Dawn Song

Christocentric and Universalist Friends: Moving Beyond the Stereotypes

A View of "the Steeple" from Jerusalem
Among Friends

A Winter's Day

It was the beginning of winter in the city. The last of the oak leaves were down, the bare tree making the front of our house look stark and undressed. It was good to be home, away from office phones for the day. I watched from our front window for a few moments as the wind gusted, driving a mix of leaves and papers down the street in a rush. How good to have this time, I mused. No interruptions. The boys were at school and Michele was out making home visits. Plenty of time to work on manuscripts, hot tea to drink, enough logs at hand to feed a hungry wood stove for the day.

The front doorbell roused me from my chair. Too early for the mail, I thought. It's not Saturday, so it can't be the door-to-door religious folks with their Bibles. Perhaps our neighbor, Judy? She's about the only person on the block who's home this time of day.

As I reached for the door knob, I paused. I saw a stranger, a woman of perhaps 40. She was dressed poorly. Her coat was dirty and much too thin for such blustery weather. Her head was covered by a scarf. She stood awkwardly near the door, her hands in the sleeves of her coat. She reached again for the bell, then spied me through the glass of the inside door. She saw me stop and hesitate, suspecting, I think, that I would turn away.

"Mister, mister, excuse me, could you help me please?" She pressed close to the door so I could hear her voice, and she looked at me expectantly.

I opened the door and stepped onto the porch, still holding the knob as we spoke. Her voice was not strong. She avoided my eyes as she spoke: "Mister, I wonder if you can help me out. I haven't got any money. I got kids at home and they haven't eaten today. The baby's sick. Could you help?"

As she spoke I could smell alcohol. Yet she appeared sober. She repeated, "I don't have any money. Can you please help?"

I didn't hesitate, as I often do on the street when I'm approached for a handout. I excused myself briefly, went inside, and took five dollars from my wallet. "Here," I said, handing it to her. "These are hard times, I know..." or something like that.

Without looking she thanked me, took the money shyly, put her hands into her sleeves, and left the porch.

I watched as she went up the block. She didn't approach any other houses. She never looked back. She walked to the corner, turned, and left my sight.

I had never seen the woman before. Did she really have children to feed? Would she just buy alcohol with the money? Why had I given her five dollars! Maybe she'd just come back again and ask for more. Was I just encouraging her not to work? How curious, why did she choose our house anyway? Perhaps it was the children's toys on the porch, or maybe it was just a hunch on her part; guess I'll never know.

What she did took guts, though; I wonder if I'd be able to go to a stranger's door if I were as desperate as she was. So much to think about. Perhaps this was her gift to me.

Inside, I sat for a time by the window and watched the paper and leaves race the other way down the street.
A View of “the Steeple” from Jerusalem
Catherine Peck
Fox’s admonition continues to have meaning, and it fits sublimely with our peace testimony.

Portrait of Our Lydia
Reva Griffith
Over a thousand friends gathered to mourn her tragic death and to celebrate her many gifts.

Dawn Song
Phyllis Hoge
Each morning in China the dance becomes a new one, the songs serve as a blessing.

Christocentric and Universalist Friends: Moving Beyond the Stereotypes
Greg Pahl
The words and differences gently fell away. Love was quietly at work.

In the Presence of God
Marty Grundy
Being taught by the Inner Teacher is the first motion, the starting place for Quakerism.

Some Advice From John Woolman on Meeting for Business
Michael Birkel
His words may both inspire and guide us at those times when we are not in unity.

Restorative Illness
Carole Hope Depp
It’s a sobering thought: Despite the best of care, serious illness and adversity can happen.

Photos on cover and this page © Danna Cornick
A colorful mystery

Henniker is a small rural town in New Hampshire, whose claim to fame is that it is the only Henniker in the world. (It's also the home of New England College.) Outside of town, about three miles down an old dirt road, one finds the Henniker Friends Meetinghouse set in a small grass plot surrounded by woods. It is a wood frame, single story, cape-style structure dating back to about 1820. It has the traditional two doors for men and women, and multi-light sash windows. Inside, there are plain wooden benches. A pole cut down by a beaver supports part of the ceiling. A few Friends gather here on alternate First Days during the summer and fall. None live nearby.

