thoughts we may have worked out under the sense of help from God — must be held loosely, with perfect willingness to refrain from uttering them if the right time has not come. In a large company, where there may be many speakers, it is of special importance that we should thus quietly wait for clear guidance.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1945

126 I returned to Quaker meeting of my childhood. It was the silence that drew me, that deep, healing silence of the meeting at its best, when the search of each is intensified by the search of all, when the 'gentle motions,' the 'breathings and stirrings' of the Spirit which is within each and beyond all, are expectantly awaited and often experienced.

ELIZABETH GRAY VINING

127 It must never be presumed that because the call has come once, it will come again. Equally, if it has never come, one must never think it never will. Strictly speaking, all one is called upon to do is to be ready *if* called, and in this, once more, the distinction between the minister and the ordinary worshipper disappears, for in the silence … God [will] choose whom he will. It has to be said, however, that there are meetings in which there is little sense of divine leading in the spoken ministry, but a lot of reliance of what Friends used to call 'the creature.' These flights of imaginative fancy, intellectual preoccupations and emotional difficulties provide much information about the ministers but not a great deal about God.

JOHN PUNSHON, 1987

128 There is no question of one's worthiness to speak, or of the importance of the message. Rather, the matter at hand is the source of the message. Is it coming from the Friend who would speak, or through him or her? And if the message is coming through the Friend, is the message properly situated in space and time? Is it for the meeting as then and there gathered, or is the message not yet ripe, or meant to be kept to oneself, or better shared after meeting with a more select audience?

LANNY JAY, 2000

129 The spiritual formation for my work as a healer came out of the Quaker tradition, out of repeatedly hearing the call in Meeting for Worship and testing it against ego's desire to speak. It comes from once having had a message in Meeting for Worship and not giving it and having a woman stand up beside me in meeting and say, "There is someone in this meeting who has a message who is not giving it. Will thee be faithful?"

ELIZABETH DEARBORN, 2000

MEETING FOR BUSINESS

130 Keep your meetings in the power of God. … And when Friends have finished their business, sit down and wait a while quietly and wait upon the Lord to feel him. And go not beyond the Power, but keep in the Power by which God almighty may be felt among you. … For the power of the Lord will work through all, if … you follow it.

GEORGE FOX, 1658

131 Not in the way of the world, as a worldly assembly of men, by hot contests, by seeking to outspeak and overreach one another in discourse … not deciding affairs by the greater vote, … but in the wisdom, love, and fellowship of God, in gravity, patience, in unity and concord, submitting one to another in lowness of heart, and in the holy spirit of Truth and righteousness, all things [are] to be carried on.

EDWARD BURROUGH, 1662

132 I had occasion to consider that it is a weighty thing to speak much in large meetings for business. First, except our minds are rightly prepared and we clearly understand the case we speak to, instead of

forwarding, we hinder business and make more labour for those on whom the burden of work is laid.

If selfish views or a partial spirit have any room in our minds, we are unfit for the Lord's work. If we have a clear prospect of the business and proper weight on our minds to speak, it behooves us to avoid useless apologies and repetitions. Where people are gathered from far, and adjourning a meeting of business attended with great difficulty, it behooves all to be cautious how they detain a meeting, especially when they have sat six or seven hours and a good way to ride home.

In three hundred minutes are five hours, and he that improperly detains three hundred people one minute, besides other evils that attend it, does an injury like that of imprisoning one man five hours without cause.

JOHN WOOLMAN, 1758

133 The gift of the Clerk is to call forth the clerk in each of us.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

134 Fellowship in a common faith has often brought a religious society into being before it was in any way organized into an institution. It was so with the primitive Church and with the Society of Friends. Organization is a good servant but a bad master; the living fellowship within the Church must remain free to mould organization into the fresh forms demanded by its own growth and the changing needs of the time. Where there is not this freedom the Church has its life cramped by ill-assorted clothes, and its service for the world becomes dwarfed or paralysed.

ANNA L.B. THOMAS AND E.B. EMMETT, 1905

135 The spirit of worship is essential to that type of business meeting in which the group endeavors to act as a unit. … To discover what we really want as compared with what at first we think we want, we must go below the surface of self-centered desires. … To will what God wills is … to will what we ourselves really want.

HOWARD BRINTON, 1952

136 I have not mentioned community in all of this because I really do not believe community can be sought after directly, at least in the

Meeting for Business. I believe it is discovered. When we sit together in silence, in humility, in common obedience, listening for that of God in each of us, and in patience, a bond of love grows among us that knits us together inextricably. This, I think, is the Good Order of Friends. Once more I want to turn to ancient Latin origins for a phrase of St. Augustine which helps me to understand what this is. He wrote "Ordo est Amorix," Order is Love. In a way this sums up all we might say about the spiritual basis for the Meeting for Business.

ELLIE FOSTER, 1986

137 It is sometimes assumed that unity can be found only by the submission of a minority to the decision of a majority. This is not so but neither should it be assumed that positive steps cannot be taken without unanimity. A minority should not seek to dominate by imposing a veto on action which the general body of Friends feels to be right. Throughout our history as a Society we have found that continuing search to know the will of God, a different a unity is opened to us.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987

138 My appetite is whetted for more experiences in business meetings because they often provide the stimuli for spiritual growth and for rejoicing in the affirmation of a practical, working faith.

DAVID O. STANFIELD

139 Through the process by which Quakers attain the sense of the meeting, transformation occurs. We are changed. We feel, in a literal way, the loving Presence which hovers over us. It manifests in the love we have for one another. We form invisible bonds among ourselves which transcend the petty and make the next sense of the meeting more desirable and more readily attainable. We are participants in each other's well being. Later we may stop to wonder whose idea evolved into the sense of the meeting. But we can't remember. Often the person through whom the idea came cannot remember. We sense that the sense of the meeting came through us and for us, but not from us. We are amazed that it works — exactly as it's supposed to. Over and over we are amazed; it is appropriate that awe and transformation coexist.

BARRY MORLEY, 1993

140 And oh! how sweet and pleasant it is to the truly spiritual eye, to see several sorts of believers, several forms of Christians in the school of Christ, every one learning their own lesson, performing their own peculiar service, and knowing, owning, and loving one another in their several places and different performances to their Master, to whom they are to give an account, and not to quarrel with one another about their different practices! For this is the true ground of love and unity, not that such a man walks and does just as I do, but because I feel the same Spirit and life in him, and in that he walks in his rank, in his own order, in his proper way and place of subjection to that. And this is far more pleasing to me, than if he walked just in that track wherein I walk…

ISAAC PENINGTON, 1659

141 In this day and age the place where Friends find their unity is in the kind of God they worship. Their apprehension of the relationship of Jesus Christ to God embraces every orthodox and unorthodox shade of theology from unitarian to trinitarian; but whether we regard Jesus … as God himself or as the supreme revealer of God to man, it is the same kind of God: a spirit of peace, truth, love and redeeming power. We need to feel the influence of this Spirit in our lives rather than to argue about our different modes of apprehending him. Directly we begin to chide each other for orthodoxy or unorthodoxy, we cease to be the catholic body we are; for the logical end of such chiding is sanctions and the excluding of the weaker body by the stronger. Let us keep our different modes of apprehension and remember always that it is the same God we serve, revealing himself to each according to his faith, his openness and his need.

BEATRICE SAXON SNELL, 1961

142 We would wish to unite with all Christians and also with those of other faiths who work for reconciliation and healing in a broken world. Our membership includes those who 'whilst ill at ease with orthodox formulations of Christian belief and doctrine, are nevertheless counted among those who do the will of God. As Friends we wish to recognise the divine gifts in those who call God by other names or see their commitment to truth in very different ways from those expressed in the Lima document.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*, 1987

143 Unity suggests to us not agreement or sameness of viewpoint, but a oneness of purpose that instructs our life together. And so it is not necessarily completed, but always underway, moving us beyond maintaining images, even our Quaker image. When we are divided, we are challenged to think of where our unity exists.

We understand there to be an essential aspect of the Ground of Being that draws us in reverence, and that our coming together is more than accidental. We are called to be people of strong feeling, to know differences, and to discover through exploring our diversity or conflicts a means of truthfully communicating, in order to reach together toward what is both common and holy.

STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING, 1989

MEMBERSHIP

144 We have searched again for the meaning of membership in the Society of Friends. … We find some of that meaning in the concepts of responsibility and communion. … We are reminded that ours has always been a religion of experience, not of assent to a statement. Through communion in the quiet meeting on the basis of spiritual inspiration we seek to know God and to know each other in that which is Eternal.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1951

145 Entry into membership of the Religious Society of Friends is a public acknowledgment of a growing unity with a community of people whose worship and service reflect, however imperfectly, their perception of discipleship and their recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

TO LIMA WITH LOVE, LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1987

146 Membership in the Society of Friends is membership in a particular monthly meeting. One who joins Friends usually has experience with a meeting for worship, and joins because that particular group experience is meaningful, comfortable, or supportive. It can be disillusioning to discover later that other meetings are not exact copies, and that all kinds of variety exists. Why is it that we feel too fragile to expose our diversity? Diversity has been around a long time. Why else would Isaac Penington write in 1659, "… and mark, it is not the different practice from

one another that breaks the peace or unity, but the judging of one another because of different practices…"

HEATHER C. MOIR, 1992

147 Membership should mean that both the Meeting and the member know what they expect from each other and from other Friends. It is a covenant relationship. We have no creed, no doctrine, no single statement of faith. How then do we know each other? By our deeds and by our commonalties, among them that we choose to worship together regularly.

JANE PEERS, 1996

148 Membership must be active. It should really be a verb. It is not something you are but something you do. And it must be something worth doing. It must deserve an investment of time, relationships, money, personal action, and self-sacrifice. It must be a part of your integrity and it must be a commitment that you expect to last a lifetime. The Society of Friends of Truth is destroyed by passive "membership."

ROBERT GRISWOLD, 2000

MARRIAGE

149 Friends, our life is love and peace and tenderness. We are called to bear one another's burdens, forgive one another, and never judge or accuse one another. Instead, we must pray for one another, helping one another up with a tender hand if there has been any slip or fall. O! wait to feel this spirit. Wait to be guided and to walk in this spirit that you may enjoy the Lord in sweetness and walk meekly, tenderly, peaceably, and lovingly with one another.

ISAAC PENINGTON

150 For the right joining in marriage is the work of the Lord only, and not the priests' or magistrates', for it is God's ordinance and not man's; and therefore Friends cannot consent that they should join them together; for we marry none; it is the Lord's work and we are but witnesses.

GEORGE FOX, 1669

151 … while at home running the farm and nursing a critically sick daughter, Ruth wrote to her husband Eli, who was away on one of the numerous Quaker trips, "I go into the parlor and take a good look at thy picture once in a while, and that helps me some. I can spare thee as long as the Lord has employment for thee, and NO LONGER."

RUTH FISHER HARVEY, 1862

152 That so deeply enriching and spiritually fulfilling an experience as love between two individuals should be limited to those of different sex we find inconsistent with the Quaker principle of the universality of love in the light.

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING, 1982

153 It is our belief that the equality of all people is a fundamental Quaker testimony. And we also believe that the meeting gains its greatest strengths in honoring, celebrating, and supporting committed loving relationships. …We respect the rights of couples regardless of gender to marry under the care of the meeting. The marriage procedure outlined in Faith & Practice will serve as a guide for all unions.

REDWOOD FOREST FRIENDS MEETING, 1996

DEATH AND MEMORIALS

154 For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers; nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8:38-39

155 Death is no more than a turning of us over from time to eternity.

WILLIAM PENN

156 The night before landing in Liverpool I awoke in my berth with a strange sense of trouble and sadness. As I lay wondering what it meant, I felt myself invaded by a Presence and held by the Everlasting Arms. It was the most extraordinary experience I had ever had. But I had no intimation

that anything was happening to Lowell [his eleven-year-old son]. When we landed in Liverpool a cable informed me that he was desperately ill, and a second cable, in answer to one from me, brought the dreadful news that he was gone. When the news reached my friend John Wilhelm Rowntree, he experienced a profound sense of Divine Presence enfolding him and me, and his comfort and love were an immense help to me in my trial. … I know now as I look back across the years, that nothing has carried me up into the life of God, or done more to open out the infinite meaning of love, than the fact that love can span this break of separation, can pass beyond the visible and hold right on across the chasm. The mystic union has not broken and knows no end.

RUFUS M. JONES, 1947

PART IV
ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting is the basic unit of organization of the Religious Society of Friends. Individuals hold membership in the Monthly Meeting, and that is where the responsibility resides for pastoral care, religious education, and worship.

The members of Monthly Meetings also constitute Yearly and Quarterly Meetings. A typical Yearly Meeting encompasses several Quarterly Meetings, each of which includes a number of Monthly Meetings. Pacific Yearly Meeting has two Quarterly Meetings: College Park Quarterly Meeting and Southern California Quarterly Meeting. It also includes several Monthly Meetings that are not part of a Quarterly Meeting.†

The names of these assemblies reflect how often they meet, not a hierarchy of authority. The Monthly Meeting is at the core. Quarterly and Yearly Meetings are organized to explore and realize common purposes of Friends and the Monthly Meetings to which they belong. The work of the Yearly Meeting is done largely in its committees, and corporately at its annual gathering. Friends who attend the gathering do not participate as instructed delegates, but as a group of Friends whose views may well reflect the diverse views of the Yearly Meeting as a whole.

There are over 80 Yearly Meetings across the globe. While many share joint undertakings and communication among them is treasured, there is no super organization of them all. At each year's annual gathering, Pacific Yearly Meeting prepares an "Epistle to

† Honolulu, Big Island, Mexico City and Guatemala.

Friends Everywhere" for distribution, and reads excerpts from the many such Epistles it has received.

The Monthly Meeting

> *I was moved to recommend the setting up of Monthly Meetings throughout the nation. And the Lord opened to me what I must do …*
>
> GEORGE FOX, *JOURNAL*

The Monthly Meeting consists of a group of Friends who meet together at regular intervals to wait upon God in Meetings for Worship and who meet monthly on the occasion of business. In corporate fellowship, Friends experience the most profound realities of life: birth and death, marriage and family, community of spirit, and concern for other people. A true Meeting in the Quaker sense is a gathering of people that is also an encounter with God. When this divine-human interaction takes place, there is order, unity, and power. If and when this connection fails, Friends wait and pray that "the way may open" once more. The good order of Friends is based on this conception of a "Meeting."

ORGANIZATION

The purpose of organization is not for its own sake, but to provide the Meeting with the necessary means for orderly and effective operation, with a maximum of freedom, participation, and responsibility. A Monthly Meeting has many functions. It receives, records and terminates memberships. It provides spiritual and material aid to those in its fellowship. It oversees marriages, gives care at the time of death, and counsels with members in troubled circumstances. It collects and administers funds for its maintenance and work. Meetings hold titles to property, witness to Friends' testimonies, and relate to other bodies of Friends and to other organizations with common concerns.

A Meeting's organization evolves with its needs. At first, a small Meeting may be able to act as a "committee of the whole." As it gains strength and experience, it should select appropriate persons and committees to carry out specific responsibilities such as the religious education of children. A combined Ministry and Oversight (or Ministry and Counsel) Committee should be formed promptly. If the meeting holds title to its Meetinghouse or other property, it should be incorporated.

OFFICERS

Ministry in word and act, responsibility for the good order and material needs of the Meeting, visitation, faithfulness in testimonies: all these things, in the measure of the Light that is given, are the responsibilities of persons in the Meeting. For practical reasons Monthly Meetings appoint members to serve as its officers for definite terms of service, using a nomination process described below. A good officer is one who, while assuming a particular responsibility, seeks to engage the resources of the Meeting in the task to be done.

The *Clerk* presides at the business sessions of the Meeting, prepares or bears responsibility for the minutes of its proceedings, and carries out the instructions of the Meeting to accomplish its business. (See p. 136 for qualifications and role of a Presiding Clerk) He or she may be assisted by a *Recording Clerk* who assists with drafting minutes, an *Alternate Clerk*, who presides when the Clerk is unable to serve, and a *Corresponding Clerk*, who handles Meeting correspondence.

Most Meetings appoint a *Recording Clerk* who can make faithful, concise and accurate records of the minutes of action, as discerned and stated by the Clerk. The Recording Clerk puts the Meeting's insights and minutes of exercise into written words but the Clerk bears the ultimate responsibility for the completeness and accuracy of the Meeting's minutes. (See p. 138 for Minutes of Action and Exercise.)

The *Treasurer* is responsible for maintaining and disbursing the Meeting's funds, and giving regular reports to the Meeting. A financial professional should periodically review the Meeting's accounts.†

The *Recorder* (or *Recorder/Archivist*) keeps faithful and accurate membership records on forms provided by the Yearly Meeting. Such records include vital statistics pertaining to the member and his or her immediate family, whether or not they are all members of the Meeting. The Recorder promptly notes any changes relating to the membership, such as births, deaths, transfers, releases, or marriages. At the request of the Yearly Meeting Statistical Clerk, the Recorder completes a questionnaire regarding the Monthly Meeting, and files a copy of this report in the permanent records of the Monthly Meeting.

The Recorder/Archivist also takes proper care of other important records of the Meeting. The officer responsible for current minutes and record books may retain them. All others should be preserved, together with important correspondence and legal papers, such as deeds, conveyances, and trusts, in a durable and legible form, and in a permanent repository, protected from fire and loss. (See Appendix 1A: Recommendations for Monthly Meeting Records.)

COMMITTEES OF THE MEETING

Each Meeting decides which committees are necessary to carry out its business and concerns. Most Monthly Meetings find a Ministry and Oversight Committee and a Nominating Committee essential. Other standing committees often include Religious Education, Finance and Budget, Peace and Social Order, Property, and Hospitality. *Ad hoc* committees are sometimes useful for a particular project or concern. When a committee no longer serves its purpose, it should be laid down.

† See *Friendly Audits*, Elizabeth Muench, available through Friends General Conference Bookstore.

Committees conduct business in the same manner as a Monthly Meeting, waiting on the Spirit to find direction in their operation and unity in their decisions. It is important that members of committees, and clerks especially, attend Meeting for Business regularly to assure smooth coordination between the committees and the Meeting.

A written charge to each committee enables a Monthly Meeting to be clear both about what it expects of its committees (and officers) and the limits of the delegated authority. Such clarity and communication within an atmosphere of trust allows Meetings, officers, and committees to fulfill their respective tasks without wasteful duplication and frustration.

Members of committees should be selected according to their abilities and concerns. Meetings customarily appoint experienced and capable members of the Religious Society of Friends to the Worship and Ministry Committee, the Oversight Committee, the Nominating Committee, and as Clerks of most committees. The purpose is to assign those responsibilities to persons of spiritual depth who are familiar with Friends' faith and ways of organizing and conducting Meeting work. Serving on a committee allows Friends to engage in the life of the Meeting. New attenders learn Quaker decision-making process, and all committee members have an opportunity to deepen relationships and to develop their gifts.

Committees serve the Monthly Meeting not only by carrying on routine delegated functions, but also by doing important background work in preparation for decisions at the Monthly Meeting for Business. They examine designated matters in depth, identify the issues, gather the most useful information, and make seasoned recommendations for decision by the Meeting. When this work is done well, the Monthly Meeting in session is able to focus quickly on the matter at hand.

It is important that committees keep minutes of their meetings and report to the Monthly Meeting regularly. In bringing a matter

to the Meeting for Business, the committee should supply concise background and a clear description of the response it wants from the Meeting, such as a draft minute. All actions of committees in the name of the Meeting are subject to approval by the Monthly Meeting.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

> *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*
>
> I CORINTHIANS 12:4-7 *RSV*

The Nominating Committee is a small committee that must be representative of the Meeting and familiar with its members and attenders. It is selected by a small *ad hoc* committee who nominates individuals to serve overlapping terms on the Nominating Committee. They need to be discerning in judgment and tactful in manner, and at the same time bold, giving opportunities to younger Friends and to those more recently arrived, and encouragement to those who underestimate their own potential for service. The great responsibility of this committee cannot be too strongly stressed.

A Nominating Committee is given the task of discerning how the gifts of members and attenders may best serve the Meeting. Like all committees, the Nominating Committee meets in worship seeking divine guidance. The committee starts with a clear idea of the Meeting's needs regarding officers, committee membership, and other responsibilities. Their goal is to appoint the best-qualified persons while developing and using the resources of the whole Meeting: the younger and newer as well as the older and more experienced people. A Nominating Committee tries to understand the qualifications needed for each individual appointment and the need for a committee to function well together as a whole. However,

the list of vacancies is only a tool. The desire to fill all vacancies should not distract the committee from its task of discernment.

Meeting responsibilities or jobs should rotate among Friends so that new approaches can be practiced and individuals have an opportunity to develop different gifts. Many gifts are latent. A particular appointment may enable one Friend to exercise unsuspected abilities. Another Friend may be overburdened by being appointed to serve beyond his or her capacity and experience. It requires great discernment to know the right moment to ask a particular Friend to undertake or to lay down a particular task.

Nominating committees do not appoint. They bring their nominations to the Meeting for Business to be held over one month for the Meeting's final approval. During the intervening month, members must have the opportunity to express any doubts directly to the Nominating Committee, while carefully recognizing that of God in each person. A member of the Nominating Committee may wish to meet with an objecting member to understand a concern. When the objection demonstrates a lack of unity around that specific nomination, the Nominating Committee should seek a different person to carry out the task. No member should press unduly to have a particular person appointed or not appointed.

The duration and scope of each appointment should be explained to all who are asked to accept nomination; the approach should not be made casually or acceptance taken for granted. To avoid misunderstandings about the tentative nature of the nomination prior to its approval by Monthly Meeting, initially it is best to ask members and attenders whether they would consent to serve if appointed by the Meeting. At times it may seem impossible to find someone to serve. Nominating committees should not feel obligated to fill vacancies that remain after the committee has concluded faithful discernment.

Sometimes, following thoughtful consultation with Overseers, an appointment may need to be ended ahead of schedule or an appointed Friend may request release from service. A particular

concern arises when a committee member's presence on a committee could prevent another person's access to that committee. In such a case, the committee member should be advised to resign. Nominating committees should not hesitate to bring problems back to the Meeting for guidance and practical help. Loving and tender care are essential.

Responsibility for an appointment does not end when it is made. Having been fully involved in making the appointments, the Meeting must support and uphold those carrying out the tasks.

In the course of its work, the Nominating Committee may see cause to consider the laying down of a committee and should report this to Oversight for forwarding to the Meeting for Business.

WORSHIP AND MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Worship and Ministry Committee customarily consists of members of the Religious Society of Friends of varied ages, genders and gifts and who are known to be faithful in worship and sensitive to the life of the Spirit. It includes both Friends inclined to speak in the Meeting for Worship and those less inclined to do so. It also includes Friends who are acknowledged as spiritual elders, to whom persons go instinctively for understanding and loving care. The function of the committee is to nurture the spiritual health of the Meeting community.

The first responsibility of the committee's members is to deepen their own spiritual lives and their preparation for worship. When they are grounded in the Spirit, committee members can recall that they are but vessels of the Light among many other vessels. Then they can better trust that the power of God may work through all persons in the Meeting and beyond. Committee members' concern for the Meeting throughout the week, the promptness and reverence with which they approach the Meeting for Worship, and their faithfulness to the guidance of the Spirit, are the most effective ways they may deepen the quality of the worship. By deepening

their own experience of worship, and by their regular presence at Meeting for Worship, committee members contribute to the corporate experience of a centered Meeting for Worship.

CARE FOR THE MEETING FOR WORSHIP: The Worship and Ministry Committee meets regularly to keep the Meeting for Worship under constant review, prayer, and care. Committee members should nurture the Meeting for Worship by giving appropriate attention to the quality of the vocal ministry and the ministry of stillness that springs from the centered silence. They should encourage all Friends to give adequate time to study, meditation, prayer, and other ways of preparing themselves for worship. Members' concerns about worship are directed to this committee for prayerful consideration and action. At times, the committee should open its meeting to all to share experience, search for insight and nurture the spiritual health of the Meeting for Worship.

Committee members should encourage those who show promising gifts and lovingly guide those who speak unacceptably, too often or for too long. They should endeavor to open the way for those who are timid and inexperienced in vocal ministry and should encourage all Friends to listen with tenderness. In trying to be helpful, they should not assume superior wisdom, trusting instead that all are sharing in the search for guidance.