Arriving on a recent September morning, the attenders were greatly surprised to find the building had received a fresh coat of white paint. The real surprise came when Friends realized that one door was painted pink and the other blue.

So far, all attempts to find the doers of this deed—I hate to use the word culprits—have failed, though one local resident did recall seeing an elderly couple in the yard one day.

Silas B. Weeks
Elliot, Maine

Elders in meeting

Barrett Caldwell (FJ May) and David Clements (FJ August) point to conditions that exist or have existed in every meeting of which I have been a part: the idea that "those who are supposed to take care of that sort of thing" don't. We appoint many kinds of officers, and some meetings even have job descriptions outlining the duties. On the administrative level, most do a creditable job. When it comes to enhancing the vocal job descriptions outlining the duties of appointed elders, busily engaged in authority on matters of faith and practice. 

4 "eldered" tended to be repressive rather than encouraging and forward-looking," it was argued. This news was so wrapped up in what the previous speaker said that I missed much ...

We seem to educate by teaching only half-rules: the corollary to "You shall not kill." Thou shalt not kill. Friend Jonathan Anderson is saying, in effect, "Thou shalt kill." We do indeed live in a crazy, mixed-up world, don't we?

Reinstituting the draft?

Jonathan Anderson's Viewpoint (FJ Oct. 1994) could be called, oxymoronically, "Why an Objector to Military Service Supports Requiring it." Anderson says that when the U.S. government takes military action "it acts on our behalf." But "our" cannot consist of representatives Quaker responses to such actions. We are not responsible if we oppose them by protests before they start, and engage in civil disobedience after they start.

Expression of opposition to the Vietnam War did not abate after Nixon ended the draft. I with others demonstrated against that war throughout most of its duration. For us and, I believe, most objectors, the end of the draft did not change the war's wrongness. Another factual error of Anderson's is that "sons of the well-to-do, educated" were sent to Vietnam. Some went, but a great many evaded the draft by getting college student deferment. As a university professor I was quite aware of this situation. Casualties in that war were disproportionately high among poor non-Caucasians.

Anderson considers the state a leviathan in which citizens automatically obey their government's commands. I am thankful this has never been fully true and that excessive nationalism is now waning.

Study of public policy should include the history of opposition to government policies. I would recommend to Jonathan Anderson The Quaker Peace Testimony by a non-Friend, Peter Brock (Syracuse University Press, 1990).

Ralph H. Pickett
Lima, Pa.

Friends had a balance of ministers and elders. When we do remember elders we often conceive of them only as admonishers. Elders in fact were those who in hidden ways mid-wifed the gifts of Friends tender in the Spirit. They acted as spiritual guides, as channels of the Spirit in their listening to others. They grounded the meeting for worship through their lives of prayer, often, without saying a word. Elders were able to sense the spiritual condition of individuals and of the group.

David Clements rightly notes that the Ministry and Oversight Committee's responsibility is to protect the sanctity of our meetings for worship, in large measure by making sure Friends know about our "Quaker Etiquette." I have collected perhaps 18 statements prepared by different meetings to guide first-time visitors. In one way or another, all mention vocal ministry; none comment on the sacredness of a time interval between message sharers. Some do suggest that attenders let seemingly inappropriate messages glide by and return to their own center.

In the 45 years I've been associated with the Religious Society of Friends, I've come to conclude that messages that should have been but were not shared far outweigh messages that might better not be spoken. That of God in each of us hardly compares with that of God in Jesus, the Prophets, or the lexicon of saints; nor with the Albert Schweitzers, Mother Theresa's, Mahatma Gandhi's, or Martin Luther Kings of modern times. We cannot expect the typical speaker to come forth with earth-shaking insights or profound utterances, for it is only the tiny part of God and not the entire Creator of the universe that speaks through us. And few of us can match the gentle persuasion of John Woolman, who might have approached an untimely speaker with a "I was moved by what you had to say, but was so wrapped up in what the previous speaker said that I missed much ...