CARE FOR THE MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS: The Worship and Ministry Committee's responsibilities include nurturing Meeting for Worship for Business. At least a few members of this committee should be present at every Meeting for Business. The committee considers prayerfully how to contribute to the Meeting's faithful discernment of Truth. It works with the Presiding Clerk to develop his or her skills and to create a worshipful and faithful Business Meeting.

CARE FOR INDIVIDUAL LIVES: The committee seeks to strengthen the lives of the individuals in the Meeting by helping individuals discern and develop varied gifts for ministry and service.

Committee members encourage vocal ministry, teaching and counseling, along with aesthetic, social, and practical modes of expression and regular spiritual disciplines. The Committee can support individual spiritual growth by circulating appropriate literature and arranging for study groups, spiritual sharing groups and retreats.

OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (OVERSEERS)

The Oversight Committee customarily consists of members of the Religious Society of Friends with experience, empathy, good judgment, and discretion. This committee assumes leadership in maintaining a caring community, helping all members to find their right roles as nurturers of each other. It may share tasks with other committees. In order to care for all members and attenders, it is important that members of this committee represent the varied make-up of the Meeting. New members should join the committee prayerfully, with an alert willingness to be of service. The committee should meet together regularly and carry on its work in a spirit of dedication and love.

The primary responsibilities of the Oversight Committee are as follows:

> Members of this committee have a special responsibility for taking a personal interest in the spiritual and physical welfare of each member of the Meeting.
>
> The committee considers requests for membership, and transfer and withdrawal of membership.
>
> It considers requests from persons who wish to be married under the care of the Meeting. It sets up clearness committees for the purposes of membership or marriage, or when otherwise requested by a member or attender. (See Clearness and Clearness Committees, p. 139)

It ensures that an accurate list is maintained of all members and regular attenders of the Monthly Meeting, including mailing addresses and telephone numbers.

It offers emotional care and practical assistance at the time of death in a family.

It is concerned for the nurture of the religious life of children and young people, for their participation in the Meeting, and their preparation for membership.

It tries to be of help in reconciling differences among people in the Meeting.

It endeavors to welcome newcomers and attenders, to respond to inquiries about Friends, to promote the Meeting's interests to prospective members, and to make clear to them the interest of the Meeting in their joining its fellowship.

It encourages visitation and fellowship within the Meeting and seeks to assure that those who are ill, troubled, or in material need receive visits, spiritual listening and support, and other assistance.

It oversees funds available to assist members and active attenders.

It encourages Friends to attend Yearly Meeting sessions and other gatherings of Friends, advising on possible financial assistance for this purpose.

It keeps in touch with related committees and may form sub-committees charged with specific responsibilities (e.g., marriage or a fund for special needs).

Sometimes a problem may be too complex and beyond the capacity of a Meeting to handle. In such cases, professional help should be sought. Committee members need to have knowledge of

professional resources in the wider community. Even when it is clear that professional help is needed, the Meeting may still offer practical assistance such as meals, childcare, or transportation.

COMBINED WORSHIP AND MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Some Meetings maintain two separate committees (one for Oversight, and one for Worship and Ministry), others combine them into one Ministry and Oversight Committee.† Whether one committee or two, they should try to assess the Meeting's programs, avoid duplication, identify tasks undone or done poorly, and recognize those done well. They should report their activities and concerns regularly to the Monthly Meeting. In consultation with the Meeting community, one of the committees oversees the preparation of an annual State of the Meeting report to the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings. (See Appendix 1B: Advices for Preparing the State of the Meeting Report.) They share oversight of other committees of the Meeting, with a special concern for good order. Either committee may turn to Quarterly or Yearly Ministry and Oversight Committees for assistance as needed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monthly Meetings must have income in order to pay for space (rent or maintenance), communication, outreach, insurance, educational materials, and other items. The procedures for securing the income are unobtrusive. The Finance Committee may send an annual letter to members and attenders, describing the broad budgetary picture and suggesting an average "share" per contributor. Such a letter always explains that actual contributions may be less for some and more for others, depending on personal circumstances.

Other duties of the Finance Committee include maintaining orderly accounts and expenditure procedures, and advising the

† Sometimes called Ministry and Counsel.

Monthly Meeting on financial aspects of its affairs. In Meetings without a Finance Committee, the Treasurer may carry these responsibilities.

OTHER COMMITTEES

As a meeting grows, it will be necessary to add other committees such as Religious Education (both Children and Adult), Peace and Social Order, Committee on Environmental Concerns, and perhaps Hospitality. A Building and Grounds or Property Committee may be necessary, even if the meeting is using rented facilities.

Growth and Change

Pacific Yearly Meeting is concerned that all who are moved to worship God after the manner of Friends may be able to do so. Worship Groups, Preparative Meetings and new Monthly Meetings enable the Religious Society of Friends to grow, change and effectively embrace both newcomers and experienced Friends who require a new location in which to worship.

NEW GATHERINGS OF FRIENDS

Friends' testimony on community urges that Meetings should be small enough to enable members to know each other well. Existing Monthly Meetings are encouraged to create new Worship Groups when the membership becomes too large to permit a true sense of community, or when it is more convenient for those members living at a distance from the meeting place. New Meetings may also be formed through the development of Worship Groups or Preparative Meetings. Where no Friends Meeting exists, individual Friends and those drawn to Friends' ways should meet together for divine guidance. In due time they may be gathered into a Worship Group which comes under the care of a Monthly Meeting.

WORSHIP GROUPS

A Worship Group is a gathering of persons who meet regularly for worship after the manner of Friends and who desire to be identified with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends. Such a group may organize independently or it may be set up with the encouragement of a Monthly Meeting and other nearby interested persons. Meeting for Worship may be their only activity for an indefinite period of time. Some Worship Groups are large from the beginning or they grow rapidly, and undertake additional activities such as shared meals, reading, study or discussion groups, service projects, religious education, public witness or worship-sharing groups.

Worship Groups need to be mindful of the danger of attempting too many things during their initial enthusiasm or of having a few individuals carry all the responsibility and thus risk exhaustion and disillusionment. Members of a Worship Group should be dedicated to the leadings of the Light and devoted to the growth of the Spirit. This goal will help them through discouraging times and setbacks that are bound to occur. There may be times when only one or two meet for worship at the appointed hour. It is worthwhile to persevere at these times, not only for those few in attendance but for those unable to attend, so that they may be upheld in the Light and all may come to know the comfort of an ongoing Meeting.

> *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*
>
> MATTHEW 18:20 *RSV*

As an independent Worship Group develops, it should seek the care and guidance of a nearby Monthly Meeting. In so doing, it establishes an official relationship with the Religious Society of Friends, providing an avenue for individual membership, which comes only through a Monthly Meeting. Monthly Meetings, in turn, should seek out, visit, and assist new Worship Groups. When no Monthly Meeting is able to take the Worship Group under its

care, this relationship may be established through the appropriate Quarterly Meeting or through Pacific Yearly Meeting (when no Quarterly Meeting is available). Their Ministry and Oversight Committees will assume the duties normally performed by a Monthly Meeting.

Each Worship Group need organize only to the degree that is right for it at a particular time. It should, however, organize sufficiently to nurture the interests and concerns of its participants, including children and to provide an avenue for contacts with other Friends groups and with the wider body of the Religious Society of Friends, both of which can enrich the life of a Worship Group. Usually a *Correspondent* serves as a convener of the group. Communications from Monthly and Quarterly Meetings and other Friends' groups or organizations should be addressed to the Correspondent who is responsible for sharing them with the entire group.

Applications for membership, requests for weddings, or other such formal actions must be taken to the Monthly Meeting to which the Worship Group is related. When a Worship Group feels it is ready to organize and conduct its own business in the manner of an established Meeting, it should consider requesting Preparative Meeting status.

PREPARATIVE MEETINGS

A Preparative Meeting conducts its Meetings for Worship and Business under the care of a Monthly Meeting to which it reports regularly, while it is preparing to becoming a Monthly Meeting. It may originate when a Worship Group asks to be advanced to the status of Preparative Meeting or when a group of experienced Friends, who wish to organize as a Preparative Meeting, ask to be recognized as one.

The overseeing Meeting should appoint a committee to provide continuing care and counsel when the Preparative Meeting is established. A Preparative Meeting requires a Clerk, a Treasurer, and a Ministry and Oversight Committee. Other committees may evolve

in the manner of a Monthly Meeting. It should hold a Meeting for Business regularly and should regularly send a copy of its minutes to the overseeing committee.

A Preparative Meeting may not receive members, hold weddings, or otherwise act formally as an established Meeting. Such actions are brought to and carried out through the Monthly Meeting to which it is related. Friends participating in a Preparative Meeting are urged to hold their membership in the overseeing Monthly Meeting. Friends who already are members of other Meetings should request transfer of their membership to the overseeing Monthly Meeting until the Preparative Meeting becomes a Monthly Meeting.

Ideally, Worship Groups and Preparative Meetings should look forward to becoming Monthly Meetings, through growth and development under the grace and power of God. The step of becoming a Preparative Meeting provides opportunity for members to gain experience as a Friends community. There may be circumstances in which it is desirable for a Worship Group or a Preparative Meeting to continue indefinitely as such.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW MONTHLY MEETINGS

A Preparative Meeting (or, occasionally, a Worship Group) becomes a new Monthly Meeting when a Quarterly Meeting recognizes it as such. When a Preparative Meeting feels ready for independent existence as a Monthly Meeting, the Preparative Meeting sends a letter to the Clerk of the overseeing Meeting stating these facts and asking that its request be forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting. If the overseeing Meeting concurs, it forwards this request to the Ministry and Oversight Committee of the Quarterly Meeting. If the latter approves, it reports this to the Quarterly Meeting and suggests names of four or five Friends for a visiting committee. This committee should include one or two members of the Monthly Meeting committee that has had the Preparative Meeting under its

care, along with suitable and experienced Friends who have not been closely associated with the Preparative Meeting.

The visiting committee meets with the prospective Meeting, making sure its members are aware of the responsibilities of a Monthly Meeting. Plenty of time, care and deliberation at this stage may prevent complications later. The visiting committee should attend Meetings for Worship and for Business and visit with individuals from the Preparative Meeting. The following topics should be explored:

APPLICATION: If the Preparative Meeting has not done so earlier, it should write a statement telling why it wishes to become a Monthly Meeting and why it feels ready. It should provide a complete list of names and addresses of its participants, and indicate the Meetings in which individuals hold their memberships.

SPIRITUAL CONDITION: Does the Meeting function under divine guidance? Is the Meeting for Worship the center of its life? Are Meetings for Worship held in the spirit of expectant waiting and communion with God?

HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE: How long has the group been gathering? What relations does it have with other Meetings? What geographical area does it serve? Where and when is its Meeting for Worship? What is the usual attendance? How many Friends, other attenders and children are in the Meeting? Of the families taking responsibility for the Meeting, how many appear well settled in the area? What are the Meeting's social concerns?

EVIDENCE OF GOOD ORDER: Has the Meeting studied *Faith and Practice* of Pacific Yearly Meeting? Does it hold a Meeting for Business regularly? How are minutes formed and approved? Are they recorded? Are the functions of Clerk and other officers understood? What committees does it have? Are the functions of the Ministry and Oversight Committee understood? Are these functions being carried out? Are financial matters being handled in an orderly manner? How are the Meeting's officers, Nominating

Committee, and other committees selected? How are children related to the Meeting? Does it understand the importance of religious education programs for children and adults?

If the visiting committee agrees that the Preparative Meeting is ready to become a Monthly Meeting, it prepares a written report, including reference to the above guidelines, and presents this report to the next Quarterly Meeting. If there is no Quarterly Meeting available, the visiting committee will have been appointed by Pacific Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee and will report back to Pacific Yearly Meeting.

The Quarterly Meeting (or Pacific Yearly Meeting upon recommendation of its Ministry and Oversight Committee) has the authority to establish the new Monthly Meeting. Notice of that action is then forwarded to Yearly Meeting which records the new Monthly Meeting as a member of that body. The Meeting functions as a Monthly Meeting as soon as the Quarterly or Yearly Meeting has established it. The Clerk and Statistical Clerk of the Yearly Meeting should be notified promptly when a new Monthly Meeting has been established.

The Clerk of the new Meeting should forward to the former overseeing Meeting a list of all who wish to transfer their membership to the new Meeting. Such transfers are usually accomplished automatically without an additional visiting committee. Others who hold their membership in different Meetings are encouraged to transfer promptly to the new Meeting following the usual process. (See Transfer of Membership, p. 149 and Appendix 4c: Procedure for Transfer of Membership.)

The visiting committee should continue its oversight of the new Meeting and be available for consultation for at least a year following its recognition.

LAYING DOWN A MEETING

Changes in meeting participation due to death, relocation, and other causes sometimes make it necessary to "lay a meeting down."

The Meeting itself, or the Quarterly Meeting to which it belongs, may initiate this process. In either case the termination of a Monthly Meeting should be carried out thoughtfully, respectfully, and with due regard for the good order of Friends.

If a Quarterly Meeting is aware of significant problems which may warrant laying a Meeting down, or if a Monthly Meeting requests clearness about its status, the Quarterly Meeting should appoint a visiting committee to clarify the situation. The committee should be prepared to serve in this capacity over a period of many months, if necessary. If the Monthly Meeting is not part of a Quarterly Meeting, the Ministry and Oversight Committee of the Yearly Meeting should appoint the visiting committee. The visiting committee reports its recommendation to the Quarterly (or Yearly) Meeting for approval.

The visiting committee should consider the Meeting's viability based on size and activities over the preceding year or two, the frequency and depth of its Meeting for Worship, its ability to conduct business and care for its members, and the strength of its work in the wider community.

Before a Meeting is laid down, members must decide whether they wish to continue as a Worship Group under the care of a neighboring Monthly Meeting. If so, they should ask that Meeting for its oversight. Individuals may transfer their memberships to the overseeing Meeting or a different Meeting according to the usual process.

In any case, another Monthly Meeting should be prepared to welcome Friends and attenders from the laid down Meeting and to accept their memberships. Both Monthly Meetings should be involved in all discussions prior to the actual laying down.

The Quarterly (or Yearly) Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee is responsible for overseeing both the details and the process of laying down a Meeting. The Oversight Committee must be confident that minute books, membership and other records, financial assets and real property have been properly accounted for.

Records may be deposited in the Yearly Meeting archives or with the Quarterly Meeting. All the Meetings concerned should participate in decisions on these matters.

Quarterly Meetings

Quarterly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends are gatherings of neighboring Meetings. They can be as small as two nearby Meetings. Quarterly meetings foster intervisitation on a local level, especially with worship groups and preparative meetings. Quarterly meetings generally meet quarterly except at the time of Yearly Meeting. However, some call themselves Half-Yearly Meetings and meet less often. Such regional Meetings should ask for recognition by the Yearly Meeting.

The Quarterly Meetings of Pacific Yearly Meeting have developed in a variety of ways. Their main purposes are to strengthen the life and fellowship of Monthly Meetings and other Friends groups in their area, to offer increased opportunities for worshiping together, and to consider spiritual and worldly matters of local or broader concern. They offer youth an opportunity to build closer relationships. An important aspect of Quarterly Meetings is to hear State of the Meeting reports (See Appendix 1B) from Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and Preparative Meetings throughout the year.

Responsibilities, functions and actions may be referred to Quarterly Meetings by their constituent Monthly Meetings and/or by the Yearly Meeting. These include, but are not limited to: recognizing and nurturing new Monthly Meetings; strengthening the spiritual life and fellowship of Meetings and individual Friends (including younger Friends); compiling and sharing State of the Meeting reports; considering and acting on concerns and forwarding those they have approved to Yearly Meeting. Quarterly Meetings may help with preparations for the annual sessions of Yearly Meeting in their areas. They prepare and endorse travel minutes and facilitate presentations by traveling Friends. They

establish projects to further Friends' concerns at the regional level and committees to administer them. They carry out such other functions as are appropriate to the Religious Society of Friends in their area.

To carry out its responsibilities, a Quarterly Meeting should meet regularly as agreed during the year. It should appoint a Presiding Clerk and committees as needed, receive from Monthly Meetings the funds necessary for its operations, and proceed in general according to the practices of a Friends Meeting. An Interim or Continuing Committee may help plan for future sessions and act between sessions within agreed upon limits.

Quarterly Meeting should appoint a Ministry and Oversight (or Counsel) Committee composed of experienced and spiritually sensitive Friends who reflect geographic diversity and who are able to serve as a working committee. The functions of this committee include care and counsel of Meetings and Worship Groups, and overseeing the good order and spiritual life of the Quarterly Meeting sessions. The Quarterly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee should be available to its constituent members (both Monthly Meetings and individuals), offering counsel with difficult problems or assistance in other ways.† This might include the process of laying down a meeting.

Appropriate concerns should be brought to a Quarterly Meeting in much the same manner as to a Monthly Meeting. When one or more Monthly Meetings have labored with a concern, built up a foundation of essential background information and reached a clear conclusion embodied in a proposed minute, they should promptly forward the minute to the Clerk of Quarterly Meeting. The Clerk may send it to the appropriate committee for presentation to the Quarterly Meeting session. If it approves the minute, the Quarterly Meeting may forward it to the appropriate

† FGC Ministry and Nurture Committee's *The Wounded Meeting* has relevance here. (See Bibliography)

Yearly Meeting committee for consideration. Committees have the option of consolidating concerns and referring them back to Quarterly and Monthly Meetings for further seasoning, or, finding unity, developing them for presentation to the Yearly Meeting. Quarterly Meetings may initiate action which is specifically relevant to their geographical area.

Quarterly Meetings also create institutions to serve the wider world of Friends and their communities. Southern California Quarterly Meeting was involved in the formation of both Pacific Ackworth School and Pacific Oaks College. SCQM and the Pacific Southwest Regional Office of AFSC created the Joint AFSC/SCQM Youth Service Project. College Park Quarterly Meeting was involved in establishing John Woolman School, Ben Lomond Quaker Center, and Friends House in Santa Rosa. (See Other Quaker Organizations p. 196.) These corporations make annual reports to the Quarterly Meeting. When a Quarterly Meeting sponsors corporations to carry out its concerns, it must take legal steps to minimize the financial liability of the Quarterly Meeting for such operations. It is important for Meetings to minute a clear understanding of their responsibility in such relationships.

Yearly Meeting

The Yearly Meeting comprises the members of its constituent Monthly Meetings who come together annually to explore and pursue their common purposes. The work of the Yearly Meeting is conducted by its committees and corporately during the annual gathering, which is also referred to as the Yearly Meeting session. While the Yearly Meeting's officers and committees broadly parallel those of a Monthly Meeting, additional officers and committees are responsible for the conduct of the annual gathering. Further discussion of the organization of Yearly Meeting appears in Part VI.

PART V
PROCEDURES

Friends Process for Making Decisions

Friends developed their way of making decisions in the late 1660's in response to the sufferings of Friends in prison and the crucial needs of their families. A crisis of leadership had arisen within the Quaker movement. It became clear to George Fox — himself in prison at the time — that Friends needed to take collective responsibility for decisions, rather than depend on a few outstanding leaders. Fox worked out a system of Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings through which Friends could deal with matters of corporate concern and responsibility.

PRINCIPLES

The Quaker method for reaching decisions is based on religious conviction. (See Meeting for Worship for Business p. 31) Friends conduct business together in the faith that there is one Divine Spirit, which is accessible to all persons. When Friends wait upon, heed, and follow the Light of Truth within them, its spirit will lead to unity. This faith is the foundation for any corporate decision.

Friends do not resort to a vote to settle an issue. Friends expect to find unity. This unity transcends both consensus, which retains only the views common to all present, and compromise, which affirms none of the positions presented. Unlike a decision resting upon a majority vote, one made according to a true "sense of the Meeting" can avoid overriding an unconvinced minority. It allows unforeseen insights to emerge and it enables Friends to modify previously held

opinions. They may then agree on a new view of the matter under consideration. Until the Meeting can unite in a decision, the previous policy remains unchanged or no action is taken on new business, as the case may be.

Friends begin Meetings in which decisions are to be made with a time of silent worship. In the stillness, they recall that a business or committee meeting is, in fact, a Meeting for Worship to deal with certain matters of importance.

Friends try to seek divine guidance at all times, to be mutually forbearing, and to be concerned for the good of the Meeting as a whole, rather than to defend a personal preference. Thus, having once expressed a view, a Friend is expected to refrain from pressing it unduly, at length or repeatedly. The grace of humor can often help to relax the tensions of a Meeting so that new light comes to it.

The authority and responsibility for decisions on the affairs of the Meeting reside with the members, and those present at a regular monthly Meeting for Worship for Business have the authority to make decisions for the Meeting. Until the Meeting can unite in a minute, the previous policy remains unchanged.

Most Meetings for Business proceed without distinction between members and non-members, and this benefits the Meeting. On occasion, a decision may call for invoking this distinction. At such times, non-members should not respond to the Clerk's call for affirmation of a proposed minute, and the Clerk may so remind the Meeting.

> *Friends' way of conducting business is of central importance. It is the Quaker way of living and working together. It can create and preserve the sense of fellowship in the Meeting, and from there it can spread to other groups and decisions in which individual Friends and Meetings have a part. Thus it contributes to the way of peace in the world.*
>
> GEORGE SELLECK, NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING
> *FAITH AND PRACTICE*, 1966

DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE

Friends Meetings ordinarily take care of their business at their regularly scheduled monthly Meeting for Business. However, the Clerk may call for a special session to deal with an urgent matter. Adequate notice of a Called Meeting (See Glossary) should be given, particularly if the topic is controversial.

Committee clerks and members should inform the Clerk ahead of time when they have business to come before the Meeting. As items are dealt with, the Clerk makes sure that all present have opportunity to express their views. Friends address the Clerk, not one another. Friends who stand to speak find that their ministry is more faithful, concise, and better heard. Each vocal contribution should be something that adds to the material already given.

The Meeting's work of discernment is a corporate search. The Clerk does not direct the communication toward certain predetermined goals, but keeps dialogue open, promoting free and full exploration of the matter under consideration, while fostering a sense of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Clerk is responsible for discerning and stating the sense of the Meeting and presenting a minute when unity has been reached. Members of the Meeting may sometimes assist the Clerk in this. If a member believes that the Clerk has incorrectly discerned the sense of the Meeting, it is appropriate to speak up. Similarly, someone may propose that unity actually has been reached and suggest that a minute should be recorded.

When the wording appears satisfactory, the Clerk asks Friends if they approve the minute. If Friends approve the minute without objection, it is recorded as an action of the Meeting. If, after careful consideration, minor editorial changes appear to be needed, the Clerk should have authority to make them. Those changes should be noted at the next Business Meeting, when the minutes of the previous session are read.

If the business before the Meeting is difficult, anyone may request a pause for silent worship. This can often lead to finding a way

forward. Sometimes a member with doubts about a minute favored by most of those present will voice his or her reservations but release the Meeting to move forward.† This will be recorded in the minutes as "one Friend standing aside." In rare cases a member may ask to be recorded as standing aside; however this practice is best limited to occasions when that member's professional or legal status might be jeopardized by implied consent to a minute.

Another way of avoiding a deadlock is for the Clerk or another member to suggest that a matter be held over for consideration at a later time. It may be helpful for the Clerk to ask a small committee, including Friends of diverse leadings, to revise the proposal in the light of the concerns and objections, and report to the next Meeting. If the matter is urgent, the committee may retire from a given session to return to it with a revised proposal.

DEFERRING DECISIONS

Many decisions are of a routine nature and can be handled during one Meeting for Business. Business Meeting accomplishes much of its work by trusting standing and *ad hoc* committees to have adequately seasoned matters beforehand.

Some matters are better served by, and deserve, longer periods of deliberation. It is standard practice to hold over decisions in matters of membership, marriage and nominations for at least one month before a final decision. The extra time of seasoning allows Friends to labor together in an orderly exploration of unexpected objections and thus better to discern God's will. This is characteristic of Friends' sense of "good order." (See Glossary)

Items may be held over for later consideration, as committees or the Clerk deem necessary. It is generally helpful to name the date when it will be reconsidered. The absence of Friends with a specific

† When a Friend's reservation persists, the Clerk has an obligation to discern whether it is appropriate to move forward to seek approval of a minute. See "In Times of Difficulty," below.

interest from Business Meeting (after notice has been given) should seldom be a factor in delaying a decision.

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to discern when it is appropriate to delay a decision or refer a matter back to a committee for further seasoning. If the Clerk has decided in advance that no decision will be made at a given session, he or she should inform the Business Meeting before discussion begins. The Clerk should also indicate the possible consequences of a delayed decision.

IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY

> *If it were necessary for every member to feel equally happy about the decisions reached, we should be presuming to be settling matters in an angelic colony and not among flesh and blood members of a local Quaker meeting! From the point of view of myself as a member of a meeting, the kind of unanimity that is referred to is a realization on my part that the matter has been carefully and patiently considered. I have had a chance at different stages of the process of arriving at this decision of making my point of view known to the group, of having it seriously considered and weighed. Even if the decision finally goes against what I initially proposed, I know that my contribution has helped to sift the issue, perhaps to temper it, and I may well have, as the matter has patiently taken its course, come to see it somewhat differently from the point at which I began. … I have also come to realize that the group as a whole finds this resolution what seems best to them. When this point comes, if I am a seasoned Friend, I no longer oppose it. … I emerge from the meeting not as a member of a bitter minority who feels he has been outflanked and rejected but rather as one who has been through the process of the decision and is willing to abide by it even though my accent would not have put it in this form.*
>
> DOUGLAS STEERE,
> *THE QUAKER DECISION MAKING PROCESS*

Sometimes Friends have business that seems to require decision, but their differences appear unresolvable. Usually no action is taken, and the matter is held over with the expectation that unity can and will be found. Deference to the objections of even one or two members demonstrates the great reluctance of the Meeting to override any of its members — especially when matters of conscience are involved. Some people mistakenly believe that this procedure provides each member with a veto. Rather, Meetings place a high value on unity.

Unity does not imply unanimity of the entire membership of a Monthly Meeting. A Meeting may proceed in the absence of, or (more rarely) over the objection of, one or more Friends present while recognizing that objections may contain, or lead to, new light on the matter being considered. Friends with hesitations may choose to state that they are "standing aside" when the final decision is made, or, rarely, may ask to be recorded as standing aside. (See Decision-Making Practice)

Meetings may occasionally act even over the objections of one or more Friends. Due weight should be given to the insights of any Friend, long experienced in Friends meetings, whose judgment and service have been proven over considerable time. A "stop" in such a member's mind should be heeded. If, on the other hand, the one who is withholding support is known for persistently objecting, then the Clerk may call for a period of silent worship and, if so led, announce that the weight of the Meeting seems decidedly to favor the action, and the proposal is approved. The same principle applies even on occasions when there is more than one objector.

One of the Clerk's more demanding responsibilities is to tell the difference between those occasions when it is right that the objector's views be heeded, and those times when the Meeting has reached unity and, despite objection, it must act. Friends seek neither unanimity (a matter of votes), nor consensus (a resolution of differing opinions). Friends seek unity in the Spirit. When the Clerk is clear that the Meeting approves an action, even in the

presence of dissenting views, it is his or her obligation to articulate the sense of the Meeting in a minute and so record it unless others present also object.

Any ministry in Meeting for Business may contain elements essential to discovering a Spirit-led decision around which the Meeting may unite. This is true of the ministry of experienced Friends, newcomers, and Friends whose ministry others often find unhelpful. Before considering going forward over the objection of a Friend, the Clerk and the Business Meeting must be confident that it has labored in good faith with the objecting Friend and that the Meeting has done its best to understand the objection and that the objecting Friend has had spacious opportunities to understand the leading of the Meeting to proceed.

It is unusual for a sense of the Meeting to be achieved over one or more objections, and there are good reasons for this. The objector(s) may actually be right, or the proposed action may profoundly strain their bonds to the Meeting. Sometimes concern for their feelings may weigh heavily in favor of deferring the decision. Meetings should not ignore these features of a decision taken over objection of some Friends, although the Meeting may still have to proceed. It is important to ensure that objections have been faithfully considered, and that everyone is satisfied that this has happened.

Where there is discomfort, Oversight or Worship and Ministry Committees should act quickly to heal wounds, lest they fester and spoil the community of trust. If Friends feel that the Meeting should not have recorded a particular minute, they should bring their concern to the Worship and Ministry Committee (which has the responsibility for the care of Meeting for Business), the Clerk, or the Meeting for Business. It is important for differences to be aired and faced rather than to try to muffle views or circumvent attitudes for fear of dissent. Friends believe that truth, fully and openly sought, will carry its own conviction, and that unity will be found in truth and love.

It must always be remembered that the final decision as to whether the minute represents the sense of the meeting is the responsibility of the meeting itself, not of the clerk.

LONDON YEARLY MEETING, *TO LIMA WITH LOVE*

THRESHING SESSIONS

Occasionally an issue may be complex, controversial, dependent on technical details, or emotionally charged so that significantly more corporate preparation is required than can reasonably be accomplished in Meeting for Business. In such cases the Meeting should arrange a series of separate meetings. If technical details are crucial, study sessions may be in order. If matters are emotionally charged or members need to be heard in a receptive setting, Quaker dialogue or worship-sharing may be helpful. If extended preliminary exploration is needed, threshing sessions may be appropriate.

Threshing sessions derive their name from the assumption that through them the chaff might be separated from the grain of truth, clearing the way for later action on the issue. However, no corporate decisions are made at such meetings.

The Clerk or moderator of a threshing session is responsible for ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to speak, drawing out the reticent and limiting redundancy. Special efforts must be made to see that Friends of all shades of opinion can and will be present. To the extent that Friends who hold a given view are absent, the usefulness of such a meeting will be impaired. Knowledgeable people should be asked to present factual or complex material and be available to answer questions. A recorder should take notes of the meeting for later reference.

CLERKS AND CLERKING

The Clerk coordinates the business of the Meeting. The Clerk sees to it that all pertinent business and concerns are presented clearly to the Monthly Meeting in good order for its deliberate consideration,

united action, and appropriate execution. The following guidelines apply generally to the Clerk of any Friends Meeting or committee.

The Clerk is a member of the Meeting, who enjoys the confidence of its membership and who, in turn, respects and cherishes its individual members and attenders. He or she seeks the leading of the Spirit for corporate guidance. It is essential for the Clerk to be familiar with Faith and Practice and other Quaker literature. The Clerk should be able to comprehend readily, evaluate rightly, and state clearly and concisely an item of business or concern that comes to the Meeting. He or she should be able to listen receptively to what is said, and, through spiritual discernment, to gather the sense of the Meeting at the proper time.

The Clerk attends Meeting for Worship and keeps close to the work of committees, in all of which he or she should be considered an *ex officio* member. In order to be aware of the condition of the Meeting, it is essential that the Clerk attend Meetings of the Worship and Ministry and the Oversight Committees.

The Clerk presides at all Business Meetings. (An Alternate Clerk may preside when the Clerk is unable to be present.) The Clerk prepares the agenda, and encourages committee Clerks and others to provide reports, concerns, proposals, and other materials in advance. The Clerk's care in preparing the agenda, and judgment of the relative urgency of each item, greatly facilitates the Meeting's business. The Clerk makes sure that someone responds to any correspondence that comes to the Meeting.

The Clerk sets the pace of the Meeting to assure full and balanced expression of the views of the members. He or she does not express personal opinions, but if an essential viewpoint has not been presented, the Clerk asks the Meeting for permission to offer it. If the Clerk is led to take a strong position on a controversial matter, the Alternate Clerk or another appropriate person is asked to preside and take the sense of the Meeting.

As actions are taken, the Clerk makes sure that assignments are clear and responsible persons and committees are notified promptly in writing.

The Clerk signs all official papers and minutes, including minutes of sojourn and travel, letters of introduction and certificates of transfer or removal. If legal documents and minutes are involved, it is good practice for both the Clerk and the Recording Clerk to sign. The Clerk also endorses travel minutes and letters of introduction presented by visiting Friends.

The Clerk ensures that the activities of the Monthly Meeting are coordinated with those of its Quarterly and Yearly Meeting and that representatives to these gatherings are appointed. Reports, minutes and other concerns must be communicated to the proper officers on schedule. Business and concerns received from Quarterly and Yearly Meeting must be delivered to the proper persons and committees and to the Meeting as a whole.

MINUTE-TAKING IN THE MONTHLY MEETING

Minutes should be correct, accessible records of what occurred during a Meeting. Because Friends believe every offering in a Meeting for Business comes from God, the idea is recorded but not the names of the persons who speak. Items may be attributed to "one Friend" or "some Friends." Names of persons appear only when necessary — such as to identify who presented a report or who was charged with a task.

In the Monthly Meeting for Business, the recording clerk and the Presiding Clerk act as a team in preparing the two types of minutes: minutes of action and of exercise (see below). Narrative passages are helpful as well in recording how a decision was reached. (See Appendix 1C for useful practices for preparing Meeting minutes.)

Minutes of Action – Numbered Minutes: When the Meeting arrives at a decision, it needs to be clearly and correctly recorded in a "minute of action." Such a minute should be read aloud, modified if necessary, and approved at that Meeting. Once approved, it

should not be changed other than for authorized editorial modifications that do not alter the meaning. When finding the precise wording appears both difficult and important, the Presiding Clerk should name a few Friends to retire and work out language to present for approval later in the Meeting. Describing the issues that were considered, and how they were resolved, can contribute to later understanding of how the decision was reached.

Minutes of Exercise: When discussion of a matter produces important considerations, but no decision, it may be useful to record salient points in a minute of exercise, capturing the sense or recording the process of the session. What is the Meeting's dilemma? How was it addressed? What were the conclusions? Even matters such as whether a committee should be laid down or if the Meeting is to support a Friend's leading may require time at more than one Meeting for Business. A minute of exercise is especially useful to avoid unnecessary repetition and strengthen the basis for further discussion. It is the prerogative of the clerk to discern why the Meeting could not unite.

CLEARNESS AND CLEARNESS COMMITTEES

One of the special joys of a Friends Meeting is the recurring reminder that each person contributes to the spiritual strength of the loving community, and that the community is a guiding and sustaining force in the life of each individual. This mutual relationship strengthens the Meeting and produces a bond of love and trust among its members, helping the Meeting find unity in its spiritual life and harmony in its actions.

Such spiritual unity is evident in a Meeting when members feel free to ask for help with clarifying personal problems and making decisions. These may relate to family adjustments, marriage, separation, divorce, stands on public issues, a new job, moving to a distant area, personal witness, traveling in the ministry, and other decisions. Meetings usually respond to such requests for help by appointing clearness committees. (The clearness processes for

membership application and marriage under the care of the Meeting are described in the sections on those topics and in the Appendices.)

A clearness committee is generally formed at the request of the person or persons seeking clearness, though Friends in the Meeting may initiate an offer of help. The seeker may make a request of the Meeting as a whole, Overseers, or the Worship and Ministry Committee, as appropriate. In every case, the request becomes the responsibility of the Oversight Committee.

Overseers will sometimes find it desirable to have serious preliminary talks with the seeker on the nature of the issue. Such talks may convince the committee that the seeker needs professional counseling, rather than the help of a Meeting committee, and they will advise the seeker accordingly.

If the Oversight Committee believes that a clearness committee is appropriate, it will, in consultation with the seeker, appoint a committee, and designate a convener from among its members. A clearness committee should be composed of persons who, because of gifts and background, seem particularly suitable to help with the problem. A clearness committee normally includes three to five members of varied ages and experience. If, in the judgment of the Oversight Committee, the Meeting is too emotionally involved in the problem to be helpful, members of the clearness committee may be selected from outside the immediate Meeting community, for example, from the Ministry and Oversight Committee of the Quarterly or Yearly Meeting.

A clearness committee meets with the seeker neither as professional counselors nor as colleagues discussing a problem and giving advice, but rather as caring Friends, drawing on the same resources that bind the Meeting together in worship. Listening and patience are essential. All must listen not only to the person in need, but also to the movement of the Spirit.

Friends seek clearness in the Light. Committee members seek to help an individual become clear about a problem or impending decision by maintaining a spirit of openness and prayerful worship

and by serving as channels for Divine guidance. Their purpose is not to criticize, or to offer their collective wisdom. They are there to listen without prejudice or judgment, to help clarify alternatives, to help communication, to provide spiritual and emotional support, to find God's will.

In a clearness committee, as in a Meeting for Business, all parties seek "truth and the right course of action." Some clearness committees are formed to help a seeker see a problem more clearly or to make a decision in the Light. There is no need to find unity: only the seeker's clearness is being sought, and once this is accomplished, the committee may stand aside. However, when the individual has a strong leading toward a specific action and wants the Meeting to affirm it, the clearness committee seeks unity on whether this is indeed a leading of the Spirit (See Concerns and Leadings p. 59). When forming the committee, it is important to be clear about which type of committee is being formed.

Friends who are asked to undertake the ministry of spiritual clearness and support should not be deterred from accepting this responsibility because of their own human weaknesses. They will learn from their mistakes, from one another, and especially from the ones they are called upon to help, when they reach out to each other with an attitude of prayer. Asking for help requires personal discernment and trust in the Spirit. Similarly, being asked to help invites Friends to seek inner guidance about how best to respond. Thus, asking for help and responding to such requests creates the opportunities for us to invite spiritual guidance into our everyday lives.

Membership

> *George Fox and his early followers went forth with unbounded faith and enthusiasm to discover in all lands those who were true fellow members with them in this great household of God, and who were the hidden seed of God.*
>
> RUFUS JONES

A BRIEF HISTORY

Regularly enrolled membership as we know it was not a feature of the early Meetings of Friends; however, a recognized membership did exist. In its first years, the Society was a radical and charismatic movement, very much at odds with the civil and religious bodies of its day. Because the risks of joining involved rejection by contemporary society, imprisonment, physical abuse and economic ruin, only deeply convinced and committed people were willing to face the consequences of being considered Friends. Formal lists were unnecessary, since Friends were well aware of each other and of events in each other's lives. The word "member" appears in early Friends' correspondence, and lists of those "suffering for Truth's sake" were drawn up almost from the beginning, but formal membership was not established until 1737.

Although there was no formal membership, fanatical behavior and spiritual irresponsibility led to the practice of disownment. Those who misrepresented the group in word or deed were still welcome in worship and fellowship, but they were not allowed to participate in Meeting decisions. Thus the distinction between an active community of shared faith and an evolving institutional structure was tacitly recognized in early Quaker history.

THE MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership establishes a commitment between the individual and the Religious Society of Friends within the framework of a particular Monthly Meeting. Membership implies that, for each member, the Religious Society of Friends provides the most promising home for spiritual enlightenment and growth. It commits a person to the daily pursuit of truth after the manner of Friends, and commits the Meeting to support the member in that pursuit. Membership represents the outward recognition of unity with other members of the Religious Society of Friends and a commitment to cherish and share in the living tradition.

Ever since early Friends rejected the distinction between clergy and laity, responsibility for the full range of Meeting activities has rested with the membership. Members are expected to take an active role in corporate worship, to share in the work and service of the Society, and to live in harmony with its basic beliefs and practices. This means participating in Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business, and committee work, and giving time, skills, and financial support to Meeting activities such as religious education, pastoral care, and witness to the broader community.

Membership in a Monthly Meeting also confers membership in Quarterly and Yearly Meetings and the Religious Society of Friends. The strength of these bodies depends on the active involvement of members. Membership in a Monthly Meeting extends one's joys and obligations to include the wider family of Friends around the world.

PREPARATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

An attender may wonder how to discern readiness for membership. Typically, one first becomes acquainted with a particular Meeting through regular attendance, at both Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Business, often for a year or more. Familiarity with the Meeting's aspirations and ways may lead one to want to share in the responsibilities, difficulties and joys of its community. It is also important to become familiar with the history, principles and testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends, and with Pacific Yearly Meeting's book of discipline, *Faith and Practice*.

Attenders realize that it is time to apply for membership in various ways. One may discover that the faith of Friends and their ways have become central to her or his life. A spiritual leading which becomes clear and strong tells some that it is time, while many others report that it is the sense of having found their true place, of being "at home" after long seeking. For some, there may be a feeling of identification with and a responsibility for the Meeting and the Religious Society of Friends. Such realizations may indicate a readi-

ness for membership. Attenders who are not yet members are urged to attend to such leadings as to any other guidance in the Light.

BECOMING A MEMBER

All decisions concerning membership in the Religious Society of Friends are made in sessions of the Monthly Meeting, as Meetings seek to include in their membership all who find themselves in unity with their faith and practices. The procedure has several steps. It is seldom completed within less than three months. In some cases both the applicant and the Meeting may find it useful to take even more time for this process.

STEP 1: An applicant writes a letter to the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting expressing a desire to become a member. The letter need contain no more than a plain request although in some Meetings it is customary to provide some background. The Clerk promptly sends an acknowledgment on behalf of the Meeting, reads the letter at Business Meeting, and then gives it to the Oversight Committee.

STEP 2: The Overseers appoint a clearness committee consisting of two or three members, at least one of whom is an Overseer, to visit with the applicant. Great care should be taken to select sympathetic and discerning Friends who also have a strong understanding of the meaning and implications of membership. All visits take place in the spirit of a common worshipful seeking for God's will and guidance. Sufficient time must be allowed to ensure mutual trust and understanding. (See Appendix 4A for topics suggested for the use of a clearness committee.)

The members of the committee meet with the applicant as often and for as long as necessary for both the applicant and the committee to discern the rightness of this relationship, and the readiness of the applicant. These visits provide an opportunity (a) for the visiting Friends to become acquainted with the applicant at a deeper level, (b) for the applicant to ask questions and (c) for preparing the applicant and the Meeting for this new membership.

STEP 3: When the clearness committee unites with the applicant in the request for membership, it reports to the Oversight Committee with its recommendation.

If the committee feels the applicant is not yet ready for membership, they may encourage a wider experience with Friends' beliefs and practices through additional reading, visits to other Monthly, Quarterly or Yearly Meetings, attendance at workshops, or other activities. Membership itself is not as important as the spiritual growth of the prospective member. If it becomes clear that more seasoning is required, the committee should set another time to meet again with the applicant. The committee should inform the Overseers and plan a time to report again, keeping the Meeting aware of continuing work on the application.

If it becomes clear to the applicant or the clearness committee or both that membership is not advisable, the application may be withdrawn and the Meeting should so be informed. Regardless of the outcome, the applicant should be treated with gentleness and respect. He or she should be welcome to continue attending and participating in the life of the Meeting, just as prior to exploring the possibility of membership.

STEP 4: If the Overseers have a positive recommendation, they present it to the Meeting for Business. It is not acted on at that session, but is placed on the agenda for action at the next Business Meeting. This allows members to become better acquainted with the applicant and to voice concerns about the prospective membership to the Oversight Committee in advance of the decision.

When the recommendation is brought back to the Meeting for action, it is customary in some meetings for the applicant to withdraw from the room during the deliberations. A Friend, often a member of the Oversight Committee, generally accompanies the applicant.

STEP 5: Upon approval of the application, the Meeting minutes its acceptance of the new member, and the Recorder or another

designated person promptly completes Pacific Yearly Meeting membership forms.

STEP 6: The Meeting should arrange to provide a warm welcome into the community. A Quaker book or periodical may be presented as a gift from the Meeting.

CHILDREN AND MEMBERSHIP

Pacific Yearly Meeting has no provision for birthright membership. From birth, all children of the Meeting are under its care.

Meetings must be aware of and responsive to the needs of its children, most particularly their spiritual needs. Meetings have a responsibility to help children develop a sense of security in their relationship to the Meeting and in their own identities as Friends. Children become aware of themselves as Friends, not only through attendance at Meeting for worship and religious instruction, but also through friendship with adults and participation in Meeting activities.

Some Meetings in Pacific Yearly Meeting and other Yearly Meetings recognize Junior Membership, which the parent(s) or the child may request at any time, from birth onward. However, there is no established category of Junior Membership in Pacific Yearly Meeting at this time. Junior membership generally ends when the young person reaches the age of 21, although he or she may apply for adult membership earlier. If a child who holds Junior Membership moves to a Meeting that does not recognize this, the practice of the new Monthly Meeting will apply. Some Monthly Meetings simply call all children whom they recognize as part of their community "Children of the Meeting." Like an adult, a child of any age becomes a member by application. A young person's request for membership should be considered according to the Meeting's regular procedures. (See above, "Becoming a Member") Meetings should be very tender toward a young person's application, making sure that she or he understands the meaning of membership and feels welcome to participate in the life of the

Meeting. As there are seasons in a person's life, Meetings must not expect each one to be able to do all that another can do at every age.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

SOJOURNING MEMBERSHIP: The Religious Society of Friends is best served when membership is held in a Meeting near the member's primary residence. Friends who expect to be residing temporarily near a Monthly Meeting which is not their own should ask their Meeting for a Minute of Sojourn (See Appendix 5B), outlining the reasons for and the probable duration of their sojourn. If the home Meeting approves, a minute of sojourn is written and sent to the new Meeting. A minute of sojourn does not terminate the membership in the home Meeting. Friends who find that their stay will be prolonged beyond a year should seriously consider transferring their membership.

When a minute of sojourn has been accepted, the Friend may participate fully in the visited Meeting, although their primary financial responsibility and their membership statistics remain with the home Meeting. Meetings care for sojourning members as they do their own. Decisions made and the consequences of those decisions remain the responsibility of the members of each Meeting. A sojourning membership terminates when the sojourner leaves the visited Meeting, whose Clerk should notify the home Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP OF ISOLATED FRIENDS: Occasionally, a person who lives far from any Meeting or other Friends may seek membership. When a Meeting is willing to make a genuine, practical and lasting commitment to maintaining supportive contact, membership may be appropriate. When a Friend who is a Member of a Meeting moves to an isolated area, they and the home Meeting should try to locate a Meeting in that area. Membership in the Wider Quaker Fellowship† is an alternative way to obtain continual contact with

† A program of the Friends World Committee for Consultation.

Quaker thought and activity. FWCC accepts applications for membership in the Religious Society of Friends from isolated Friends worldwide through the London office.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP: Meetings want to contribute to the wellbeing and health of all those who attend. For this reason, applicants are asked to be certain that they are whole-hearted in joining the Religious Society of Friends. Membership in another religious body, or even in another Yearly or Monthly Meeting, is difficult to maintain. Therefore, dual Membership is discouraged.

There may be occasions when, for personal or family reasons, a person finds it essential to maintain membership elsewhere. In such a case, the individual Meeting may be willing to accept such a person into membership. The Friend would have the full responsibilities of membership in both congregations. When a member of the Meeting feels drawn to join another religious organization, the Meeting should labor with that member to determine an appropriate resolution.

APPLICANTS FROM PREPARATIVE MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS: When an attender of a Preparative Meeting or Worship Group wishes to become a member of the Religious Society of Friends, he or she does so by applying for membership in the overseeing Monthly Meeting, following the procedure outlined above. It may be difficult to consult if the two Meetings are a considerable distance apart, but such an application can provide an impetus for contact between the two groups involved in the process. Ideally, the clearness committee should include members from both the Preparative and the overseeing Monthly Meeting. It is important for the clearness committee to arrange sufficient time for satisfactory visits with the applicant.

In the early stages of a Preparative Meeting, most of the responsibility for membership applications lies with the overseeing Meeting. As the group grows, its responsibility increases, but only the Monthly Meeting can accept members. The Overseers of the Monthly Meeting may ask the Preparative Meeting's Oversight

Committee to comment on a membership application. When it becomes a Monthly Meeting, the new Clerk sends to the former overseeing Meeting a list of all who wish to transfer their memberships to the new Meeting. These transfers are made promptly without the usual visiting committees.

NON-MEMBER ATTENDERS

The Religious Society of Friends values the attendance and participation of persons drawn to Friends whether or not they are Members of the Society. At the same time, the Society encourages concerned persons to consider membership as a way to increase opportunities for developing their religious lives.

In general, non-members do not serve as officers, as members of the Worship and Ministry, Oversight or Nominating Committees, or as Clerks of most committees. Occasionally, Meetings find it wise to make an exception. The Overseers should be aware of the increasing interest or participation of an attender and discuss with her or him the question of membership. Non-member attenders may choose to be included as such in the Meeting's list of names and addresses.

While members have accepted an obligation to attend and take part in Business Meeting, attenders are also welcome to participate. Their contributions are valued and respected; however, responsibility for decisions remains with the members of a Meeting. An ability and willingness to take an appropriate share of responsibility for matters under discussion, and for the life of the Meeting as a whole, gives weight to one's participation in Meeting for Business.