We seem to educate by teaching only half-rules: the corollary to "experience is a great teacher" is "but only a fool learns from no other"; and the corollary to "speak truth to power" is "and you just might well get clobbered."

George Newkirk
Ocala, Fla.

Antidote to helplessness

Recently I overheard a Friend who had just returned from Russia telling about an incident that happened in a Moscow subway. She was going down a passage when she heard shouts and saw a policeman swinging a club. An African man crouched at the policeman's feet,望着 off the blows. Her first impulse, she said, was to shrink away like everyone else, the...
shoulder into the struggle, put her hand on
finally, instead of running,

and spat over his shoulder in the Friend's

the African man's head and said a silent

prayer, then prayed for the policeman, too.

direction. Perhaps he thought her to be in

able to act, able to do something—almost

debilitating sense of helplessness she felt at

is familiar, I suspect, to many of us, weighed

violent conflicts. Commitment to

nonviolence is fundamental to Friends'

and teaching these disciplines to

oppression. George is an internationally

peace waging. He has been called to such

conflicts, George's ministry needs the

than ever.

with oppressed minorities here as well. At

Nonviolence",

leaders in peaceful, effective forms of social

Aspiring to Quakerism

Could you write more articles for

nonQuakers who aspire to Quakerism but

struggle with whether they are “good”

enough or “committed” enough to ever be a

true Quaker (or feel comfortable among

Quakers . . .)? This is my story.

Jenny

Santa Rosa, Calif.

Yes, we would welcome an article or two

on this subject. Is anyone interested in

writing such a piece for us? —Eds.

Did we do right?

Irwin Abrams (FJ Sept. 1994) raised

questions very difficult to answer. I believe the

Quakers [in Nazi Germany] could not have

have done more. My parents told me that

they thought it was impossible to have

changed Hitler's mind. There was always

propaganda and a publicity campaign from

1933 until the end of the war, telling how

right Hitler was. You could not put anything

against it.

The Religious Society of Friends did a

lot for Germany in sending relief after the

war. They have been a great help to

Germany and showed an extraordinary sign

of humanity. I believe no German will ever

forget this.

Klaus Martin Finzel

Cologne, Germany

“Did we do right?” asks Irwin Abrams.

Perhaps it piques me because our Bible

seminar in Gainesville (Fla.) Meeting is

starting to work on the book of Job.

Isn’t his question skewed by his

presumed judgment that the truth was not

spoken to power, in the cited episodes? If

what was spoken then was not the truth, what

was it? Truth comes in an infinite

variety of sizes, forms, garbs, and

intensities.

Perhaps he is lusting after the whole

truth. That’s O.K. But who but God can ever

speak the whole truth? Indeed, maybe even

God can’t.

Which creature can ever hear the whole

truth?—or even say conclusively what is

right?

Irwin Abrams probably suspects along

with me that the more realistic and valid

question is, “Did we do good?” Also, that

the answer is, “Yes, thank God!”

John Lepke

Gainesville, Fla.

No law against it

I saw this humorous piece in a large

coffee-table book (Philadelphia, by John

Guinther, 1982) and thought you might

share it. Although the big Penn celebration

is now past, a good laugh is always timely:

In Massachusetts in the 1600s, they

executed witches. Not so in tolerant

Pennsylvania, but witchcraft trials they did

have, with William Penn himself presiding

over one in 1683.

The defendants were two Swedish women,

Margaret Mattson and Getro Hendrickson.

According to the complainant, 20 years earlier

Mrs. Mattson had bewitched somebody's

cows so that they gave little milk. The owner

of the animals testified that only one had gone

dry, and she had no evidence that even that

poor bovine was under a magic spell.

However, another witness recalled that Mrs.

Mattson's teenage daughter had once told

someone that her mother was an old witch.