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Ideally, an individual should hold membership in the Meeting where he or she is active. Where this is not so, there is a loss both to the individual and to the Meeting, as well as a failure to assume the responsibilities of membership. Membership is based on function, not sentiment. The love for an old Meeting is not transferable, nor

should it be. Friends anticipate that appreciation and love for the new Meeting will grow through full participation in its life.

When a Friend moves to the vicinity of another Monthly Meeting, the clerk of Overseers of the original Meeting should write promptly to the Clerk of the new Meeting, recommending the member to its fellowship. Transfer of membership without undue delay is encouraged, but it is not automatic. Because Meetings vary greatly in style and character, transfer of membership deserves prayerful and thorough consideration. Both member and Meeting need to understand each other's hopes and expectations to avoid future misunderstanding. Therefore, the Meeting appoints a visiting committee to share points of view and experience. The member and both Meetings are involved. (The procedure for transferring membership is outlined in Appendix 4C.)

ENDING MEMBERSHIP

Termination of membership may be initiated by the member or by the Monthly Meeting. Membership of a Friend ceases when this action is formally minuted in the record of that Meeting for Business. Monthly Meetings need to keep in mind that some Friends may go through periods, sometimes prolonged, when their association with the life of the Meeting is tenuous, and it is important that the Meeting communicate with them. However, a membership based only on nostalgia, status, or inertia should not be continued.

ON THE INITIATIVE OF A MEMBER: A member who no longer feels in accord with the beliefs and practices of Friends should be encouraged to consult the Oversight Committee to explore that feeling before considering resignation.

When a member writes a letter of resignation, it is given to the Oversight Committee before being brought to the Monthly Meeting. When the person and the circumstances regarding termination are already well known to the Oversight Committee and they are satisfied that the member's decision is clear, the

Committee may make its recommendation to the Monthly Meeting without appointing an additional committee. If the reasons are not clear, Overseers should appoint a clearness committee of two or three persons, including one of its members, to visit the Friend and explore the reasons for the resignation. They may encourage the Friend to reconsider and continue in the fellowship of the Meeting. If the member's intention remains unchanged, this is reported to the Oversight Committee, which in turn recommends to the Monthly Meeting that the request be granted.

The Meeting minutes the release of the Friend, stating that it is at the member's request. The Clerk of the Meeting sends a letter to the resigning member by registered mail with return receipt requested. The letter should include a copy of the Meeting Minute that terminated the Membership and express the affectionate regard of the Meeting. The Meeting may consider renewed application from this person, according to the usual procedure for new members.

If the resignation is due to a desire to join another religious body the Clerk may, at the request of the member, write a letter to the other denomination indicating that the individual has been released from the Religious Society of Friends.

ON THE INITIATIVE OF A MONTHLY MEETING: When a member seems to have abandoned Meeting for Worship, or to have replaced it with some incompatible practice, Ministry and Oversight should seek clearness with that Friend as to whether resignation or termination of membership would be appropriate. If it becomes clear that the termination should go forward, Meeting for Business should minute the release of that person from membership in the Monthly Meeting and the Clerk should inform the individual of that action by registered mail with return receipt requested. One copy of the Minute should be placed in the Membership Record and another kept in the file of former members.

If a Friend shows no interest in the Religious Society of Friends over a prolonged period, or exhibits repeated disregard of Friends principles, a Monthly Meeting may initiate the release from

membership. Such a member should be approached by a member of the Oversight Committee or by a small committee of its members, either in person or by correspondence, to clarify the relationship between the member and the Religious Society of Friends. If the committee and member reach clearness to terminate Membership, the recommendation should be brought to the Meeting for Business. Approval should be minuted and a copy of the minute, accompanied by a friendly note, should be sent to the former member.

If the Meeting repeatedly attempts to contact a member over an extended period of time and there is no response, the Oversight Committee may recommend to the Monthly Meeting that the individual's membership be dropped. If the Meeting concurs, it should minute the circumstances and terminate the membership. The Clerk of the Meeting should send a note with a copy of the minute to the discontinued member promptly by registered mail with return receipt requested. If the address of a member is unknown, and the above procedure has been followed, a returned letter should be attached, unopened, to the Meeting copy along with the membership record in the file with the record of former members.

If a Friend by behavior or expression appears to harm the Meeting or to misrepresent Friends, the Oversight Committee should appoint a small committee to meet with the Friend. In a spirit of loving concern, this committee should counsel with the member, seeking to understand his or her views and actions.

When termination of Membership must be considered, it should occur over a minimum of three Meetings for Business. If there appears to be no hope of restoring unity with the Meeting, the Oversight Committee should report to the Monthly Meeting, and recommend that the membership be terminated. The Meeting may then wish to appoint a special committee to confer further with the Friend before taking action. If that committee reports that there is still no hope of reconciliation, the Meeting should notify the

member in writing of its intention to consider termination of the membership at a Meeting for Business. If the Meeting agrees that the membership should be terminated, a proposed minute should be written, noting that final approval will be sought at the Meeting for Business on the date scheduled. That minute should be sent to the individual by registered mail with return receipt requested. At the appointed Meeting for Business, the minute should be re-read to the Meeting for its approval.

A Monthly Meeting or member may approach the Quarterly Meeting's Oversight Committee to help find clearness if problems arise regarding ending a membership. Procedures designed to promote clarity amid difficult circumstances are not intended to displace kindness and loving care for individuals' spiritual life. Using registered mail and following procedures precisely may avoid misunderstandings and be helpful to the Meeting in case of legal action.

Marriage

> *We sensibly felt the Lord with us and joining us, the sense whereof remained with us all our life.*
>
> THOMAS AND MARY ELLWOOD, 1669

Friends recognize that God consecrates marriage. Marriage is the expression of God's will and purpose functioning in two lives, joined with joy, reverence, faith and an expectation of lifelong partnership. Couples serve as important examples for our children and young adults as they learn about adult relationships.

Quaker marriage vows invoke divine assistance. Friends believe that when we know God's love in our lives, when we are open to receiving direction, we find the divine assistance that our relationships need. This requires openness and a maturity of spirit as we seek to love the other person as he or she actually is. When Friends marry, they are encouraged to do so under the care of the Meeting,

in a spirit of commitment for lifelong care of the relationship. Friends act as witnesses to what the Spirit has brought together.

All marriages need a foundation of commitment, communication, honesty, and integrity. Patience, humor, and a spirit of adventure, guided by a mutual trust in God's presence, strengthen the present and brighten the hope for the future.

Marriages pass through many phases, and through all phases the quality of marriage is tested. Respect for each other and the expression of enduring love deepen the bond. With God's help, each couple finds a true path and a way of living that leads to a strong union. The Meeting can provide guidance and support to marriages through clearness committees, retreats, workshops, and referral when needed. Most important, the Meeting and individuals help couples through prayer and a strong belief in divine assistance in daily life.

LEGAL RECOGNITION OF QUAKER MARRIAGE

Early Friends struggled to gain recognition of their marriages. In a 1661 case involving inheritance for children of Friends, an appeal was made to the English court seeking legal recognition of Quaker marriages. It was successful, and subsequent marriages have been recorded and legally recognized in England. In the United States, recognition of Quaker marriages is determined by individual states. Today, most Quaker couples record their marriages with legal authorities. (See Appendix 6D for the requirements in different parts of Pacific Yearly Meeting.)

The legal institution of marriage carries with it certain rights and responsibilities, as defined by the State. The laws concerning who may marry are changing. Once illegal in many states, interracial marriages are now granted full legal recognition. Marriages between same-gender couples may be undergoing a similar change. Friends' concern for equity in the legal rights of same-gender couples is affirmed in Pacific Yearly Meeting Minute 96-14. (See Appendix 6C.)

MARRIAGE AND GENDER

Although Monthly Meetings vary in belief and practice regarding same-gender marriage, there is a growing acceptance of the principle that gender and sexual orientation should not influence Friends' decision to take a marriage under its care. † It is consistent with Quakers' historical faith and testimonies that Friends practice a single standard of treatment for all couples who wish to marry. The same level of careful discernment should be used in interviewing a gay or lesbian couple as a heterosexual couple. All such ceremonies should be blessed occasions where life partners join together in the presence of God.

> *Junior Yearly Meeting has reached unity in supporting same sex marriages. We reached this conclusion at a business Meeting after two hours of deep worship-sharing. In our decision of unity, Junior Yearly Meeting urges Pacific Yearly Meeting to support the loving bond of marriage between two people regardless of their gender.*
>
> PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING, 1996,
> MINUTES OF PLENARY VII

MARRIAGE UNDER THE CARE OF THE MEETING

When a couple wishes to be married "under the care of the Meeting," (see Glossary), they should write a letter stating their intention and requesting that the Meeting begin the clearness process.

When both members of the couple are members of one Meeting, the marriage is usually under the care of the Meeting where their memberships reside. When either partner holds membership in another Meeting, a letter of clearness should be obtained from that Meeting. When one member of the couple is not a Friend, his or her religious affiliation needs to be considered in terms of how it will be

† Some Meetings are not comfortable calling a same-gender union a marriage. However, some will take under their care ceremonies of commitment for homosexual couples.

acknowledged in the clearness process and in the wedding. When active non-members ask to be married under the care of the Meeting, they are subject to the same process with the marriage clearness committee as members.

Circumstances sometimes lead Meetings to make adjustments to the customary procedures. Such variations should be seriously considered and decisions taken under the guidance of worship.

MARRIAGE CLEARNESS COMMITTEE

When the request for oversight of a marriage under the care of Meeting is received, the overseers should appoint a marriage clearness committee. Members of this committee should be available, willing to give prayerful consideration regarding the right course of action, and well-informed about Friends practice. (See Appendix 6A.) The marriage clearness committee and the Meeting need to be sensitive to the couple's hopes and expectations for setting the wedding date. However, until the Meeting has actually approved taking the marriage under its care, no date should be announced.

The couple and the marriage clearness committee should meet together for thoughtful and prayerful discussions to seek God's will regarding the proposed marriage. The Committee may also meet with each of the partners individually. Specific queries or topics may aid the discussions, or they may arise out of worship. Everyone in the clearness process should approach each meeting with open hearts and minds, and with sufficient time for thorough understanding and seasoning to occur. Possible encumbrances should be explored to ensure that the couple is free of conflicting obligations.

When the couple and the committee are clear that the marriage should go forward, the marriage clearness committee reports to Overseers, indicating that unity has been found. The Monthly Meeting accepts the report for consideration at the following Meeting for Business. (See Deferring Decisions p. 132.) When the

Meeting has united in approving the request, a time and place for the wedding should be scheduled and the Meeting should appoint an arrangements committee.

If unity to move forward is not readily found, the marriage clearness committee and the couple may choose to continue seeking God's will in this matter, or they may choose to lay aside the request indefinitely or even permanently. This should be reported to the Overseers.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

The arrangements committee, which should include a member from the marriage clearness committee, works with the couple to ensure that all desired legal requirements are met and that the marriage is accomplished with simplicity, dignity and reverence. A wedding reception may become part of this committee's responsibility.

The arrangements committee should know the local legal requirements for registration of marriages and be prepared to help the couple take responsibility for obtaining, filing, and mailing necessary forms. (See Appendix 6D.) The final responsibility of this committee is to ensure that a minute recording the marriage is prepared for the Monthly Meeting's next Meeting for Business.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP ON THE OCCASION OF MARRIAGE

Meeting for Worship on the occasion of marriage should be simple and reflect the importance of the step the couple is taking. The Meeting gathers in silence at the appointed time, witnessing as two individuals join together freely and equally.

The meaning of the Meeting for Worship and the procedure of a Friends wedding should be explained to non-Friends in the invitations or early in the Meeting. After a suitable time the couple should rise (if able) and, taking each other by the hand, each in turn declare to the other words to this effect:

In the presence of God, and before these our Friends, I take thee, _____, to be my (wife, husband, partner, spouse), promising, with Divine assistance, to be unto thee a loving and faithful (wife, husband, partner, spouse) as long as we both shall live.

After these or similar declarations, the marriage certificate† should be signed by the couple, using the names by which they will be known. A Friend should be appointed in advance to read aloud the certificate of marriage. (An example of a marriage certificate is found in Appendix 6B.)

A period of worship follows, in which all are free to speak out of the silence as they are led. When the time seems right the Clerk or designated Acting Clerk should close the Meeting. Everyone present should be invited to sign the marriage certificate. When the marriage is to be recorded, the Clerk is responsible for seeing that the required legal document is delivered to the proper legal authority.

MARRIAGE AFTER THE MANNER OF FRIENDS

Occasionally couples ask for and receive permission to be married "after the manner of Friends." (See Glossary) Couples may have questions about the appropriate procedure for a "Quaker style" wedding. Overseers should be willing to give such guidance. Couples who are not members of the Meeting should be advised that neither the Meeting nor the Clerk may sign legal certificates or documents for them.

NURTURING MARRIAGE

> *In the true marriage relationship the independence of husband and wife is equal, their dependence mutual, and their obligations reciprocal.*
>
> LUCRETIA MOTT

† This is not the Marriage License.

The spiritual journey of an individual can be enhanced and strengthened in the marital relationship. The covenant of marriage opens the door to free and unreserved love, to forgiveness, to sharing strengths, to trust, and to the nurture of each other's growth. The relationship thrives in the mutual practice of openness, honesty, and shared responsibility.

A Meeting's responsibility for nurturing, supporting and celebrating a marriage under its care does not end with the wedding, but endures throughout the whole of life. The marriage clearness committee may take the lead in establishing an ongoing relationship with the couple. For example, celebrations, workshops and supportive discussion groups as well as Meetings for Worship are important within the life of the marriage. Couples often appreciate the feeling of oversight that the Meeting offers when times are easy, but fail to invite the oversight process during difficult times.

As with marriages conducted under the care of the Meeting, members' marriages outside the Meeting require loving support and oversight. If a member is married outside the care of the Meeting, members of the Oversight Committee should visit with the newly married couple, expressing the support of the Meeting for the new relationship. A non-member partner should be made welcome and invited to attend Meeting.

Friends with a concern about their own or others' marriages should bring such concern to the Oversight Committee. As witnesses and parties to the marriage, the Meeting has the responsibility to be steadfast and direct in fulfilling its oversight obligation. Overseers may see a need for concern and action before the couple does. Prayerful worship and God's leading should guide all in these matters, overcoming hesitancies and embarrassment. Meetings may wish to develop guidelines for the support of both healthy and troubled marriages, and thus find it easier to nurture marriage partners in its community. Similar support can be offered to non-member couples who are active in the life of the Meeting.

Friends should not endure physical or emotional abuse nor should they or their children be exposed to sexual exploitation. If the Oversight Committee becomes aware of such exploitation or abuse, they should approach the offender(s) forthrightly, seeking correction of the unacceptable behavior. While holding both the violator and the violated in the Light, it is incumbent upon Friends to protect the victim(s) and seek help for the violator. This may appropriately involve informing legal authorities and other services. Where abuse or exploitation exists, counseling and/or separation or divorce may be advised.

REMARRIAGE

When a divorced or widowed person wishes to remarry, it is a time for rejoicing. Remarriage is a new commitment to partnership and should be handled by a clearness committee in the same manner as other marriage requests. The clearness committee should be sensitive to issues of time, children, and the spiritual healing of each partner related to their prior marriage. The remarriage of divorced persons under the care of the Meeting should not occur until prior personal, financial, or legal obligations have been resolved.

Remarriage may create a blended family. Children of either partner should be consulted during the clearness process. By encouraging all parties to examine their feelings and expectations, the clearness committee can be helpful in resolving feelings about the new family order. It may sometimes be helpful to consult with ex-partners and former family members.†

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

Marriage is a covenant. Marriage vows should not be taken lightly or broken easily. Nevertheless, some couples find themselves unable

† A resource for further consideration is *Living With Oneself and Others* (New England Yearly Meeting), available through the AFSC bookstore.

to overcome difficulties in their relationships and find it necessary to separate or divorce. Many people experience a sense of failure for promises not kept. In such situations, Meeting can help them remember that God's grace is available to all.

A crisis in a marriage is a spiritual crisis.† The Meeting's first responsibility is to minister to this spiritual crisis by providing a clearness committee, offering prayer, and holding individuals in the Light. The pain of separation and divorce, even in the best of circumstances, can take years to heal. Meetings may provide helpful referrals to professional counseling resources and vital support such as childcare, a listening ear, or a holding hand.

Although it is not the role of a clearness committee to offer legal advice, such a committee can be a welcome adjunct to an often-divisive legal procedure. Within a clearness committee, mutual accords may be reached and noted to remind the couple of their agreement. Peaceful mediation should be sought whenever possible, either within or outside the Meeting. If it becomes necessary to seek legal counsel, Friends are advised to do so with careful consideration.

A member of the Oversight Committee should consider approaching a couple they know to be struggling with their relationship to offer a clearness committee. Friends need to be courageous about reaching out to a couple that otherwise might not be ready to ask for help. Tenderness towards the needs of the individuals in the relationship should always be paramount, holding each of them in the Light and offering appropriate assistance when they are receptive to it.

† A clearness committee for separation or divorce may wish to consider such matters as: 1) how the separation or divorce will affect the spiritual life, sense of self, and relationships of each of the partners; 2) alternatives to divorce; 3) how children will be affected; 4) how finances and property will be affected; 5) how legal obligations will be met; and 6) how involvement in the life of the Meeting will be affected.

If, after prayerful consideration and using the resources of a clearness committee, separation or divorce seems inevitable, the Oversight Committee of the Monthly Meeting should be informed. Dissolution should move forward only when the couple is clear that a marriage no longer exists.

Friends should be tender to the needs of any children involved. They have a right to be heard. The Meeting's role may be as simple as appointing individuals to listen to the children's fears or taking them on an outing. It may be advisable to offer a separate clearness committee for the children so they may freely express their desires.

Death in the Meeting

> *Friends find that preparation for death is in many ways a preparation for deeper living. It includes an awareness that our lives will end and a realization that our lives have an eternal dimension.*
>
> SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION, 1990

Death often faces us with the most difficult questions, and some of our most profound insights into the meaning of life. As Friends seek to surround the bereaved with love and care, the sustaining power of God can bring courage to all concerned and a transforming truth about death and life itself.

PREPARING FOR DEATH

> *Make provisions for the settlement of all outward affairs while in health, so that others may not be burdened and so that one may be freed to live more fully in the Truth that shall stand against all the entanglements, distractions, and confusions of our times.*
>
> EPISTLES OF YEARLY MEETINGS OF PENNSYLVANIA AND THE JERSEYS, 1694 AND 1695, AS PARAPHRASED BY PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING *FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1997

While they are free from unusual mental or physical pressures, adult Friends of all ages are strongly urged to complete a Will and Durable Powers of Attorney (for both financial and medical concerns), and inform medical personnel and family of their wishes. Friends should consider whether their financial situation warrants additional measures such as a Living Trust. Wills, Powers of Attorney, and Living Trusts should all be regularly reviewed, and immediately updated when changes are made. Couples who are not legally married are at special risk and need to take special care that their legal papers reflect their wishes about end-of-life decision-making and finances.

Meetings can aid members by gathering information about hospice care, mortuaries, and relevant legal issues such as organ donations and the use of the body for scientific purposes. Many Friends belong to memorial societies which contract for prompt, simple and inexpensive disposition of the body, frequently through cremation.

It is useful for Meetings to maintain, along with Membership Records, a record of members' desires for the time of death, including a list of persons to be notified. A suggested form for this purpose, *Information and Instructions on Health Care Decisions and Final Affairs*, is found in Appendix 7. Members should review and update the information regularly.

SUPPORT OF THE DYING AND THEIR LOVED ONES

There was a time when birth and death were home-centered. Today, the hospice movement helps Friends experience and understand the role of family and friends during the time of impending death. Meetings may find it appropriate to provide support to a dying person, their family and close friends over an extended period of time.

Support from the Meeting may take the form of holding Meeting for Worship at the home of the ill person or listening non-judgmentally to the wide variety of feelings that the seriously ill

person and their loved ones may express. It is always appropriate to offer practical assistance such as food, housekeeping, childcare, and shopping. Members of the Meeting may also help assure that the necessary legal forms are in order, final arrangements have been made, and respite care is available for the caregivers.

Meeting representatives should make themselves available in an open and reassuring way to respond to the spiritual needs of the individual or the family. It is sometimes important to step in with supportive help, without offending the family, when those most closely involved are unable to make their needs known. It takes great sensitivity and caring on the part of the helping Friends to be appropriately supportive at this critical time.

MEMORIAL MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

> *They that love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill what never dies. Nor can spirits ever be divided that love and live in the same Divine Principle, the root and record of their friendship. If absence be not death, neither is theirs.*
>
> WILLIAM PENN, 1693

> *Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-torn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself.*
>
> THOMAS A. KELLY, *A TESTAMENT OF DEVOTION*, 1941

When Friends suffer the loss of a loved one there is sustaining strength in the loving concern and helpfulness of the Meeting and its members. Friends are urged to make their needs known, and the Oversight Committee should give whatever specific help may be necessary when death comes. The committee asks Friends to visit and counsel with the family or friends of the deceased and to offer assistance such as notifying relatives and friends, and helping to plan a Memorial Meeting.

Friends' testimony on simplicity, and consideration for the wishes of the family, should govern the arrangements. Friends generally feel that a Memorial Meeting should occur following prompt and simple disposition of the body. The Oversight Committee oversees the arrangements for the Memorial Meeting.

Meetings may hold Memorial Meetings for non-members. Memorials "in the manner of Friends" may also be held in the Meetinghouse, when the Meeting discerns what type of spiritual and logistical support it can offer.

For Friends, a Memorial Meeting for Worship on the occasion of death is a time to celebrate in the Light the life of an individual whose spirit has been released to God. It is a time to draw the living into the upholding comfort and loving care of the Divine Presence. A Friend may be asked to talk briefly about the manner of the Meeting. (Some Meetings provide a written explanation of Friends Memorial Meetings.) A statement about the person may be prepared ahead of time and read if that is consistent with the spirit of the Meeting and the desires of the family.[†]

A simple reception may follow the Memorial Meeting. Such an occasion gives an opportunity to express grief, love and thanksgiving. For many, it is a helpful reentry into everyday life.

Care of the ashes or burial is often handled at a separate time from the Memorial Meeting and is usually a family matter.[††] This can be a particularly poignant moment, and the Meeting needs to be sensitive to the needs of the family for privacy or for spiritual support.

The Oversight Committee oversees the preparation of a Memorial Minute, which emphasizes the deceased's life as a Friend, so that his or her journey may be a teacher to the Monthly Meeting

† If the Memorial Minute is ready, it may be read at the Memorial Meeting. However, the status of the minute should not hold up the Memorial Meeting, which should be timed for the family's convenience.

†† As of January 1, 1999, it is legal in California to scatter or bury ashes on private property including that owned by Meetings.

and to the Yearly Meeting. The Oversight Committee should present the Memorial Minute to the Monthly Meeting for Business for inclusion in the Meeting minutes, and forward it to the Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee. A copy of the Minute should be included in the membership records of the deceased and it may also be sent to Friends' publications.

GRIEVING

> *In bereavement, give yourself time to grieve. When others mourn, let your love embrace them.*
>
> BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING,
> *QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE*, 1995

Grieving extends far beyond the initial turmoil of arranging for the Memorial and settling the affairs of the deceased, and opens many opportunities for spiritual growth. Some learn that they can feel angry at God, even deserted, and often through struggling with God have their faith strengthened. Many also experience the comfort of an omnipresent Spirit throughout their grief. The gifts of grief can teach important lessons about the richness of living.

Friends should provide an atmosphere which enables those who have lost a loved one to grieve in a natural manner rather than suppressing it until a later time, which can be detrimental physically and emotionally. Many Friends find it helpful to keep a journal or tell their story again and again. Attentive listening is very important. Friends can also help by accepting all feelings expressed, by providing practical and spiritual support, and by encouraging the bereaved to nourish and care for themselves. This is an appropriate time for personal indulgences, but not for making major decisions.

Intense grieving often lasts a year or more. Overseers should be alert to depression, sleeping problems, or changes in weight of persons grieving more than six months. They should be prepared to tell those grieving about helpful literature and community resources such as professional bereavement counselors and grief support groups.

PART VI
ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE YEARLY MEETING

The Annual Gathering of Pacific Yearly Meeting

Every year all members and attenders of Monthly Meetings are invited to attend an event known as Yearly Meeting. During the course of this annual gathering, Friends meet for worship, fellowship, and to conduct business. Worship and business take place in plenary sessions. The Yearly Meeting reviews the State of the Society as reflected in the reports received from its Monthly Meetings, and hears and acts upon concerns which come to it from its Meetings and members. The annual gathering provides an opportunity for all present to support one another in seeking Divine Guidance and strengthening the bonds that unite them. Pacific Yearly Meeting also welcomes visitors from other Yearly Meetings and Quaker organizations, and all who are interested in Friends ways.

Friends share thoughts on matters of immediate interest and deep spiritual import. Over the years, many times a strong call to action has motivated Friends to join in decisive actions with lasting impact. Daily worship-sharing groups have been a tradition and a highlight.

Children attend activities in groups organized by interest and age. There is music making, singing in small and large groups, and a "Community Night" which gives thespians of varying talents a time to perform. Youths build lifelong friendships.

There are several opportunities for sharing, both informal and structured. Many Friends attend one or more interest groups to share common concerns. Friends who want to meet with others of similar background (such as women, participants in 12-step groups, those concerned with mental illness, or gay and lesbian Friends) may attend affinity groups. The Children's Program, Junior Friends (junior and high school age) and Young Friends (college age) groups are a vital part of the Annual Gathering. Each of these groups meets separately for part of the time, and with the entire group, as they find appropriate.

It is traditional for the names of Friends who have died during the previous year to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee, so that their names may be read at a plenary session devoted to memorials. Many people find it inspiring to recall the lives of Friends who have helped Truth prosper among us.

The exchanges of experience, feelings and insights which Friends are able to make at Yearly Meeting, in correspondence and intervisitation, as well as in Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, are the lifeblood of our fellowship. Widely dispersed as we are geographically, the Annual Gathering allows us to feel, with deep gratitude to God, as one body. Friends of all ages find this gathering binds them into a close-knit community, which in many cases lasts far longer than the week of the experience.

THE BUSINESS OF THE YEARLY MEETING

The Yearly Meeting exercises general oversight and care of its constituent Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in matters pertaining to the Yearly Meeting as a whole. It is necessary to keep careful records of its procedures and information concerning constituent Meetings and membership. (See Appendix 1E)

Responsibility for actions and decisions lies with members present at plenary sessions. Monthly Meetings select representatives to attend Yearly Meeting, who carry a special responsibility for being familiar with concerns and issues coming before it and their

Meetings' feelings on those issues. Although representatives are informed by their Meetings' concerns, they act as individuals. They carry a special responsibility to report back to their Monthly Meeting on the proceedings. Representatives should be chosen carefully, with awareness of the subtle role they play in plenary deliberations.

When a Quarterly or Monthly Meeting has labored with a concern, built a foundation of essential background information, and reached a clear conclusion embodied in a proposed minute, it should promptly forward the minute to the Clerk of Yearly Meeting. The Clerk should acknowledge receipt of the concern, send it to the appropriate Yearly Meeting committee, and inform the originating Meeting of its disposition. The committee should consider the minute for presentation at the Yearly Meeting. Concerns that cannot be seasoned in this manner should be presented to the Presiding Clerk as far in advance of the Yearly Meeting as possible. Committees may choose to consolidate concerns, refer them back to Quarterly and Monthly Meetings for further seasoning, or, finding unity, develop them for presentation at the Yearly Meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, a concern may arise from the floor at a plenary session. If so, it should be presented briefly and heard without discussion. The Clerk may refer it to an appropriate committee for consideration, or for presentation in concise written form at a later session. If a concern arises from the floor at the last business session of Yearly Meeting, the Clerk has discretion as to its consideration.

Friends attending plenary sessions may expect a wide range of matters to be covered. They may include: reports from Yearly Meeting committees, including Nominating and Finance; calls for action from committees and constituent Monthly Meetings; communications among groups in the wider Quaker world; reports from delegates to other Quaker organizations; presentations by occasional invited guests. Plenary sessions hear Epistles and communications addressed to the Yearly Meeting and approve an

Epistle "To Friends Everywhere." Plenary sessions for business are always subject to the leading of the Spirit through which alone the purposes of Yearly Meeting can be achieved.

It is helpful if Monthly Meetings hold an orientation for all who will attend the annual sessions, to acquaint newcomers with the many opportunities at Yearly Meeting and to keep them from being overwhelmed by the wealth there to be appreciated.

Junior Yearly Meeting

Here we stand,
Lost in the void between
Childhood and adulthood.
Here we sing
Of the joy and sadness
That fills our lives.
Here we sit
And rest our weary souls
Once a year.
Here we talk
And find that we are not alone.

Here we dream
Of the world we want to
create.
Here we watch
the miracles of
Growing up.
Here we learn
About love and tenderness,
And the vital importance of time.
Here we live.

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING MINUTES 1992:
JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING EPISTLE.

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) is composed of Friends of junior high and high school age. They may hold a Yearly Meeting or meetings of their own during the PYM annual gathering, Quarterly Meetings, or at other times chosen by the Junior Yearly Meeting Committee. In keeping with Friends' practices, they select officers and committees as needed, hold sessions and take such actions as are appropriate. These may include the composition of a Junior Yearly Meeting epistle or epistles. Youth are welcome at Yearly Meeting plenary sessions, and are asked to bring reports of their own sessions at an agreed time. JYM is an important part of the Yearly Meeting community and is encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of

PYM. The Junior Yearly Meeting Committee appoints Advisors to the Junior Yearly Meeting.

Young Friends at Yearly Meeting

Young Friends experience Yearly Meeting as a unique opportunity to come together in fellowship and worship, giving one another emotional and spiritual support. Though many Young Friends participate in other Quaker activities, Yearly Meeting is an important experience for Friends in transition from youth into adulthood. The weeklong gathering gives them time to build community both socially and spiritually.

Young Friends hold their own Business Meetings to seek the leadings of the Light, build leadership, and encourage awareness of Quaker practice. They strive to be involved in the greater PYM community, including the Junior Yearly Meeting and children's program. Young Friends learn and grow from the patterns of their traditions and examples of their elders and peers.

The Yearly Meeting as an Organization

Pacific Yearly Meeting is not only an annual gathering of unprogrammed Friends, it is an ongoing institution. Throughout the year, officers and committees conduct much of the work of the Yearly Meeting. Business of the Yearly Meeting may also be conducted in plenary sessions and committee meetings when the Representative Committee gathers in early spring. (See page 171.)

YEARLY MEETING OFFICERS

Yearly Meeting officers are nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Yearly Meeting. Officers are selected from the membership of the Yearly Meeting on the basis of their qualifications, availability to serve, representation of the geography, and resources for present and potential leadership. There is no predetermined pattern of rotation or appointment to leadership; three consecutive annual appointments has been a

frequent pattern. Terms generally begin at the close of the annual session and last for one year. Outgoing officers are expected to complete responsibilities related to the annual session and to orient new appointees.

PRESIDING CLERK. The Presiding Clerk has chief responsibility for the plenary sessions of the Yearly Meeting. The Presiding Clerk:

- with the assistance of the Clerk's advisory committee, prepares the agenda for the Yearly Meeting sessions, providing for worship, sharing, business and reports from Friends organizations;
- presides at plenary and Representative Committee sessions, and is a member of all committees *ex officio*;
- forwards the Epistle to Yearly Meetings throughout the world;
- in cooperation with the Recording Clerks, takes responsibility for the final form of the minutes of the Yearly Meeting; and
- ensures that the instructions of the Yearly Meeting are carried out.

Upon recommendation by the Nominating Committee, the Yearly Meeting appoints such additional clerks as may be needed, including an Assistant to the Clerk, Recording Clerks, and a Reading Clerk. When the Presiding Clerk is unavailable, the Yearly Meeting calls upon past Presiding Clerks, beginning with the immediate past Clerk.

THE ASSISTANT TO THE CLERK. A Friend experienced in the working of the Yearly Meeting assists the Presiding Clerk with practical arrangements for conducting business. The Assistant oversees the scheduling of interest and sharing groups and Community Night.

RECORDING CLERKS serve overlapping two-year terms. They assist the Presiding Clerk with formulating accurate minutes of all

proceedings of Yearly Meeting and Representative Committee sessions. These are read to the Meeting for correction and approval. They constitute the official minutes of action of the session. The Reading Clerk assists the Presiding Clerk by excerpting and reading Epistles sent to the Yearly Meeting, and other communications as needed.

THE CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE includes three or four experienced Friends who are able to recognize and appreciate the diversity in the membership. Their task is to assist in planning sessions and to help the Clerk remain flexible and responsive to the wide spectrum of feelings, thoughts, and styles present in the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting Clerk and the Clerk of Ministry and Oversight, in consultation with that committee, selects the advisory committee.

THE TREASURER receives and holds funds of the Yearly Meeting, makes authorized disbursements, and keeps complete records of all income and expenditures. The Treasurer presents interim financial statements to the Yearly Meeting at its annual session and final financial statements for the preceding fiscal year to the Representative Committee. The Treasurer is a member of the Finance Committee and the Pacific Yearly Meeting Holding Corporation *ex officio*. An Assistant Treasurer may be appointed to help the Treasurer as needed. The Treasurer is appointed for a three-year term consistent with the fiscal year (10/1 to 9/30).

THE STATISTICAL CLERK is responsible for assembling annual statistical reports (births, deaths, marriages, new memberships, changes of address) from constituent Meetings as well as maintaining lists and addresses of Worship Groups, Preparative Meetings, and Clerks of local Meetings. These lists are distributed to Meetings and provided to other Friends' organizations as appropriate. The annual report of the Statistical Clerk is given at Yearly Meeting. The Statistical Clerk also maintains current forms, files and records of Yearly Meeting, and periodically transfers them to the care of the Historian-Archivist. (See Appendices 1E and 2.)

Two members of the Ministry and Oversight Committee are named to be available for guidance and counsel to the Statistical Clerk. The Statistical Clerk is a member of the Finance Committee *ex officio* and is appointed for a three-year term.

THE HISTORIAN-ARCHIVIST gathers, organizes and preserves materials relating to the development and history of Pacific Yearly Meeting and its precursor, the Pacific Coast Association of Friends. The Historian-Archivist works with the Recording Clerks to maintain an index to the minutes of Pacific Yearly Meeting and its Representative Committee as an aid to officers and committees in their work. The Historian-Archivist is appointed for a three-year term and serves on the Discipline Committee *ex officio*. Records and materials are stored at Whittier College Library in a room that the College agreed to set aside for this purpose in 1986. (See Appendix 2)

THE ARRANGEMENTS CLERK has primary responsibility for all preparations and operations of support services necessary for the right holding of the Yearly Meeting. These may include negotiating a contract for the site in consultation with the Presiding Clerk, Treasurer, and Clerk of the Site Committee. The Arrangements Clerk names the Arrangements Committee, serves as its convener, and is a member of the Representative Committee. The Assistant Arrangements Clerk serves as an aide to the Arrangements Clerk and is a member of the Arrangements Committee *ex officio*.

THE REGISTRAR's duties revolve solely around the annual session. They include setting fees in consultation with the Finance Committee, designing and collecting registration materials, and assigning lodging, as needed to adapt to the site. The Registrar works closely with other officers to see that it is as physically and financially convenient as possible for all to attend the annual session.

YEARLY MEETING COMMITTEES

Unless otherwise indicated, the Nominating Committee nominates Clerks and members of Yearly Meeting committees, who must then be appointed by the Yearly Meeting. The individuals begin their

terms at the close of the annual session. At that time, outgoing members are expected to have completed their business, and Clerks should promptly turn over all materials to the incoming Clerks and to the Historian-Archivist.

REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE consists of the officers of the Yearly Meeting, Clerks of Quarterly Meetings and all Yearly Meeting standing committees, the Registrar, one Representative from each Monthly Meeting, Representatives of special committees as approved by the Clerk, the convener of the Friends World Committee for Consultation Representatives, and the immediate past Clerk of Yearly Meeting. All members of Representative Committee are expected to attend all meetings of the Committee.

Each Monthly Meeting should appoint a Representative and Observer who are active in the life of the Meeting and are capable of communicating its views, to serve for a full term of at least one year. The Representative keeps informed on matters likely to come before the committee and reports back to the Monthly Meeting on the issues, concerns and decisions of the committee and the Yearly Meeting. Although they bring the thoughts, feelings and convictions of their Meeting to matters under consideration, they should not adhere to a predetermined point of view, but join with other members of the committee in seeking Divine Guidance for the corporate sense of the Meeting.

Each Monthly Meeting also selects an Observer who is encouraged to use the opportunity to become familiar with the work and procedures of the Representative Committee and the Yearly Meeting. Because the Yearly Meeting needs continuity of service, the Representative and the Observer may be re-appointed, and Meetings may find that their Observer is the most appropriate person to be their next Representative. Long term service by both gives continuity to the Representative Committee.

The role of the Representative Committee has evolved over the years. As of this writing, it meets annually in early March (alternating between Northern and Southern California), but the

Clerk may call for additional sessions as necessary. For some time Representative Committee seasoned concerns on behalf of the whole Yearly Meeting, but it does not now function in this way.

The Representative Committee conducts any business of the Yearly Meeting that cannot be delayed. It is authorized to act on behalf of the Yearly Meeting if long-standing policy or historical position covers the matter. Nominations made by the Nominating Committee since the previous annual session are presented at Representative Committee for approval. The Representative Committee makes interim appointments as necessary, accepts the report of the Treasurer for the previous fiscal year, and approves budget changes for the current year as needed. This body may hear reports on the progress of plans for the annual session, make suggestions for the agenda, and approve a site change if necessary. Reports are presented from Quarterly Meetings and Monthly Meetings in Guatemala, Hawaii and Mexico (not included in either Quarter).

The Representative Committee names an *ad hoc* COMMITTEE TO NAME THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE. It consists of three Friends, one of whom acts as convener and a fourth person who serves as an alternate. During the annual session this committee recommends Friends to serve on the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee, for approval at a plenary session. (See Nominating Committee, p. 184.) They also recommend the name of a person (ideally one who is in the second year of service on the Nominating Committee) to be Clerk for the ensuing year. Members of the *ad hoc* committee serve through the annual session, until the next meeting of Representative Committee.

MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: The Ministry and Oversight Committee consists of nine experienced and sensitive Friends who serve overlapping three-year terms. Its role is to help foster the spiritual life and good order of the Yearly Meeting, by providing assistance and counsel to the Yearly Meeting clerks and endeavoring to make the annual session a fulfilling experience for

all participants. During that time, it is responsible for all Meetings for Worship including Meeting for Memorials, and it oversees smaller gatherings such as worship-sharing, affinity, and interest groups. It prepares the program for one plenary session to aid in centering the spirit of the Yearly Meeting.

The committee may invite officers and clerks of the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings who have particular concerns to meet with them. The committee selects three persons to serve as the Epistle Committee (see p. 182), and brings these names to the first plenary session of Yearly Meeting.

Throughout the year the Ministry and Oversight Committee is concerned for the spiritual life and good order of those Monthly Meetings, Preparative Meetings and Worship Groups that are not affiliated with a Quarterly Meeting. Upon request, it may assist any committee, Meeting or individual of the Yearly Meeting.

The committee also considers and reports on any other matters brought to it by the Yearly Meeting, Representative Committee, Quarterly or outlying Meeting. It establishes liaisons with other committees and groups so that it is aware of their needs, and names two of its members to be available to the Statistical Clerk for advice and counsel. The committee administers the Fund for Concerns and advises the Treasurer regarding other special funds (see next page).

STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES OF MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT

In its role of helping to "foster the spiritual life and the good order of the annual session," the Ministry and Oversight Committee works in part through subcommittees and through liaisons to other standing committees. As the needs of the annual session vary, so do the work and constitution of subcommittees. *Ad hoc* subcommittees serve a specific charge and then are laid down, while standing subcommittees have ongoing responsibilities. In addition, the Ministry and Oversight Committee appoints a liaison from its own membership to each of the appointed subcommittees along with liaisons to certain Pacific Yearly Meeting standing committees.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: The Adult Religious Education Subcommittee attends to the various ways in which Friends continue to grow in the Spirit. It seeks to present one or two interest groups at the Yearly Meeting, often based on successful programs which have been developed either by a particular Meeting, by a Quarterly Meeting, or by Ben Lomond Quaker Center. It has four members who serve overlapping two-year terms.

BRINTON VISITOR: The Howard and Anna Brinton Memorial Visitor Subcommittee arranges for one or more Friends to sojourn among Meetings and Quaker gatherings. The subcommittee selects Friends to serve as Brinton Visitors and reports on its work to the Ministry and Oversight Committee. With approval, the subcommittee submits its recommendations to the Yearly Meeting. It then prepares a schedule for the visitation.

The subcommittee is made up of members from the Yearly Meetings it serves: Pacific (3), Intermountain (1), and North Pacific (1). Members from Pacific Yearly Meeting serve overlapping two-year terms. Individuals and Meetings may contribute to a fund maintained by the Yearly Meeting Treasurer for support of this program.

SPECIAL FUNDS: The Special Funds Subcommittee prepares and updates descriptions of each of the special funds under its care, together with descriptions of the procedures to request disbursements. At the annual gathering and at Representative Committee Meeting, they publicize the existence of the funds and the procedures for accessing them. Along with the Treasurer, this subcommittee evaluates requests for the expenditure of monies from special accounts established by the Yearly Meeting, and ensures that each proposed expenditure is in accordance with the minutes that established the funds. The funds address the following areas: (1) peace, social order, or spiritual concerns; (2) sharing to meet unusual needs of a member of a Monthly Meeting; (3) Brinton Visitor; (4) peace tax fund; (5) student conscience fund;

(6) assistance to attend PYM; (7) scholarships for young Friends to attend Quaker gatherings.

When time permits, the full Ministry and Oversight Committee decides how the funds should actually be expended. In routine cases and/or where time is of the essence, if all of the requirements pertaining to a particular fund's purpose appear to have been met, the Clerk of the subcommittee, in consultation with the Clerk of the Ministry and Oversight Committee, may give direction to the Yearly Meeting Treasurer. This subcommittee has two members who serve overlapping two-year terms.

WORSHIP-SHARING: This subcommittee creates opportunities for small worship-sharing and affinity groups to meet during the annual session. The subcommittee makes sure that the needs for such groups and their availability are made known to the Representative Committee and consults with the Registrar to assure that the options are described in the registration materials. It designates the worship-sharing group leaders and assigns groups. It consults with the Presiding Clerk or Assistant to the Clerk to establish appropriate times for worship-sharing and affinity groups to meet. It works with the Arrangements Clerk to be sure there are suitable gathering places and with the Assistant to the Clerk to arrange for orientation of leaders. It consists of four persons who serve overlapping two-year terms.

LIAISONS AND THEIR WORK

The Ministry and Oversight Committee may also appoint Liaisons to participate in the work of subcommittees and other Yearly Meeting committees. Liaisons should have regular contact with their committees, facilitating communication in both directions. They should attend meetings of the committees when possible, report regularly, and bring relevant issues to Ministry and Oversight Committee meetings for consideration. Ministry and Oversight Committee liaison relationships include:

Discipline Committee/Faith and Practice Revision Committee
Two persons to advise and consult with the Statistical Clerk
Junior Yearly Meeting Committee
Young Friends
Children's Program Committee

OTHER YEARLY MEETING COMMITTEES

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE: coordinates all preparations and ongoing operations of the Yearly Meeting annual session except the agenda and program. It arranges housing or camping for all resident attendees. It provides all necessary equipment for the Yearly Meeting plenary sessions, committees, interest groups, and for the Children's Program. It arranges for a system of communications; assists with transportation to and from the annual session; and maintains liaison with the management and food services at the site. The Arrangements Committee also determines the use of the various facilities at the site in consultation with the Presiding Clerk, and maintains a liaison with the management and food services on the site.

Members of the committee serve through the close of the annual session. The Arrangements Clerk assigns responsibilities to members, all of whom, together, ensure the smooth operation of the Yearly Meeting. The Clerk may ask Monthly Meetings located near the annual session to assist and provide volunteers to see that the work is done.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM COMMITTEE: During the Yearly Meeting annual session the Children's Program Committee is responsible for coordinating an educational program and activities for infants and children up through sixth grade. It selects, supervises and evaluates the program coordinators, and determines the level of their stipend. This committee consists of six members, who serve three-year overlapping terms, with two members appointed annually. The current and immediate past coordinators are members *ex officio*.

THE COMMITTEE TO NAME THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE (*ad hoc*) (See Representative Committee.)

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE: This committee operates between revisions of the *Faith and Practice*. It assembles and organizes material that may go into a revision of Faith and Practice, and submits it to the Yearly Meeting for study, discussion and acceptance. *Faith and Practice*, also known as "the discipline," is an instrument for growth as well as a reflection of current feeling and thought as Friends continuously seek to experience and follow the leadings of the Spirit. All Meetings and Friends with concerns, suggestions or questions should submit them to the committee in writing. The Discipline Committee may also be asked to interpret matters relating to *Faith and Practice*.

The committee consists of six Friends, representative of the thought and spirit of the Yearly Meeting, who serve three-year overlapping terms. The Historian-Archivist is a member *ex officio*. At the instruction and with the approval of the Yearly Meeting, the committee may be augmented by six "permanent" members, nominated by the Nominating Committee, in order to labor on a revision of *Faith and Practice*, preparing material in book form for acceptance and use by the Yearly Meeting. ("Permanent" members serve for the duration of the task of revision.) During the time of revision, the entire committee is called the FAITH AND PRACTICE REVISION COMMITTEE.

EAST-WEST RELATIONS COMMITTEE: The East-West Relations Committee focuses on nurturing the work of Friends House Moscow. It promotes intercultural visitation in the area formerly called the Soviet Union. The committee consists of nine members who serve three-year overlapping terms. Three members are appointed annually. Pacific Yearly Meeting has two representatives and one alternate on the board of Friends House Moscow, who are members of this committee *ex officio*.

EPISTLE COMMITTEE *(ad hoc)*: The Epistle Committee prepares a statement *(epistle)* expressing the spirit and concern of the annual session to be sent "To Friends Everywhere" when it has been accepted by the Yearly Meeting.

This committee is appointed by the Ministry and Oversight Committee and consists of three Friends who serve for the duration of the annual session. Their names are publicized at the beginning of the annual session so that Friends can contact them with suggestions. One member, who should have served the prior year, is appointed Clerk. A first draft of the Epistle is read at a plenary session prior to the final day. Then the committee may hold an open meeting for consideration and discussion of proposed changes. The revised Epistle is presented at the plenary session before the closing Meeting for worship.

FAITH AND PRACTICE REVISION COMMITTEE (See Discipline Committee)

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Finance Committee develops the Yearly Meeting budget including that for the annual session, for the fiscal year 10/1–9/30. It recommends an appropriate assessment of the constituent Monthly Meetings for each adult member. The committee considers all proposed expenditures of money and makes recommendations for consideration by Representative Committee or Yearly Meeting.

The committee regularly solicits input from Monthly Meetings to determine the Yearly Meeting's outreach and other expenditures. Guided by these recommendations, the committee proposes contribution amounts and recipients to be included in the budget for approval at the Yearly Meeting sessions.

The proposed budget for the following fiscal year is presented at an early session of the Yearly Meeting and adopted at a later session. Following the adoption of the budget, the committee ensures that all Yearly Meeting officers, committee Clerks and Representatives to affiliated organizations are notified of the amounts budgeted for their use.

The Finance Committee recommends travel reimbursement rates for Representatives to organizations and for committee members who travel to committee meetings. It oversees all expenditures that have been authorized and arranges for an audit of accounts whenever there is a new treasurer or at least every three years. This committee is composed of six members who serve overlapping three-year terms, two of whom are appointed annually. The Treasurer and Statistical Clerk are members *ex officio.*

JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING COMMITTEE: The Junior Yearly Meeting Committee serves as a support group for the Junior Yearly Meeting and as the liaison between Junior Friends and Pacific Yearly Meeting. The committee is responsible for providing appropriate adult leadership during Junior Yearly Meeting activities and is available to advise and counsel the Junior Friends. It helps Junior Friends arrange programs during the annual Junior Yearly Meeting (see p. 172) and at other times of the year. Ministry and Oversight appoints a liaison to this committee, to facilitate communication in both directions.

The committee, officers and Clerks of the Junior Yearly Meeting and other interested Junior Friends usually meet at the Representative Committee session to plan for Junior Yearly Meeting. The Clerk of the committee and the Clerk of Junior Yearly Meeting jointly report to Representative Committee. The committee may also meet at other times.