Upon hearing this evidence, Penn turned to

Mrs. Mattson—no testimony was ever

introduced against Mrs. Hendrickson—and

asked her, "Hast thou ever ridden through the

air on a broomstick?"

The terrified woman, who spoke little

English and probably misunderstood the

question, vigorously nodded yes, whereupon a

thoughtful Penn replied, "Well, I know no law

against it."

The jury found the two women not guilty

of being witches, but guilty of being thought
to be witches. Penn put each woman under a

£50 bond to keep the peace, which meant,
apparently, that they were no longer permitted

unauthorized flights.

Bruce Grimes

Sunncytown, Pa.

First names only

Betty-Jean Seeger's review of Martin &

Malcolm and America: A Dream or a

Nightmare (FJ Aug. 1994) made me

uncomfortable. Both Martin Luther King, Jr.

and Malcolm X were addressed by their first

names throughout the review. In all other

reviews and references, leaders and people

in general are given the respect of their full

name if not their title. The author is referred
to as "James Cone" and the article is signed

by "Betty-Jean Seeger." I'm sure that no

harm is meant and that Friend Seeger is just

carrying out the style of the title. Still, I

become afraid when an unusual familiarity

is shown two black leaders and no one else.

Jim Harris

San Jose, Calif.

Friends Journal welcomes Forum contributions. Please try to be brief so we may include as many as possible. Limit letters to 300 words, Viewpoint to 1,000 words. Addresses are omitted to maintain the authors' privacy; these wishing to correspond directly with authors may send letters to Friends Journal to be forwarded. Authors' names are not to be used for personal or organizational solicitation. —Eds.
A View of “the Steeple” from

by Catherine Peck

It is impossible to live in Jerusalem without exploring the magnificent edifices to faith that are here. As a Quaker well-schooled in the idea that churches are unnecessary to faith—are in fact impediments to faith—I am nonetheless drawn into the spaces meant to commemorate sites where Jesus performed his ministry. No less compelling are the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, which the Jews hold as their holiest shrine, and the Dome of the Rock where Mohammed left to take his midnight ride to heaven.

Aside from the fact these spaces provide an atmosphere where I may encounter transcendence, I go to them also as a voyeur, to observe what other people find there. At the Western Wall one can see men and women resting on their foreheads, their cheeks, their lips on the huge Herodian stones and murmuring as if to lost relatives. At the Dome of the Rock, as people kneel and touch their foreheads to that holy ground, their hauntingly melodic prayers rise like articulate birds flying to God. And in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, just inside the entrance, hundreds of pilgrims kneel each day to kiss the flat rectangular stone on which Jesus is said to have lain after he was crucified.

On first observing worshipers at the holy sites, I was cynical. The places are so constantly filled with tourists who glance around and then leave that it is easy to imagine they were built for tourists alone. But because I have the privilege of spending time in them, I am eventually reminded that each site was lovingly built to focus the rambling sensibilities of worshipers on some aspect of their faith. Given God’s grace, such a focus will open the door to a clearer understanding of God’s will.

A good example is the chapel on Mount Zion that commemorates the day Peter denied Jesus three times. Why, I wondered when I saw it, would the French choose to build a shrine to denial? But sitting in this chapel one day I suddenly remembered the Spears’s Bible Study Technique, which asks of every verse, “What does this passage mean to me?” Studying the images of Peter’s ordeal rendered in stunning mosaics, I could only ask myself in what ways I deny Christ many more than three times every day!

So I have learned to appreciate the chapels, the synagogues, the mosques as spaces where it is possible to withdraw from a world loaded with distractions, and to make sense of that world in the light of faith.

But in Jerusalem, above all places, I am also troubled by these holy structures, for nowhere has more blood been spilled for the sake of edifice.

There is a photograph that is famous here, rendered on postcards and poster. It is a sparkling black-and-white photograph, taken in 1967, which shows the faces of three young, exhausted Israeli paratroopers gazing with a mixture of disbelief and awe at the Western Wall of the Temple Mount. They had just spent six days fighting hard to liberate the site from Jordan, and they were seeing the Western Wall for the first time in their lives. I confess it raises me strong emotions. It is a picture of triumph in a holy cause, and I am as susceptible as the next person to the catharsis of that moment.