The committee consists of eight members who serve three-year overlapping terms, of whom two or three are appointed annually. To the extent possible, members of this planning group also attend Representative Committee. The Clerk or Clerks of Junior Yearly Meeting are members of Representative Committee *ex officio*.

LATIN AMERICA CONCERNS COMMITTEE: In 1997, the annual session established a standing Latin America Concerns Committee to gather and disseminate information to Pacific and other Yearly Meetings regarding Friends groups and service projects in Latin America. The intention is to support rather than replace spirit-led

projects already supported by Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and individual Friends. It is composed of five to nine members as determined by the Nominating Committee in consultation with the committee.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The Nominating Committee submits nominations for all officers and committees. A preliminary report is given in an early plenary session, then posted for study, review and formal consideration later in the annual session. When vacancies occur during the year, nominations should be offered to Representative Committee at its interim meeting. When time is a factor, the Presiding Clerk, in consultation with the Clerk of Nominating Committee, may make interim nominations for Representatives to affiliated organizations. The committee is responsible for ensuring that organizations are notified of such appointments. The committee is responsible for notifying appointees, making sure they understand their responsibilities, and confirming their willingness to serve. The Nominating Committee may aid the Yearly Meeting by helping to define the structure and method of appointment of Yearly Meeting committees.

The committee consists of nine members who serve three-year overlapping terms. Three members are proposed annually by the Committee to Name the Nominating Committee and approved by the Yearly Meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee should be thoroughly familiar with the function and structure of Yearly Meeting and with Friends practices. They should be aware of the interests, talents, proven experience, latent gifts and potential leadership of Meeting participants. The committee membership should be well balanced as to age, gender and regional representation. The *ad hoc* Committee to Name the Nominating Committee recommends the Clerk of this committee from members who are serving a second year. (See also Representative Committee, p. 175.)

PEACE AND SOCIAL ORDER COMMITTEE: The Peace and Social Order Committee encourages and assists Monthly and Quarterly

Meetings in undertaking peace and service activities. With the approval of Yearly Meeting, it coordinates activities that express Friends' testimonies on unity, equality, simplicity peace, and community. The committee seeks to balance its efforts between peace and social order concerns. It may provide programs during a plenary session or sponsor interest groups to heighten awareness of issues and concerns, share activities, and encourage corporate action on proposed minutes.

The committee appraises concerns brought to Yearly Meeting by constituent Meetings, and requests for interest groups or displays at the Yearly Meeting session that are concerned with Peace and Social Order issues.

The committee consists of nine members who serve overlapping three-year terms, of whom three members are appointed annually. It includes the Clerks (or their designees) of the Quarterly Meeting Peace and Social Order Committees, and correspondents from Meetings unaffiliated with a Quarterly Meeting. One of PYM's Representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) named by PYM's delegates, and one PYM Friends Committee on Legislation (FCL) Representative serve *ex officio*. Representatives from Junior Yearly Meeting and Young Friends are encouraged to attend meetings of the committee.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN COMMITTEE: This committee is responsible for encouraging religious education programs for children in the Monthly Meetings. The committee may hold workshops and interest groups at Yearly Meeting to provide opportunities for Religious Education Committee members from constituent Meetings to share ideas and problems or to publicize outstanding materials and programs. The work of the committee is not limited to First Day School content, but may include related areas, such as the place of children in Meetings, Quakerly parenting, pre-school and teenage religious education. The committee may provide assistance to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups through newsletters, regional gatherings, visitations, or other means

as opportunity or need arises. It consists of six members who serve three-year overlapping terms, two of whom are appointed annually.

SECRETARIAT COMMITTEE: This committee is responsible for ensuring good communication at the annual sessions, distributing materials to Monthly Meetings, Preparative Meetings and Worship Groups, and maintaining a current mailing list for these purposes. It is composed of three members, who serve three years with overlapping terms. The Assistant to the Clerk serves *ex officio*.

SITE COMMITTEE: This committee evaluates sites for the annual sessions of the Yearly Meeting and remains involved as a resource until the Presiding Clerk and the Arrangements Clerk, in consultation with the Treasurer, have negotiated a contract. It also examines the feasibility of a permanent site and makes recommendations to the Yearly Meeting. It consists of six members who serve three-year overlapping terms, two of whom are appointed annually. The present and immediate past Arrangements Clerks are members *ex officio*.

UNITY WITH NATURE COMMITTEE: Established in 1985 in response to Yearly Meeting members' concerns for the environment and dangers to it, this committee is empowered to act on behalf of the Yearly Meeting on spiritual concerns as related to the environment and to develop its charge as way opens. This may take the form of newsletters or other publications, such as *EarthLight*. It may raise funds to further its work. The committee consists of nine members, appointed for three-year overlapping terms. The *EarthLight* Editor and one additional member of the committee are members *ex officio* of the national Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN).

WIDER FELLOWSHIP AMONG FRIENDS COMMITTEE (WFAF): At the 1985 session of the Yearly Meeting, the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee was established. The committee consists of three members who serve overlapping three-year terms. Its charge includes:

reporting regularly (in Friends Bulletin or in a newsletter) on upcoming activities or interests of Friends groups in which Pacific Yearly Meeting Friends might participate;

encouraging the release of Friends for visitation to other Friends groups;

exploring ways to bring Friends together in activities such as working for peace, assisting refugees, supporting Friends schools, and hosting conferences.

The committee also includes *ex officio* those Friends who attend as visitors, Liaisons, Representatives or Observers to the following Quaker organizations: Evangelical Friends International, Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, Evangelical Friends Church, the Reunion General de los Amigos en Mexico. It includes one member from the group of Pacific Yearly Meeting Representatives to the Friends World Committee for Consultation. The convener attends Representative Committee, convenes a meeting of the Representatives at the annual session, and makes an annual report to the Yearly Meeting.

OTHER COMMITTEES: The Yearly Meeting may set up additional committees as necessary to carry out its purposes. Such committees can be laid down when their assignments have been fulfilled and full reports have been made to the Yearly Meeting.

MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

Pacific Yearly Meeting has several special funds. In addition to those described below, there are special funds managed by specific committees. The East-West Relations and Unity with Nature Committees each manage funds designed for special purposes associated with their committees. Their funds derive primarily from designated contributions or from subscriptions to publications.

FUND FOR CONCERNS: The Ministry and Oversight Committee administers the Fund for Concerns. Its purpose is to assist members

and attenders of Monthly Meetings to follow individual leadings arising from peace, social order, or spiritual concerns. It is not intended to underwrite organization or committee projects. Individuals may apply for funds through their Monthly Meeting, which in turn applies to the Ministry and Oversight Committee on their behalf. (See Concerns and Leadings p. 59.) Earmarked contributions from Meetings form the primary source of this fund.

THE SHARING FUND is administered by the Ministry and Oversight Committee. It is available to assist members and attenders who have unusual needs of a personal nature. Individual requests go first to the Monthly Meeting. When approved by the Monthly Meeting, they go to the Pacific Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Clerk. The primary source of this Fund is earmarked contributions from Monthly Meetings.

THE PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING ATTENDANCE ASSISTANCE FUND is administered by the Ministry and Oversight Committee. Its purpose is to provide financial assistance to individuals and families who might otherwise be deterred from attending the annual Yearly Meeting session. Guidelines for application are available from the Ministry and Oversight Clerk. Contributions to this fund are solicited from attenders of the Yearly Meeting during the registration process. Meetings and individuals are invited to contribute to the fund.

THE HOWARD AND ANNA BRINTON MEMORIAL VISITOR FUND is a joint project of Pacific, Intermountain, and North Pacific Yearly Meetings. The fund is used to pay the expenses of the Brinton Visitor and is administered by the Pacific Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee through its Brinton Visitor Subcommittee. The fund is replenished by contributions from Meetings and individuals.

THE PEACE TAX FUND is administered by the Yearly Meeting Treasurer. Persons who withhold a portion of their federal income taxes for reasons of conscience may deposit the withheld money in the fund and withdraw it to pay what is due to the Internal Revenue Service when necessary.

THE STUDENT CONSCIENCE FUND is administered by a committee composed of the clerks of the Peace and Social Order and Finance Committees, and a designated member of the Ministry and Oversight Committee. Its purpose is to provide financial assistance to students who were denied federal or state grants because they refused to register for Selective Service. Guidelines, available from the Clerk of Ministry and Oversight Committee, include a plan for repayment of the funds. This fund, which was derived from contributions, is designed to revert to the Fund for Concerns if it is no longer needed as a consequence of changes in the federal laws.

YEARLY MEETING PUBLICATIONS

FAITH AND PRACTICE

FAITH AND PRACTICE is the primary published source of information describing the experience and practice of Pacific Yearly Meeting Friends as they seek to know and follow God's Light within the Religious Society of Friends.†

Most Yearly Meetings periodically review, revise, develop, and publish their edition of *Faith and Practice* to reflect practices in their own Yearly Meeting. The development of *Faith and Practice* is discussed in the Introduction to this edition. (See also Discipline Committee p. 181.)

FRIENDS BULLETIN

FRIENDS BULLETIN predates Pacific Yearly Meeting by more than fifteen years. With the first gatherings of Friends on the West Coast in 1929, its first five issues were set in moveable lead type and edited by Anna Brinton. The first issues of a new Volume I, dated January 1934, were edited by Howard Brinton, Clerk of the Pacific Coast Association of Friends, the predecessor to Pacific Yearly Meeting.

Friends Bulletin, published twice a year at that time, recorded the minutes, reports and papers read at the annual sessions along with

† PYM *Faith and Practice* may be purchased from Monthly Meetings or the AFSC Bookstore in Pasadena.

personal news of Friends and their families and the activities of the handful of unprogrammed Meetings along the West Coast. During World War II and for some time thereafter, the *Bulletin* carried news of conscientious objectors and Friends' concerns for interned Japanese Americans and their reintegration into Western communities following the war.

With the formation of Pacific Yearly Meeting in 1947, *Friends Bulletin* became its official journal. When North Pacific Yearly Meeting (NPYM) was formed in 1973, the *Bulletin* was approved as its publication as well. In 1978, *Friends Bulletin* began publishing Intermountain Yearly Meeting's (IMYM) minutes, announcements, epistles and news; in 1984, it became the official IMYM publication. In order to ensure representation from all three Yearly Meetings and to avoid being unequally associated with Pacific Yearly Meeting, where the responsible committee continued to reside, *Friends Bulletin* incorporated as a not for profit religious corporation in Oregon in 1994. The Board includes representatives of the three Yearly Meetings the *Bulletin* serves.

Friends Bulletin, now published ten times a year, has developed into the major voice for three Yearly Meetings, sustaining their bonds of friendship and recording the history, the spiritual leadings, hopes and visions and activities of unprogrammed Friends in the western United States. Although subsidized by the three Yearly Meetings, the *Friends Bulletin* endeavors to be self-supporting and is available through subscription.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Individual committees, their subcommittees, and representatives to other organizations periodically publish articles, pamphlets, or newsletters. On occasion these materials are printed in *Friends Bulletin*, *Friends Journal*, or as Pendle Hill Pamphlets. *EarthLight*, a quarterly publication of Pacific Yearly Meeting Unity with Nature Committee, has been published since 1989. Depending in part on the nature of the document, such materials can be obtained directly

from the originating committee, or the AFSC Bookstore in Pasadena. A wide range of books and other publications of interest to Friends is available also from bookstores at Pendle Hill, Friends General Conference, and Friends United Meeting.

LINKS TO OTHER FRIENDS ORGANIZATIONS

Pacific Yearly Meeting is an unaffiliated Yearly Meeting that maintains membership with the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) and appoints representatives or visitors to many Friends organizations in order to maintain two-way communication. The Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee selects liaisons to Friends organizations whose ability and experience enable them to relate to the particular organization. If a Friend is unable to attend a given session, the Clerk of the Nominating Committee and the Clerk of Yearly Meeting appoint an alternate.

When a nomination is made, the Nominating Committee provides the Representative with a summary of his or her responsibilities. The Yearly Meeting budget includes travel funds for its Representatives to attend gatherings of Friends organizations. The Treasurer or Finance Committee advises each Representative of the availability of such funds.

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE (AFSC): Founded in 1917 by a small group of Quakers to provide alternative service opportunities for conscientious objectors and relief for war victims, the American Friends Service Committee today is a worldwide organization which continues to serve as a corporate expression of certain Quaker beliefs and practices. The AFSC undertakes programs of relief, social change and reconciliation in this country and abroad. People of many races, creeds, and nationalities who share the Committee's religious and social philosophy serve as staff members or volunteer on its committees which carry primary responsibility for program direction at every level.

The AFSC is made up of a national office in Philadelphia and nine regional offices throughout the United States including those in Pasadena and San Francisco, plus a network of domestic and overseas programs. The national Board of Directors, primarily members of the Religious Society of Friends, sets organizational policy. The Clerk of each Regional Executive Committee is a full member of the National Board. Quaker process guides decision making throughout the AFSC.

Pacific Yearly Meeting appoints five persons to serve as Representatives to the AFSC Corporation (which oversees the Board of Directors), each for a three-year term. At least one of the five (selected by the Representatives themselves) should attend the annual meeting of the Corporation. The primary responsibility of the Representatives is to develop and maintain a close relationship between the AFSC and the Yearly Meeting.

EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH SOUTHWEST is a member of Evangelical Friends International. PYM Monthly Meetings in Berkeley have participated in some joint activities with Berkeley Friends Church.

Pacific Yearly Meeting sends a liaison to Friends Church Southwest Yearly Meeting's annual session. The liaison makes an annual report and is a member *ex officio* of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

EVANGELICAL FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL (EFI): The Association of Evangelical Friends, which was formed in the 1950s, became known as the Evangelical Friends Alliance in 1965. It expanded to include some Yearly Meetings in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the early 1990's. Its current membership includes five Yearly Meetings in North America. It publishes *The Friends Voice* monthly from its headquarters in Colorado. Pacific Yearly Meeting's Representative attends any EFI Yearly Meetings during the year (for example, Evangelical Friends Church Southwest Yearly) but there are no regular meetings of EFI *per se*. The Representative to EFI is an *ex*

officio member of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION (FCL): The Friends Committee on Legislation was founded by California Friends in the 1950s to bring a Quaker witness to the California state political process. The policies, priorities and programs of FCL are developed and established by its Northern and Southern Regional Committees which meet together annually to form the statewide organization. These Regional Committees are composed of Friends and like-minded persons, most of whom are appointed by Monthly Meetings in California.

FCL maintains an office in Sacramento with lobbyists who represent the organization to the California Legislature. They prepare a monthly newsletter on pending legislative issues of concern to Quakers, and distribute action alerts to FCL supporters. One seat on FCL's executive committee is reserved for a PYM Representative who is named by and is an *ex officio* member of PYM's Peace and Social Order Committee.

FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION (FCNL): The Friends Committee on National Legislation was founded in 1943 to bring spiritual values to bear on the political process. It advocates reconciliation among nations and peoples. FCNL works to eliminate militarism, coercion, and injustice and to promote civil rights, self-determination of Native Americans, restoration of confidence in government, and better housing, education and health care. This work is directed by a committee of more than 200 members of the Religious Society of Friends, who are appointed by twenty-four Yearly Meetings or other Friends organizations. They participate in the process of developing policy, establishing priorities, and approving programs. FCNL's professional lobbying team in Washington, D.C. publishes newsletters and background papers, issues timely and informative calls for action, and maintains useful resources and files. A periodic Statement of Policy, prepared

and approved by the Committee, guides all expressions of FCNL views.

Pacific Yearly Meeting may appoint as many as six Friends for overlapping three-year terms to serve on the FCNL General Committee. These Representatives serve as a liaison between the Yearly Meeting and FCNL, facilitating mutual sharing of needs, concerns and information. They make periodic reports to Representative Committee or the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting pays for one member's attendance at the annual policy setting meeting of the General Committee. The representatives name one member to serve on the Yearly Meeting Peace and Social Order Committee *ex officio*.

A representative of the Yearly Meeting who attends the annual meeting of FCNL is also appointed to attend the annual William Penn House Board meeting (which immediately precedes that of the FCNL).

FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE (FGC): Friends General Conference, formed in 1900, is composed of fourteen Yearly Meetings and six Monthly Meetings. It provides many services to Friends in unprogrammed Meetings, including a bookstore and catalog service, materials for religious education programs, and assistance with the purchase or building of Meetinghouses.

FGC also maintains connections among unprogrammed Meetings in the USA and Canada. All Friends are invited to its annual gathering, where a large number of Friends experience contemporary expressions of life and thought within the Religious Society of Friends and share concerns and problems.

Although Pacific Yearly Meeting is not an affiliated member, it does name an Observer annually to attend Friends General Conference Central Committee meetings. This representative is a member *ex officio* of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

FRIENDS UNITED MEETING (FUM): Friends United Meeting is a fellowship composed of both pastoral and unprogrammed

Meetings. It works to extend Quaker witness throughout the world and to provide Yearly, Quarterly, and local Meetings with practical resources, including a bookstore and conference center. It meets every three years. Pacific Yearly Meeting is not a member. However, it names an Observer to attend Friends United Meeting Triennial. This Representative is also an *ex officio* member of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION (FWCC): Created in 1937, The Friends World Committee for Consultation is a worldwide body of diverse Yearly Meetings which acts in a consultative capacity to promote better understanding among Quakers. FWCC is a committee-run organization that enables Friends and their Yearly Meetings to work cooperatively. The four geographically defined sections meet annually, and the global organization meets every three years.

These gatherings enable Yearly Meeting Representatives to join in worship with Quakers worldwide to search for God's will and to make their corporate witness more effective. FWCC encourages spiritual and personal connections with adult and young Friends around the world through conferences and intervisitation. It also publishes a directory and calendar of Yearly Meetings, and other Quaker literature. FWCC sponsors programs and is affiliated with the Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO) in New York and Geneva.

Pacific Yearly Meeting appoints five Friends to the FWCC, Section of the Americas, for overlapping three-year terms. All Representatives are encouraged to attend the annual session of the Section of the Americas in March, which is open to all Friends. Pacific Yearly Meeting sends three Representatives to the triennial worldwide sessions of worship and business.

The Representatives name one of their members to serve as convener and one to serve as an *ex officio* member of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

PACIFIC FRIENDS OUTREACH SOCIETY (PFOS): was formed as a California nonprofit corporation with the purpose of providing a center for spiritual development in a sustainable environment and committed to social justice, education and outreach, capable of hosting yearly meetings and other Quaker and non-Quaker groups. This action was taken with the approval of Pacific Yearly Meeting in 1996.

REUNION GENERAL DE LOS AMIGOS EN MEXICO (RGAM) includes both unprogrammed and pastoral Friends in Mexico. It meets every 18 months for fellowship, sharing and mutual support. The Yearly Meeting appoints one Friend to attend who is also an *ex officio* member of the Wider Fellowship Among Friends Committee.

WESTERN YOUNG FRIENDS (WYF): Young people from Pacific and North Pacific Yearly Meetings founded WYF in the 1970's. The group holds an annual intergenerational New Year's Gathering, lasting four or five nights, which alternates between northern California and southern Oregon. While there is no formal tie to other Quaker bodies, WYF has many participants who are or have been members or attenders of Monthly Meetings.

The WYF New Year's Gathering is multi-generational and open to all ages. All participants share the work of the gathering, including meal preparation, childcare, and workshop facilitation. WYF conducts enough business to care for each other during the Gathering, create an epistle, and ensure the planning of the next Gathering.

OTHER QUAKER ORGANIZATIONS

QUARTERLY MEETING ORGANIZATIONS

BEN LOMOND QUAKER CENTER is an incorporated self-service retreat and conference center located on 80 acres of redwood forest land near Santa Cruz. It was originally given to the AFSC in 1949 and became an independent corporation under the care of College Park Quarterly Meeting in 1982. This facility has become a valuable resource of spiritual enrichment, psychological insight, and social

concern as it offers weekend and week-long programs of many kinds to Friends and the community at large. It provides retreat facilities for Monthly Meetings, other groups and individuals.

COLLEGE PARK FRIENDS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION was formed by a group of Friends in the 1950's. Its first project was a summer school in Southern California for secondary school students. The group eventually incorporated under the care of College Park Quarterly Meeting in 1960. This led to the establishment of John Woolman School, located in the Sierra foothills of Northern California. It has provided a friendly high school education, plus a home away from home, for selected students since 1963.

FRIENDS ASSOCIATION OF SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY (FASE) began with a Pacific Yearly Meeting discussion about the problems of the frail elderly. College Park Quarterly Meeting followed up on the concern. FASE formed a corporation to arrange financing, purchase property and build Friends House, which began operations in Santa Rosa in 1984. It has an independent Board of Directors nominated by the Board and residents, which must be approved by the Quarterly Meeting, as is the case for other corporations of College Park Quarterly Meeting.

THE JOINT YOUTH SERVICE PROGRAM OF THE AFSC AND SCQM is based on the early work camp concept. It regularly brings Southern California Quaker youth together with other groups to build fellowship and to contribute to the larger community. Events have included inter-city, inter-racial weekends and week-long construction projects in communities south of the Mexican-American border.

PACIFIC ACKWORTH SCHOOL was formed by a group of Friends in southern California during World War II. Located in Temple City, California, it is a day school. Its purpose has been to offer alternative pre-school and after school care, serving children up to the middle school level. Southern California Quarterly Meeting appoints two Friends to the twelve person governing board. There has been a consistent attempt to have the program reflect the principles of the Religious Society of Friends.

This glossary is indebted to the glossaries in Pacific Yearly Meeting's 1985 *Faith and Practice*, and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's 1997 *Faith & Practice*.

advices – brief reminders of the basic faith and principles held to be essential to the life and witness of Friends. They are intended to supply guidance, caution and counsel to *Monthly Meetings* and their members. Often, each month a Meeting considers one advice and its accompanying *queries*.

after the manner of Friends – following the practices of Friends, but not formally within the structure of Friends Meetings or organizations; particularly used for weddings which look like Quaker weddings but are not under the care of a Meeting.

affirmation – a legal declaration provided for Friends and others who, as a matter of conscience, refuse to take (or swear) judicial oaths.

attender – one who attends a Meeting, but is not a formal member.

birthright member – a Friend recorded at birth on the membership rolls of a Meeting (not a practice of Pacific Yearly Meeting); sometimes informally used to mean a Friend born of Quaker parents.

breaking Meeting – see closing Meeting.

Called Meeting – a Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business called by its *Clerk* at a non-regular time, usually for the purpose of considering a particular issue or item of business.

center down – to clear one's mind and settle down during the initial stage of worship, becoming spiritually focused so as to be open to the leading of the Spirit.

clearness – confidence that an action is consistent with divine will.

clearness committee – a number of Friends who gather to help one Friend achieve confidence of God's guidance in his/her life about a certain decision or course of action.

Clerk – the person responsible for administering a Friends committee, Monthly Meeting or other body and sensitive to the guidance of the Spirit in the conduct of the business of that body. When "the Clerk" is used on its own, it usually refers to the Presiding Clerk of a Meeting for Worship for Business. Monthly Meetings also often have a *Recording Clerk* responsible for recording the minutes.

closing meeting – when a Friend (usually previously designated) ends Meeting for Worship by shaking or clasping the hands of the closest Friends. These Friends in turn shake or clasp hands with other neighbors.

concern – a quickening sense of the need to do something about a situation or issue in response to what is felt to be a direct intimation of God's will.

consensus – a decision or opinion to which no one in the decision-making body dissents, as distinct from *unity* and *sense of the Meeting,* though often used erroneously by Friends as a synonym for these terms.

Conservative Friends – three unaffiliated Yearly Meetings — Iowa, North Carolina and Ohio — call themselves Conservative. Historically, they share John Wilbur's objections to the pastoral system. At the same time they are, in general, more explicitly Christ-centered than most western or other *unprogrammed Meetings* affiliated with Friends General Conference.

continuing revelation – a belief that the revelation of God's will is ongoing.

convener – a member of a committee who is asked to set up committee meetings until a Clerk has been identified. Also, the correspondent or contact person of a *Worship Group*.

convinced Friend – a person whose experience of Friends ways has led him/her to become a member of the Religious Society of Friends; often used to describe a Friend who was not raised a Quaker.

corporate – descriptive of the collective body of a Friends Meeting or organization (as distinct from individual).

covered Meeting – see gathered Meeting.

discernment – the process of seeking and discovering that which is deeply true.