But behind the photograph is a killing field where many Jews and Muslims lay dead, killed in fighting for access to this holy place. What is not shown in the photo are the homes of Arabs that stood on the site before the Six Day War. During a recent walking tour of the old city, the Israeli guide told our group that after the 1967 war, “We cleared the slums away from this area to create the beautiful plaza that provides a place for Jews to come and pray.” He tossed off this bit of information and then moved on, leaving no time for anyone to wonder about the fate of the 600 families who had lived there. He offered no description of refugee camps or shattered lives. Such complexities have been rendered moot because this ground was taken for a holy cause.

Let me not appear to judge. The conflict that won the Western Wall and its plaza for the Jews is part of the history of Jerusalem, a layered history of domination and subjugation. In this blood-soaked holy land, few people on any side of the conflict question the right, indeed the duty, of believers to protect their symbols from “the other.” So intense is the air of fear and hostility in Jerusalem, and so frequent are the incidents of violence in the name of claiming or re-claiming holy space, that most people who live here eventually reach a point where they can no longer sustain outrage. They learn simply to shrug and say, “It’s just human nature to fight over these spaces; it’s just the way of the world.” This is just the point George Fox was making when he ranted against the evils of worshiping “the steeple.” Since Fox was so articulate on this point, it falls to us to question “the way of the world.”

I present the photograph of soldiers at the Western Wall as emblematic of the spiritual compromises we must make when we attach ourselves to places. Jewish law strictly forbids killing and the oppression by Jews of another people. But while establishing the State of Israel, Jews killed or displaced hundreds of thousands of Arabs, and they now occupy the West Bank where they rule over hundreds of thousands with violence and fear. Last February, when Baruch Goldstein opened fire on 700 worshipers at the Tomb of Abraham and Sarah in Hebron, he did so because his ideology claims that shrine as an exclusively Jewish place of worship.

Catherine Peck and her husband, Chip Poston, share the position of peace development worker for the Mennonite Central Committee. As Quakers, they live in Jerusalem with daughters Hannah and Ellie, “who are learning a great deal,” Catherine writes, “about the complexities of living nonviolently in a violent world.”
Jerusalem

Likewise, the Koran deplores killing. Yet just last month a Muslim activist bombed a bus in Tel Aviv killing 22 Israelis and wounding many more. It was only the most recent of many attacks on Jews. To protest past and present abuses, some Muslims retaliate against the Israelis with violence, engendering towards all Arabs fear and hatred within the Jewish population. Violence begets violence. That truth is constantly before me here. Living in proximity to such religiously motivated incidents is spiritually deadening for one who strives to believe in the possibility of a "peaceable kingdom."

Here, it is even impossible to turn to Christians for vision. To choose only one example of Christian conflict, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre has been divided into several parts. The Roman Catholics, the Greek Orthodox, the Armenians, and the Ethiopians all vie for holy dominion over this site where Jesus was crucified and buried. So bitter is their conflict that no single denomination is allowed to hold the key to the church. For centuries a Muslim family living nearby has held the key, and each night it is a Muslim who locks the door.

Seeking release from the pain of having to watch as religious people descend into bitterness and violence for the sake of holy places, I find solace by turning to Fox's prophetic witness in asking what makes a place holy. For Fox did answer that question. He understood that once you allow "the steeple" to become the symbol for the faith you hold dear, then you cannot bear to see it destroyed, or worse, used by "the other." And so you must protect your faith with murderous symbols of worldly might and power. But if you do not invest your faith in symbols, then it cannot be destroyed, and there will be no need for outward weapons. One of the magnificent aspects of George Fox's theology is that it is all of a piece. His admonition against the building of steeples fits sublimely with the Peace Testimony, and as such renders comfort to the conflict-wary soul struggling to make sense of "the way of the world."