Discipline – 1) formerly, the *Faith and Practice* of a Yearly Meeting was called its ***Discipline***. 2) related to discipleship: the practices and body of thought of a particular path, teacher, or historical tradition.

elder – (1) *verb*, to support and encourage members or attenders in the flowering of spirit-led *ministry* (and discourage behavior and speech which inhibits such ministry). This leadership can include logistical support, honest feedback, prayer, and helping with spiritual discernment. (2) *noun*, sometimes used to refer to one who has been chosen to provide ongoing eldering to support the ministry of one Friend. Historically, Elders were appointed to foster the life of the Meeting and individuals in the Meeting.

Epistle – a public letter of greeting and ministry. Such letters are sent from a Friends Meeting or organization to other Friends groups, to supply information, spiritual insight, and encouragement.

gathered Meeting – a Meeting for Worship or Business in which those present feel deeply united in the Divine Presence.

good order – those procedures for the conduct of Friends business and witness that encourage a Meeting or Friends organization to carry out its corporate activities under divine leading. The term "rightly ordered" is also used in this sense.

hold in the Light – to desire that divine guidance and healing will be present to an individual who is in distress or faces a difficult situation; also, to give prayerful consideration to an idea.

Inner Light – a term that represents the direct, unmediated experience of the Divine. Similar terms used in Quaker writings include Christ Within, Light of Christ, Inward Light, Holy Spirit, Spirit of Truth, Divine Principle, Seed, Guide, Inward Teacher, and that of God in every person.

labor with – an effort by two or more Friends to struggle with a *concern* and seek a resolution or a sense of how to proceed.

lay down – to discontinue a committee or activity when its work is completed or no longer felt spiritually vital; occasionally a Monthly Meeting or other Friends organization may be laid down when it is no longer viable.

lay over – to postpone the consideration of an issue or the presentation of a report from one Meeting for Business to another.

leading – a sense of being called by God to undertake a specific course of action. A Friend may submit a leading to the Meeting for testing by corporate wisdom. A leading often arises from a concern.

letter of introduction – a letter from the Clerk, prepared at the request of a Friend who is preparing to travel. The letter often includes the fact of the Friend's membership and involvement in the home Meeting, and appropriate greetings to other Meetings and Friends bodies. This letter does not require formal consideration of the Meeting. It is often endorsed by those visited. (See Appendix 5A.) See also *travel minute*, which is not the same as a letter of introduction.

liberated Friend – see released Friend.

Light of Christ – since the formation of the Religious Society of Friends, many Friends have believed in the existence of the Christ Spirit, which is available to guide all people regardless of whether they know of or believe in the teachings of the historical Jesus. See also *Inner Light*.

mind the Light – a reminder to seek the guidance of the Inner Light, both to be obedient to Divine leadings and to nurture one's openness to the Light.

minister – (1) *verb*, to give *ministry*; (2) *noun*, one who has spoken or acted in a Spirit-led manner; one who has evoked God in another. Friends believe that we are all ministers to each other. See also *recorded Ministers*.

ministry – speech or behavior which is Spirit-led, which touches the hearts of those listening or observing; sharing or acting upon one's gifts, whether in service to individuals, to the Meeting, or the larger community. See also *vocal ministry*.

minute – a record of a corporate decision by a Friends body convened for considering business. "The minutes" also refers to all these decision minutes and their narrative accompaniment which form the records for a Meeting for Worship for Business, committee, or Friends organization.

Minute of Travel – see travel minute.

Monthly Meeting – (1) a congregation of Friends who meet regularly for worship and to conduct corporate business; (2) a monthly gathering of such a body for Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

moved to speak – led by the Spirit to speak, especially in Meeting for Worship.

opening – a new spiritual opportunity or *leading*.

Overseers – members of the Oversight or Ministry and Oversight Committee, appointed by the Meeting to give pastoral care and nurture to all members and attenders. Because "overseer" is a term associated with slavery, many contemporary Friends choose not to use it.

pastoral Meeting – see programmed Meeting.

plain dress – the witness of early Friends to the testimonies of equality and simplicity by dressing simply, in undecorated garments. A few *Conservative Friends* still wear plain dress.

plain speech – (1) the witness of early Friends to the *testimonies* of equality and integrity by speaking plainly to all, regardless of social status. This involved the use of "thee, thy, thou, thine" for all people, instead of observing the custom of using "you" for a person of higher status. Friends continue the practice of plain speech by using full given names and no titles when addressing others. (2) the Friendly habit of speaking simply and truthfully about a subject, without rhetoric or sentimentality.

Preparative Meeting – (1) a body of Friends, under the care and guidance of an established Monthly Meeting, preparing to become a Monthly Meeting; (2) in Britain Yearly Meeting (and historically), Friends in one Monthly Meeting commonly worship in several smaller Preparative Meetings which also "prepare" business to be brought before the Monthly Meeting.

proceed as way opens – to act after waiting for guidance from God, avoiding hasty judgment or action, and moving ahead as circumstances allow.

programmed Meeting – (1) a Meeting for Worship with a prearranged sequence of events, usually including music, an offering, a sermon, etc. Programmed Meetings are often led by a pastor, and often include periods of open worship in which any Friend may minister out of the silence. Also called a pastoral meeting. (2) a particular Meeting for Worship with a prearranged theme or program, such as a memorial or a wedding.

Quaker – originally a derogatory term for Friends, coined because their excitement of spirit when led to speak was sometimes expressed in a shaking or quaking motion. Now this term is simply an alternative designation for a member of the Religious Society of Friends, more widely recognized by the general public than "Friend."

Quaker dialogue – a structured process for creative listening in small groups. See also *worship-sharing*.

Quarterly Meeting – a regional gathering of members of constituent Monthly Meetings, traditionally on four occasions each year. In Pacific Yearly Meeting, the Quarterly Meetings meet three times a year, and then all Friends in the *Yearly Meeting* are invited to attend the Annual Session of the Yearly Meeting.

queries – a set of questions, based on Friends practices and testimonies, which are considered by Meetings and individuals as a way of both guiding and examining individual and corporate lives and actions. Queries to be considered regularly are included in *Faith and Practice*; others may be formulated by a committee or Meeting that seeks to clarify for itself an issue it needs to address, or to invite other Friends to examine their beliefs and actions about a concern.

recorded Minister – a Friends Meetings may record as a Minister a member who has a special gift of service to the Meeting or the community (rare within Pacific Yearly Meeting). Such recognition is accompanied by the Meeting's commitment to provide oversight to the ministry and perhaps other forms of support as well. Historically, recorded Ministers were acknowledged specifically for their gifts of vocal ministry.

Recorder – the person appointed by a Meeting to maintain records and statistics about members and attendees of the Meeting. Also called the Records Clerk, which is different from the *Recording Clerk*.

Recording Clerk – one who writes the minutes of decisions and proceedings of a Meeting for Worship for Business or other Friends decision-making body. The Recording Clerk is an assistant to the Presiding Clerk, who is ultimately responsible for creating minutes for the approval of the Meeting or other Friends body.

released Friend – A Friend who has received the recognition and support of his/her Meeting to undertake religious service, often including traveling. This may require the Meeting to take over responsibilities of the concerned person while that person is away.

right order – see good order.

rise of Meeting – (1) see *closing meeting*; (2) the time when Friends rise from their seats, following the announcements and introductions that follow the close of meeting.

seasoning – a process of waiting (often one month) before committing to a decision, to ensure that the decision is grounded in God's will.

sense of the Meeting – an expression of the unity of a Meeting for Worship for Business on some issue or concern; the general recognition of agreement within the Meeting about a matter, as articulated by the Clerk or some other person.

speak to my/one's condition – the conviction that a message, whether directly from God or through the words or actions of another, meets one's own deepest needs and purposes.

standing aside – an action taken by an individual who has genuine reservations about a particular decision, but who also recognizes that the decision is clearly supported by the weight of the Meeting. An individual who stands aside frees the Meeting from continuing to labor with him/her on the issue, and allows the Meeting to reach unity.

stop/stop in the mind – a clear uneasiness in the face of a proposed decision or action, and an unwillingness to concur with the proposal.

testimony – (1) speech or action which derives from and demonstrates deeply held beliefs; (2) a commonly held, fundamental belief of Friends which has, over time, guided public speech and action, e.g., testimonies of equality, simplicity, community, integrity, and unity.

travel minute – the endorsement a Meeting gives to one of its members who is traveling under the weight of a concern, usually expressed in a letter which accompanies the traveler. See also *letter of introduction*, which is different from a travel minute.

under the care of – describes an activity, program or event for which a Meeting takes responsibility and to which it gives oversight; thus, a marriage, a *Preparative Meeting*, and a school might each be said to be "under the care of" a Monthly Meeting.

under the weight of – carrying a concern which is pressing upon an individual or a Meeting. A Meeting which is led to struggle about fair labor practices in its community is "under the weight" of this concern.

unity – the spiritual oneness and harmony whose realization is a primary objective of a Meeting for Worship for Business; within a gathered group of Friends, the state of finding and recognizing a unified sense (often referred to as God's will) about a concern or item of business.

unprogrammed Meeting – a Meeting for Worship in which Friends gather in silence, waiting for the guidance of the Holy Spirit; a Monthly Meeting which holds Meetings for Worship in this manner.

vocal ministry – the sharing of a message, prayer or song during Meeting for Worship.

wait upon the Lord – to actively seek and attend to God's will in expectant worship.

way opens – see proceed as way opens.

weighty Friend – an informal term for a Friend who is respected for spiritual depth, experience, or wisdom.

witness – to let one's actions and words spring from deep convictions or spiritual leadings. Many unprogrammed Friends do not talk often about their beliefs, but allow their lives to bear witness to their beliefs.

Worship Group – a group of worshipers who gather regularly to follow Friends practice, who may or may not have a formal affiliation with a Monthly Meeting.

worship-sharing – a structured worshipful experience in which all participants are invited to speak (usually to a query). Worship-sharing provides an opportunity to reflect deeply on a topic, to build community with others, and to feel the movement of the Spirit within the group. See also *Quaker dialogue.*

Yearly Meeting – A body consisting of Monthly Meetings from a geographically extended area, whose members are invited to gather in annual session to worship and conduct business together. This term is also used to denote the total membership of the constituent Monthly Meetings of a designated Yearly Meeting.

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Sources for these and other materials which serve to undergird the life of the Society may be found by consultation with the staff of the bookstore of the Pacific Southwest Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee, 980 N. Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena CA 91103, or the bookstore of Friends General Conference, 1216 Arch St. 2B, Philadelphia PA 19107, <bookstore@fgcquaker.org>, which publishes an annual catalog, *A Resource Guide for Quaker Materials.*

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Listening Spirituality, Vol. I: Personal Spiritual Practices Among Friends, by Patricia Loring. Openings Press, 1997. Contemporary Friend's writing on spiritual formation.

A Testament of Devotion, by Thomas Kelly. New edition. Harper 1996. Devotional readings with a biographical memoir by Douglas Steere.

There Is A Spirit: The Nayler Sonnets, by Kenneth Boulding. Fellowship, 1945 (reprint Pendle Hill, 1992). Poetic meditations on the life and words of James Nayler, early Friend.

The World in Tune, by Elizabeth Gray Vining. Harper, 1954 (reprint Pendle Hill 1994). Meditations.

QUAKER WITNESS

For More Than Bread, by Clarence E. Pickett. Little, Brown, 1953.

Love is the Hardest Lesson: A Memoir, by Margaret Hope-Bacon, Pendle Hill, 2000. Memoir of her experience working in a psychiatric institution.

Uphill for Peace, by E. Raymond Wilson. Friends United Press, 1975. A history of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, as well as the life of the author.

Welcome to the World, by Stephen H. Thiermann. AFSC, 1968.

A Western Quaker Reader: Writings by and about Independent Quakers in the Western United States, 1929-1999, edited by Anthony Manousos. Friends Bulletin, 1999. Consists mainly of articles written for *Friends Bulletin* since its inception.

Witness for Humanity: Biography of Clarence Pickett, by Larry McK. Miller. Pendle Hill, 1999. Includes much history of the American Friends Service Committee.

Witness in Washington: An Account of the First 50 Years of FCNL, edited by Tom Mullen. Friends United Press, 1994.

STAGES OF LIFE

Childhood and Youth

Answering That of God in Our Children, by Harriet Heath. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 315, 1990. Clues to the budding spirituality of children.

Children and Solitude, by Elise Boulding. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 125, 1962. Children do need time for developing a sense of the Spirit.

Who Do We Think We Are? Young Friends Commitment and Belonging. Swarthmore Lecture Quaker Home Service. Presentation at Britain Yearly Meeting by Young Friends General Meeting. Non-linear organization of the material is helpful.

Adult Life

Addressing Sexual Abuse in Friends Meetings. New England Yearly Meeting, 1994.

Living with Oneself and Others, New England Yearly Meeting. Available from AFSC Bookstore, 980 N. Fair Oaks, Pasadena, CA 91103

Marriage: A Spiritual Leading for Lesbian, Gay and Straight Couples, by Leslie Hill. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 308, 1995. A report of one meeting's experience.

One Small Plot of Heaven: Reflections on Family Life by a Quaker Sociologist, by Elise Boulding. Pendle Hill, 1989. Twelve essays.

This We Can Say: Talking Honestly About Sex. Friends Press, U.K., 1995. Revision of the 1963 book, *Towards a Quaker View of Sex*.

Aging

On Hallowing Our Diminishments, by John Yungblut. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 292, 1990. The diminishments are not limited to aging, but may include birth defects, etc., as well.

Without Nightfall on the Spirit, by Mary Morrison. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 311, 1994. Reflections on many aspects of aging.

Death and Dying

Dear Gift of Life: A Man's Encounter with Death, by Bradford Smith. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 142, 1965. Journal and poetry of one Friend as he was dying of cancer.

Facing Death, by Diana Lampen. Quaker Home Service, 1979. Touches on death and bereavement, and the need for truthtelling.

For That Solitary Individual: An Octogenarian's Counsel on Living and Dying, by John Yungblut. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 316. The essence of the message is to become a contemplative in the later years.

Planning Ahead: Meeting Our Responsibilities when Death Occurs, 1994. Useful information for executors, family, friends and Meetings. Obtainable from Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting, P.O. Box 5065, Berkeley, CA 94705

A Song of Death, Our Spiritual Birth: A Quaker Way of Dying, by Lucy S. McIver. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 340, 1998. A look at death as a spiritual birth, completion of a cycle.

STEWARDSHIP AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Caring for Creation: Reflections on the Biblical Basis of Earthcare, by Lisa Lofland Gould. Friends Committee on Unity with Nature, 1999. Spiritual roots of relationship between humans and the rest of creation.

Ecology of Hope: Communities Collaborate for Sustainability, by Ted Bernard and Jora Young. New Society, 1996. Inspiring stories of successful collaborations.

God's Spirit in Nature, by Judith Brown. Pendle Hill Pamphlet no. 336. Meditations on being present in God's world.

Healing Ourselves and the Earth, by Elizabeth Watson. Friends Committee on Unity with Nature, 1991. An early statement expressing this concern.

PERIODICALS AND MAGAZINES

BeFriending Creation: News of Friends Committee on Unity with Nature of North America. 179 N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-1607

EarthLight: The Magazine of Spiritual Ecology. Unity with Nature Committee of Pacific Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, 111 Fairmount Ave., Oakland, CA 94611. Originated by Pacific Yearly Meeting, Unity with Nature Committee.

FLGC Notes. Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, c/o Miles Frieden, 4 Portside Ln., Searsport, ME 04974 or <www.quaker.org/flgc/>

The Friend: An Independent Quaker Journal (weekly). *The Friend* and *Friends Quarterly* Subscription Dept. P.O. Box 21366, London WC1B SLH. Valuable resource for information on Quaker service outside the U.S.

Friendly Woman: A Journal for Exchange of Ideas, Feelings, Hopes and Experiences by and among Quaker Women, 1106 Caldwell Lane, Nashville, TN 37204. (Editorial committee changes every few years.)

Friends Bulletin: Building the Western Quaker Community, 5238 Andalucia Ct., Whittier CA 90601-2222. Organ of the three independent Yearly Meetings in the West.

Friends Journal: Quaker Thought and Life Today. 1216 Arch St., 2-A, Philadelphia PA 19107.

Pastoral Care Newsletter. 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. Published by the Family Relations Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Quaker Life. 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374. Friends United Meeting publication.

What Canst Thou Say? Friends, Mystical Experience and Contemplative Practice. A worship-sharing group in print. c/o Amy Perry, 6180 N. Ralston, Indianapolis, IN 46220.

APPENDIX 1A

Recommendations for Monthly Meeting Records

Permanent records should include:

1. Each Monthly Meeting should keep its own Minutes, signed by the Presiding and Recording Clerks. Minutes should include Treasurer's reports and letters sent under concern of the Meeting either as attached items or in the body of the minutes.
2. Any financial records not included in the minutes: for example, copies of deeds or contracts.
3. If the Meeting is incorporated, records of incorporation and minutes of annual Meetings.
4. A membership list of the Monthly Meeting brought up to date annually by the Monthly Meeting Recorder and submitted, as requested, to the Yearly Meeting Statistical Clerk. List of marriages under care of the Meeting (whether of members or non-members).
5. Actively maintained Membership records of current or past members, including record of births, marriages, deaths and transfers.
6. Records of Final Affairs Instructions.
7. Records of membership of deceased or removed members.

APPENDIX 1B

Advices for Preparing the State of the Meeting Report

The State of the Meeting Report is prepared once a year by each Monthly Meeting in time to be forwarded to the spring session of its Quarterly Meeting. These reports are read at Quarterly Meeting sessions throughout the year. In contrast to the informal reports of activities given to Quarterly Meetings at other times of the year, the State of Meeting Report should be a self-examination by the Meeting and its members of their spiritual strengths and weaknesses and of efforts to foster growth in the spiritual life. Reports may cover the full range of interest and concerns but should emphasize those indicative of the spiritual health of the Meeting. They do not include statistical information, which is sent to the Statistical Clerk.

To facilitate the preparation of this report, the Worship and Ministry and Oversight Committees may meet together and explore the spiritual condition of the Meeting. They may then formulate a series of queries for a response from the Meeting as the basis of the report or may ask one or more of its members to draft a preliminary report for searching consideration by the Meeting. After revision and acceptance by the Meeting, the report is read at the Quarterly Meeting and given to the Quarterly Meeting Committee on Ministry and Oversight. A copy should also be sent to the Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee.

APPENDIX 1C

Preparation of Meeting Minutes: Some Useful Practices

Expeditious preparation of useful minutes can be aided in many ways. Some suggestions follow.

The recording and presiding clerks may study the agenda together in advance of the Meeting.

An effective minute usually consists of three sections: 1) reasons for the matter before the Meeting; 2) decision approved; 3) who is responsible for carrying out the decision, including how it is to be financed. (See body of text for "minutes of action," and "minutes of exercise.")

A minute may be drafted in advance for on-site editing as discussion of the matter takes place. (Examples: membership, marriages, matters having clear alternatives.)

Oral committee reports should be supplemented by a written version and should include draft copies of action minutes.

Assign topical identification to sections of minutes and let the minutes of action be serially numbered (ex. 1-7:2000 = Minute 1: 7th month; year 2000). Both facilitate reference in the future.

Use care in distributing and filing copies of the minutes to ensure that those given a responsibility in a Meeting have a written copy of the decision.

To the extent possible, make minutes themselves complete, interpretable without reliance upon attachments — which often go astray.

continued

Some Monthly Meetings approve all the minutes of a Meeting at that Meeting, and read them at the next Meeting for information only. In other Meetings, the recording clerk takes notes and prepares minutes later (except for minutes of action). Those minutes are read for correction and approval at the next Monthly Meeting.

APPENDIX 1D

Recommendation for Quarterly (or Half-Yearly) Meeting Records

Permanent records should include:

1. Minutes, signed by the Presiding and Recording Clerks.
2. Letters or documents sent or published on concern of the Meeting, whether or not they are part of the Minutes (e.g., sent in the name of a Committee).
3. Correspondence about concerns which may come before the Meeting.
4. Deeds, wills, property records, if any.
5. Copies of any Quarterly Meeting publications, and any published under its care.

APPENDIX 1E

Recommendations for Yearly Meeting Records

Permanent records should include:

1. A copy of the minutes of each Yearly Meeting, including all its attachments, printed on archival (acid-free) paper or other suitable form, which has been read and signed by the Clerks. The attachments should include the reports of the Nominating Committee, the Statistical Clerk and the Treasurer. All Epistles from Friends Everywhere, or parts thereof which have been read at plenary sessions by the Reading Clerk, should be attached, as well as copies of all Epistles emanating from Pacific Yearly Meeting.
2. A copy of the Treasurer's Report, separate from the minutes and signed by the Treasurer (even if one is attached to the minutes); also reports of Auditors.
3. Copies of minutes of Representative Committee (sometimes called Interim or Executive Committee).
4. Any minute or letter sent under concern of the Yearly Meeting such as Travel Minutes, which may not be part of the minutes.
5. Complete file of *Friends Bulletin*, and other publications under the care of Yearly Meeting.
6. Copies of all Handbooks and Disciplines pertaining to Pacific Yearly Meeting or the Quarterly Meetings that comprise it.
7. Contracts and significant legal documents involving Pacific Yearly Meeting or PYM Holding Corporation.

APPENDIX 2A

Archive Deposit Form

Whittier College
Whittier, California
Pacific Yearly Meeting Archives

Deposit Form

Date:

The PYM archives at Whittier College Library has this day received the following records from _____ .

These documents are to be stored at Whittier College and may be removed permanently by minute of the depositing organization or temporarily by letter from Clerk or Archivist authorizing it for such use as historical display. The liability of the Whittier College, by reason of the deposit, is limited to the exercise of their accustomed and reasonable care and diligence in guarding the deposits against loss by fire, theft, and mutilation. The material will be kept under the same conditions as Whittier's collection; and it will be subject to consultation only under the personal supervision of the librarians.

Whittier College

By _____
PYM Archivist

APPENDIX 2B

Archive Gift Form

Quaker Room of Whittier College Library
Whittier, California

Gift Form

I/we hereby give, transfer, and deliver all of my/our right, title, and interest in and to the property described below to the Quaker Room of Whittier College Library of Whittier College as an unrestricted gift and dedicate to the public without restriction and thereby place in the public domain whatever literary rights I/we may possess to this property.

Dated this ____ day of _____ , 200_:

1. Signature
   Address
2. Signature
   Address
3. Signature
   Address

I hereby accept and acknowledge as an unrestricted gift to the Quaker Room of Whittier College the items or collection described below and agree to administer them in accordance with this Library's established policies.

Dated this __ day of 200_:

Accepted by:

Signature Title

Description of the material:

APPENDIX 3A

Advices and Queries for Overseers

Advices

As a Meeting, we accept a degree of responsibility and concern for one another. We would not wish to turn aside from those of us in need.

As Overseers we wish to ensure that each member of our community is able to draw upon the Meeting's care and concern. Useful ways to give support will necessarily vary from one situation to another. As we offer help we strive to be sensitive to one another's spiritual, emotional, and material condition, and to the need of each of us to maintain our personal dignity and protect our privacy.

Overseers should seek not to act beyond their competence or beyond the limits of their proper responsibility. Clear discernment of proper responsibility comes when caring arises from the heart of compassion and when people are held firmly in the light.

Our feelings and motivations necessarily color our decisions and discussions about individuals. We need to be especially aware of our feelings about a person and that these may overcome our ability to discern God's will. We should be prayerful in maintaining this awareness and, as necessary in our Meetings, remaining silent.

continued

Queries

Do we reach out to ensure that contact is maintained with all of our Meeting community? Do we make clear that we are available to offer mutual support — spiritual, emotional, and material? Are all encouraged to seek and accept the support of the Meeting?

Do we take care that each member of our community is held in sensitive awareness, with respect for personal dignity and privacy? Are we tender of one another's feelings? Do we maintain confidentiality, avoid gossip and refrain from unnecessary and inappropriate exchange of information?

As we offer pastoral care, do we each maintain awareness of our own needs and motivations and the effect these may have on our own care giving? Are we careful to distinguish personal feelings about individuals — positive or negative — from our charge to care for them? In striving to help others, do we seek the Spirit through prayer and silence?

Are we sensitive to the limits of our capacities and the limits of our responsibilities? Do we, in our caring, hold those to whom we minister firmly in the light? Do we as Overseers hold ourselves mutually accountable to the spirit of these queries?

[Adapted from material developed by Strawberry Creek Meeting.]

APPENDIX 3B

Advices and Queries for Those Asked to Serve on a Clearness Committee

Advices

Try truly to listen to the other persons present, rather than just waiting for your turn to talk. Give equal attention to each person present, whether adult or child.

Remember that people are capable of change and growth. Do not become absorbed with historical excuses or reasons for present problems. Focus on what is happening now to perpetuate the situation or to require a decision.

Do not take sides if it is a family problem. Each person contributes to the problem, its continuation, and its solution.

Try to avoid all suggestion of blame. It destroys openness and makes clearness difficult or impossible to reach.

Do not give advice; do not present solutions to others. Do not create dependency by taking over responsibility. Remember that your task is to serve as a channel for the Light to help the seeker deal with the problem or make a decision; neither you nor the committee deals directly with the problem or makes the decision.

Queries

Do you feel sufficiently at ease with the seeker and with the other members of the committee to work with them? Can you labor with them truly to provide an atmosphere in which divine guidance can be sought?

continued

If it is a family decision, can you listen without prejudice or bias to each member who is involved?

Can you devote sufficient time and energy to this committee, knowing that it may take several meetings and many weeks or months to clarify the problem and provide support while the decision is made and carried out?

Can you keep the committee discussions confidential and avoid gossiping or referring to them outside the committee unless those requesting the help of the committee are comfortable with a wider sharing of their problem?

Finally, it is important that all members of a committee on clearness feel a responsibility to help the convener establish and maintain a right spirit in all meetings of the committee. The convener has the primary responsibility. All members should cooperate in surrounding each meeting with a waiting silence, by beginning and ending with worship and asking for moments of worship during a meeting. Members may frequently recall that a meeting of a committee on clearness is not an occasion for professional or amateur counseling but a spiritual exercise, one in which Friends hope to be channels through which one or more seeking individuals may receive light on a problem and divine guidance for a decision which they — with God alone — must make.

APPENDIX 4A

Suggested Topics for Use by a Clearness Committee on Membership

The topics below, many of which will appear naturally in the course of conversation, may be useful to the visiting committee and applicant. They are used to clarify any questions that the applicant may have about membership and the workings of the Meeting, for committee members to become acquainted with the applicant on a deeper level, and for the committee members to share their spiritual lives with the applicant. Several visits may be appropriate and all meetings are held in a worshipful manner of openness and caring.

What are some milestones along your spiritual journey? How do you expect membership in the Meeting to help you in this journey?

What attracted you to Friends beliefs and practices? Are there some that you find puzzling or disturbing? Are you easy with the variety of expressions used by Friends to express their faith and with the different perspectives of Christianity that they reflect? What is your attitude toward other religions?

With what past decisions of the Monthly Meeting are you familiar and what did you think of the process and outcome?

In what ways do the Advices and Queries speak to you?

In what ways do you find the testimonies helpful? Not helpful?

How are you prepared to support the Meeting's nurture and religious education of its children?

continued

Do you understand the relationship between the Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings? Are you aware of and willing to participate as you are able in your attendance at Meetings for Worship and Meetings for Business, and to meet our expectation of financial support for programs, services, and facilities at these three levels of our organizational structure?

How will your membership affect your family relationships?

Do you have anything else you want to discuss with us?

APPENDIX 4B

Example of Letter of Welcome to New Member

[address]
[date]

Dear _____ ,

As you well know, after some months of discussion and exploration with you, Palo Alto Friends Meeting acted on your request for membership in its meeting for business of [date], approving a minute recording you as a member in the Religious Society of Friends. On behalf of the meeting, I would like to welcome you as a member. You are more than just a member of Palo Alto Friends Meeting; you are a member of the Religious Society of Friends and should feel welcome and comfortable in Meetings wherever you might visit. Membership is not the accomplishment of the journey with God, but a covenant with the Meeting in the search for spiritual depth and personal knowledge of the Divine leading our lives.

The Oversight Committee usually tries to select a book to give to new members that will be both a remembrance and of use in seeking to know the Light Within. The committee has chosen *Life on Two Levels, An Autobiography* by Josephine Whitney Duveneck, who was a strong member of the Meeting when I first came on the scene; I hope this is one you do not already have on your bookshelf.

With love,

Clerk

APPENDIX 4C

Procedure for Transfer of Membership

FOR THE MEMBER

1. When a relationship with the new Meeting has been established, the member applies to the Clerk of the old Meeting for a Certificate of Transfer (Removal) to the new Meeting.

2. At the same time, the member writes to the Clerk of the new Meeting indicating that request for transfer has been made.

FOR THE 'OLD' MEETING

1. The Clerk receives the request for transfer.

2. The request is read to the Monthly Meeting and is given to the Oversight Committee.

3. If everything is in order, the Oversight Committee recommends to the Monthly Meeting that the transfer be approved.

4. The Meeting approves the transfer.

5. The Clerk or Recorder completes two copies of Certificate of Transfer and partially completes one Acceptance of Transfer. (see pp. 241-242) One copy of the Certificate and the Acceptance are sent to the receiving Meeting. (see p. 240) (The old Meeting is obligated to inform the proposed new Meeting of any special conditions or problems experienced with a transferring member.)

6. The Clerk or Recorder retains one copy of the Certificate of Transfer.

continued

7. If reply is not received in due time, another copy of the Certificate of Transfer may be made and inquiry sent to the new Meeting.

8. When the Acceptance of Transfer is received from the new Meeting, a copy of the member's Meeting Membership Record is sent to the receiving Meeting, thus completing the interchange. The Clerk or Recorder appends the copy of the Acceptance to the Meeting Membership Record for that member and files those documents, in whatever manner the records of 'former members' are preserved. The Friend remains a member of the 'old' Meeting until the new Meeting has minuted acceptance in their Meeting for Business. The date of that Meeting marks the official membership in the new Meeting and is so reported to the Yearly Meeting in the annual Statistical Report.

FOR THE 'NEW' MEETING

1. The Clerk will have received the Member's letter of intention to transfer membership. When the Certificate of Transfer (Removal) and the partially completed Acceptance of Transfer are received, the Clerk acknowledges them and reports it to the next Meeting for Business. The material is given to the Oversight Committee. To avoid unnecessary delay, the Clerk may do this directly if the Overseers are to meet before the next Meeting for Business.

continued

2. The Overseers appoint a Visiting Committee, composed of three Friends, one of whom is an Overseer. They explore together with the transferring member such matters as are necessary in order that there be common understanding and comfort in the new relationship. When the Visiting Committee finds clearness, it reports to the Oversight Committee, which then makes its recommendation to the next Monthly Meeting for Business. If the Oversight Committee finds cause for delay, it reports regularly of the delay to the Monthly Meeting for Business. The matter should appear on the agenda until it is resolved.

3. When the Oversight Committee recommends acceptance of the Certificate of Transfer to the Meeting for Business, the matter is held over until the next Meeting for Business. No action is taken.

4. At the next Meeting for Business, the Meeting minutes its decision regarding the acceptance of the Friend as a member. With acceptance, that minute records membership in the new Meeting as of that date.

5. The Clerk furnishes the member with a copy of the approving minute.

6. The Clerk completes the Acceptance of Transfer (see p. 238) and makes a copy of it.

7. The Clerk or Recorder sends the copy of the Acceptance of Transfer to the Clerk of member's old Meeting.

continued

8. The Certificate of Transfer and the original Acceptance of Transfer become the Meeting's membership record. The Recorder preserves them in the Meeting's file of current members. The Meeting will receive a copy of the meeting membership record from the old Meeting. This is not an official record and may be stored in whatever manner the Meeting holds background information about its members.

9. At the time of acceptance of transfer, the Monthly Meeting should promptly arrange a welcoming for its new member.

10. The new member is included in the Meeting's next Statistical Report.

Note: Meetings vary in how they distribute responsibilities of the Clerk and Recorder. To avoid unnecessary delay or confusion, each Meeting will prosper by clarification of these tasks.

APPENDIX 4D

Example of Letter of Transfer

Palo Alto Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
957 Colorado Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 856-0744

February 13, 1999

Clerk
Cambridge Monthly Meeting
5 Longfellow Park
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Clerk,

Enclosed with this letter are papers relating to the transfer of membership requested by _____ :

1) Certificate of Transfer

2) Acceptance of Transfer forms (2 copies)
   Please return one copy and keep a copy for your records if you wish.

3) Meeting Membership Record

In accepting _____ 's transfer request, several of our members expressed fond remembrances and affection for him. We commend him to your loving care.

Sincerely,

Clerk

APPENDIX 4E

Certificate of Transfer

Certificate of Transfer

Date: March 7, 1993

To: San Francisco Monthly Meeting
2160 Lake Street
San Francisco, CA 94121

Dear Friends:

This Certificate of Transfer has been requested by _____ , a member of this Monthly Meeting who now resides in your area. Consideration having been given to this request, and no obstruction appearing, we commend _____ to your Friendly care, and remain with love your friends.

Removal minuted Second Month 7th, 1993, by Palo Alto Monthly Meeting, 957 Colorado Ave, Palo Alto, California 94303.

_____
Signature of the Clerk of Meeting

Enclosure
Acceptance of Transfer form, partially filled in by us. Only when you complete the form and return it to us will the transfer be concluded.

APPENDIX 4F

Acceptance of Transfer

Date:_____

To: Palo Alto Monthly Meeting
957 Colorado Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dear Friends:

This is to inform you that your Certificate of Transfer dated March 7, 1993 for _____ who now resides within our area, was read and accepted by our Monthly Meeting on _____.

On behalf of the San Francisco Monthly Meeting
2160 Lake Street
San Francisco,
California 94121

_____
Signature of the Clerk of Meeting
or of Membership Records Clerk

APPENDIX 4G

Letter of Release

[address]
[date]

Dear _____ ,

Thank you for your letter of November 9, 1995 requesting to resign your membership in the Palo Alto Friends Meeting. Although we are sorry to see a member drift from us and the Society when we remember her vibrant participation in Palo Alto Friends Meeting, we recognize the truth that Quakerism may not always satisfy one's spiritual needs, especially at a distance. The Oversight Committee considered your request and felt united in recommending to the Meeting that you be released from membership. In its Meeting for Business of April 14, 1996, Palo Alto Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends approved a minute releasing you from membership.

We hope that your future spiritual journey will be fruitful for you, whatever direction it may take. If you should find that you are drawn into membership in your local Friends Meeting, do write to us so we may forward your membership record to them. Of course you are always welcome to worship with us if you are in this area.

With love,

Clerk

APPENDIX 5A

Letter of Introduction

[Date]
[Address]

Dear Friends of New York Yearly Meeting,

We send you warm greetings with our member Elizabeth Gray Vining.

Elizabeth spent many years in Japan, and has recently written a biography of Rufus Jones. We find the combination of her global perspective on life and her in-depth knowledge of Quakerism a wonderful asset to our Meeting. We are confident you will enjoy her presence at the annual session of your Yearly Meeting.

We look forward to hearing from her about how the Spirit is moving among Friends in New York.

In Peace,

Sarah Fuller
Clerk, Big Sur Monthly Meeting

This is a fictional letter signed by the Clerk of the Meeting (someone else may have actually drafted the letter). It was written at the request of Elizabeth Gray Vining, who knew that it was common practice to bring a letter of introduction when traveling among Friends. Although it would be a courtesy for the Clerk to inform Business Meeting that the letter was written, the Meeting is not asked to approve this letter. If Elizabeth had been traveling under a particular concern, the Meeting might consider approving a travel minute (see sample).

APPENDIX 5B

Minute of Sojourn

Radnor Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
Conestoga and Sproul Roads
Villanova, PA 19085

[date]

Clerk
Redwood Forest Friends Meeting
P.O. Box 1831
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Dear Friend:

_____ has requested that her membership at Radnor Meeting be changed to that of a sojourning member of Redwood Forest Friends Meeting in Santa Rosa, California.

She left Pennsylvania in [year] but has continued her membership at Radnor while living in Marin County, California, Boulder, Colorado, and now in Santa Rosa.

Many of her friends at Radnor have fond memories of her and wish her well in her present home. She anticipates moving to Corvallis, Oregon, within the next year and will then request a transfer of membership.

Sincerely yours,

Clerk

APPENDIX 5C

Acknowledgment of Minute of Sojourn

Redwood Forest Monthly Meeting
P.O. Box 1831
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

July 14, 1989
Radnor Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
P.O. Box R 196
Radnor, Pennsylvania 19087

Dear Friends:

We have received your sojourning minute for _____ , and accepted her as a sojourning member of Redwood Forest Monthly Meeting at our Meeting for Business held [date]. We are glad to welcome her as a sojourning member. Ever since she and her son began attending our Meeting they have been much loved. She has been involved with the children and young people of our Meeting, and her care and attention in this regard is greatly appreciated. We know that she will probably be moving on in 1990, but are glad of her presence while she is with us.

With loving greetings,

Clerk

APPENDIX 5D

Sample Travel Minute

Dear Friends,

Our member John Woolman is traveling under a concern for slaveholding. Our Meeting has worshiped with him many times as we considered this issue and his leading to travel among Friends. We have no doubt that he is genuinely called to be with you and seek new Light with you about God's intentions for slaveholding and the Negro.

We entrust John Woolman to your care, and pray that you and he feel the presence of the Divine Companion as you meet together.

Signed,

Asa Sharpless
Clerk, New Dover Friends Meeting

Although this fictional example is written as a letter, it is a minute from a Meeting. It records that the Meeting affirms the Friend's leading to travel under a concern. (Probably the Meeting used a clearness committee to examine this leading.) The Meeting need not necessarily unite with the concern. (See Clearness and Clearness Committees.)

APPENDIX 6A

Suggested Topics for the Marriage Clearness Committee

BACKGROUNDS AND ACQUAINTANCE. How well does the couple know each other? What are their basic common values? How do they adapt to differences in background, religion, temperament, and interests? Can they meet these differences with humor, mutual respect, patience, and generosity? Do they have the courage and the willingness to go together for outside guidance with any problem they are unable to solve?

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, FEELINGS, ASPIRATIONS. Do they see marriage as a sacred relationship to be entered into with appreciation of its spiritual basis? How do they propose to meet their religious needs as a married couple? How do they plan to make their marriage accessible to divine assistance? Do they endeavor to hold each other in the Light?

THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP. Do they think of themselves as trusted and equal partners in marriage, sharing the responsibilities and decisions? Are they supportive of each other's goals for personal growth and fulfillment? Do they communicate their feelings and needs, their dreams and fears to each other? Are they aware of the need for developing a variety of other friendships that contribute both to individual growth and to the marriage relationship? How do they view their relationships with each other's families and their obligations toward society?

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. Have they considered together whether or not they desire children — the problems as well as the joys they would bring, and the responsibilities for nurturing and guiding them?

continued

DISCHARGE OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS. Have they prior obligations, personal or financial, which need to be met?

ATTITUDE OF PARENTS. What are the views of the parents toward the prospective marriage? These should be learned directly by the committee through personal conferences or correspondence.

THE WEDDING. How do they view the wedding that is to take place under the care of the Meeting? Are they familiar with the procedure? Do they appreciate the values involved as related to its forms?

APPENDIX 6B

Marriage Certificate

Whereas, A.B., of _____ , son/daughter of C.B. and of E.F., and D.D., of _____ , daughter/son of H.I. and J.K., having declared their intentions of marriage with each other to _____ Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, held at _____ according to the good order used among them, and [having the consent of parents (or guardians),] their proposed marriage was allowed by that Meeting.

Now these are to certify to whom it may concern, that for the accomplishment of their intentions, this _____ day of the _____ month, in the year of our Lord _____ , they, A.B. and D.D., appeared in a Meeting for Worship of the Religious Society of Friends held at _____, and A.B. taking D.D. by the hand, did, on this solemn occasion, declare that he/she took him/her, D.D. to be his/her wife/husband/partner, promising, with Divine assistance, to be unto him/her a loving and faithful wife/husband/partner so long as they both shall live (or words to that effect); and then, in the same assembly, D.D did in like manner declare that he/she took him/her, A.B., to be his/her wife/husband/partner promising, with Divine assistance, to be unto him/her a loving and faithful wife/husband/partner so long as they both shall live (or words to that effect).

And moreover they, A.B. and D.D., according to the custom of marriage, as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

A.B. D.D.

And we, having been present at the marriage, have as witnesses set our hands the day and year above written.

continued

Certificates in this form may be hand printed on parchment or good paper.

Variations on the traditional certificate may be prepared by the couple in consultation with the Marriage Committee, or preprinted traditional forms may be ordered from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Office, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102.

APPENDIX 6C

PYM Minute with Regard to Equality of Marriage Rights

PYM 96-14 Pacific Yearly Meeting approves the following Minute on Equality of Marriage Rights.

As Quakers, some of the reasons we recognize marriages are to affirm the individuals in their choice, to support loving families, and to strengthen our spiritual community. It is also fundamental to Quaker faith and practice that we honor the equality and integrity of all human beings.

Therefore, it is our belief that it is consistent with Quakers' historical faith and testimonies that we practice a single standard of treatment for all couples who wish to marry.

Given that the State offers legal recognition of opposite-gender marriage and extends significant privileges to couples who legally marry, we believe that a commitment to equality requires that same-gender couples have the same rights and privileges.

Therefore, we believe that the State should permit gay and lesbian couples to marry and share fully and equally in the rights and responsibilities of marriage.

The minute quoted above was approved at Chico, California by the Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in August 1996.

APPENDIX 6D

Legal Requirements with Regard to Marriage

CALIFORNIA LAW AND QUAKER MARRIAGE

Quaker couples who plan to marry should consult with the office of the county clerk several weeks in advance for current information about the forms, fees and health requirements. California law [Family Code Section 307] authorizes traditional Quaker "non-clergy" marriages. A statement is to be attached to or endorsed on the marriage license, showing the marriage is entered into in accordance with the rules and customs of the Society of Friends, and filed with the county registrar of marriages.

If a couple does not elect to meet with a clearness committee as provided by their Monthly Meeting, and merely wishes to have a ceremony performed in the manner of Friends, arrangements should be made for an authorized person to "solemnize" the marriage and endorse the details of the ceremony on the license. For a fee, an adult citizen, such as the Clerk of the Meeting, may apply to be named a temporary official for purposes of completing the paperwork. Any wedding ceremony desired by the couple may be used as a valid solemnization, provided that each person to be married declares in the presence of the witnesses and the authorized official that they take each other as husband and wife.

NEVADA LAW

Nevada requires a civil marriage license obtained from a county clerk. In addition, the state requires that a marriage be "solemnized" and recorded, and the record filed by an ordained minister, a civil magistrate, or a civil commissioner.

continued

However, the state does recognize a Quaker marriage as an exception. A Quaker marriage is "solemnized" if it follows Meeting practices. A marriage "under the care of the Meeting" is recognized by the State of Nevada with the filing of a Meeting's marriage certificate prepared in the form of Friends and signed by the members attending the Meeting for Marriage, and/or the Clerk or officers of the Meeting. For a marriage "after the manner of Friends" the state requires that it be solemnized, certified, and recorded by an ordained minister or by a civil magistrate.

Couples in Hawaii, Mexico, and other places should check their local marriage requirements.

APPENDIX 7

Information and Instructions on Health Care Decisions and Final Affairs

NAME DATE

ADDRESS

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

☐YES ☐NO I have completed a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions.

☐YES ☐NO I have completed forms to be an organ donor

A copy of my DPAHCD and/or organ donor form is located:

I request that the Society of Friends carry out the following upon my death:

The information below may help the Society of Friends carry out my wishes.

1. Persons to notify immediately (next of kin, executor etc.):

NAME PHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS RELATIONSHIP

NAME PHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS RELATIONSHIP

continued

2. Member of Memorial Society

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

LOCATION OF CONTRACT

3. Disposal of body

☐ BURIAL ☐ CREMATION ☐ MEDICAL RESEARCH

Preferred site for disposal of ashes:

Cemetery preferred: ☐ COMMON PLOT ☐ FAMILY PLOT

LOCATION OF DEED

LOCATION OF RELEASE PAPERS

UNDERTAKER PREFERRED

4. Burial insurance

INSURANCE COMPANY POLICY NUMBER

If no insurance, the expenses will be met as follows:

5. Services desired, and who should conduct the services:
☐ Memorial Meeting for Worship Special Requests:

continued

6. Flowers will be accepted ☐

WHERE

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE MADE TO

7. Special instructions if death is distant from home:

8. My will and/or other legal documents are located:

9. If no surviving parents, instructions on care of minor children (over)

10. Information for death certificate (must agree with legal records and policies)

FULL LEGAL NAME

PRESENT ADDRESS

DATE OF BIRTH | BIRTHPLACE | CITIZENSHIP

OCCUPATION | PRESENT EMPLOYER

TITLE | ADDRESS

FATHERS FULL NAME | MOTHERS MAIDEN NAME

RECEIVED FOR MEETING | DATE

SIGNATURE

APPENDIX 8

Yearly Meetings in the U.S. (2000)

CONSERVATIVE (C)
Iowa (C)
North Carolina (C)
Ohio

EVANGELICAL FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL (E)
Alaska
Evangelical Friends Church, Eastern Region
Mid-America
Northwest
Rocky Mountain
Evangelical Friends Church Southwest

FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE (G)
Baltimore*
Central Alaska Friends
Illinois
Lake Erie
New England*
New York*
Northern
Ohio Valley
Philadelphia
South Central
Southeastern*
Southern Appalachian

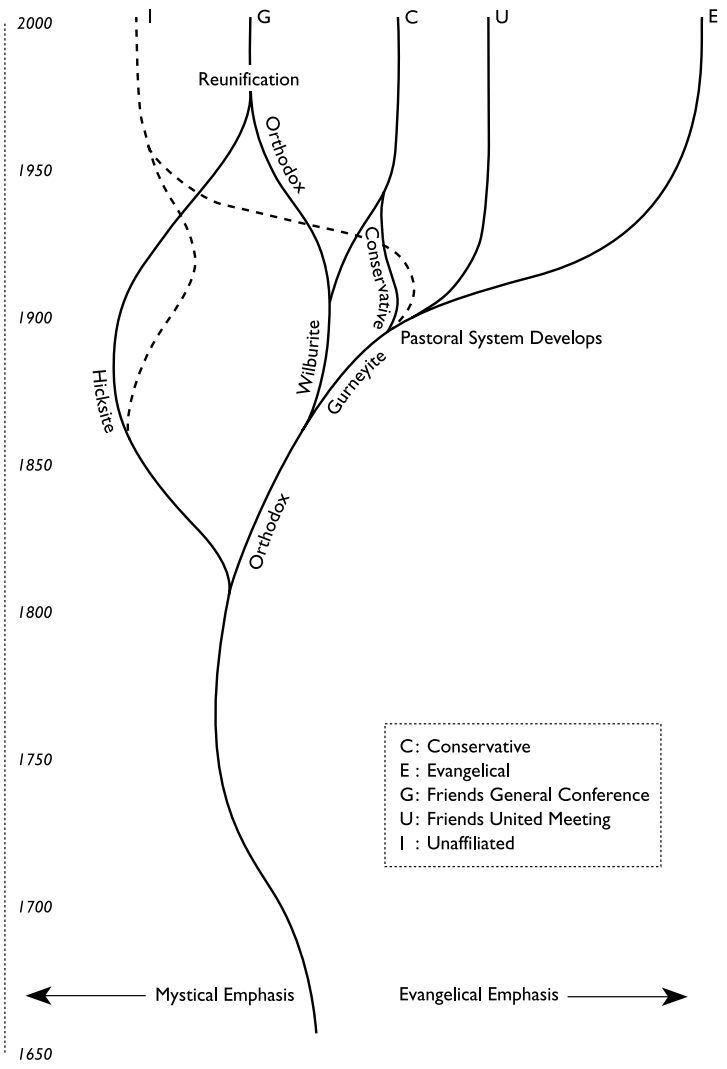
FRIENDS UNITED MEETING (U)
Baltimore*
Indiana
Iowa (U)
Nebraska
New York*
New England*
North Carolina (U)
Southeastern*
Western
Wilmington

UNAFFILIATED
Central
Intermountain
North Pacific
Pacific

* denotes a Yearly Meeting affiliated with both FUM and FGC.

APPENDIX 8 CONTINUED

Strands of American Quakerism



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