Are we Quakers immune to the temptation to invest our meetinghouses with holiness and to fight for dominion over them? Of course we are not. Our history is rife with conflicts between factions who wouldn't relinquish their meetinghouses to "the other." The most colorful and disturbing is recounted in Larry Ingle's book, Quakers in Conflict. During the H Hicksite/Orthodox split, it appears that Friends came to blows at Clear Creek Meeting in Ohio, and in the melee the clerk of the meeting was bodily thrown out the back door of the meetinghouse.

He is reported to have asked at that moment, "What kind of religion is this?" To which I might reply from my perspective in Jerusalem, "It is a religion like any other." But Friends are not called to be a religion like other religions.

Conflicts over buildings continue to plague meetings. Which of us has not sat in a protracted business meeting where the air was thick with hostility while such questions were debated as whether to expand, whether to air-condition, whether to spend thousands on a "historically accurate" renovation or hundreds on fiberglass? We often take our meetinghouses too seriously, and in so doing we let them come between us and worshipful fellowship. To discern the difference between good stewardship and edifice-building is to assure that the meetinghouse will never take the place of God as the seat of faith.

I recently heard a speaker distinguish between an icon and an idol. An icon is a window to God, he explained. But an idol inevitably becomes an object of worship itself. Living in Jerusalem, among the splendor of symbols, I have come to understand their usefulness. I like to think of the various churches I enjoy here as icons, as "windows." But in looking through them I must constantly keep before me the knowledge that the human mind is quick to convert an icon—especially a beautiful, expensive, or historic one—to an idol. Once we allow that to happen, we cannot rest in the Spirit, for an idol can be altered or destroyed, and we begin to live in fear of its destruction. Among the many ways George Fox challenged us to separate ourselves from the "way of the world," his warning against the building of steeples is basic to all we believe about living fearlessly and peacefully, and about finding our strength in God alone.
PORTRAIT OF
Our Lydia

by Reva Griffith

How can we frame a portrait of a young person who dies too soon? We are left with a picture half-finished. We can only guess what might have been, had the normal span of this life not been interrupted. Yet, the bold strokes are in place. An indistinct but certain aura hovers about the picture. We see and feel the tantalizing promise and are grateful to have observed the essence of a life lived well, though not long.

This is the way it is with our portrait of Lydia Moore. We think, if only . . .

But it was not to be. On August 14, 1994, Lydia, only 38 years old, died in an automobile accident in western Kansas. A few hours later, Friends in Penn Valley Meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, felt a stab of pain at the news. And while they struggled to absorb this unthinkable blow, it was apparent they were not alone. The next day the media and busy phone lines revealed that hundreds of people were suffering shock and grief at the news. And while they struggled to make sense of the picture, we see and feel the tanta­lizing promise and are grateful to have observed the essence of a life lived well.

This unassuming young Quaker, a family practice physician, would have absorbed thi s unthinkable blow, it was apparent they were not alone. The and patients; children and the elderly . . .

First, Lydia the doctor.

In 1985 she helped found Family Health Services, Inc., a nonprofit clinic in Kansas City, Kansas. At the time of her death, 5,000 patients were being served, many of them medically indigent and/or elderly, some 200 with the HIV virus or AIDS. Lydia, the only full-time physician of the clinic, worked 60-70 hours a week at $10.50 per hour. She volunteered in two other clinics and had only recently been appointed medical director of a medical care unit for AIDS patients, the first HIV unit of its kind in Kansas.

Lydia saw her patients as whole beings. They describe her as calm, pleasant, and humorous. One patient said, “She didn’t act like a doctor, she acted like a friend.” Her dress was casual; she often wore jeans and sandals at the office or on rounds. She made house calls in her faithful pickup truck.

In Kansas City, she was one of the pioneers in the treatment of the HIV virus and AIDS. There was no stigma in her treatment of AIDS patients; they came to the clinic like everyone else. Jay Wright, now a member of Penn Valley Meeting, was the first clinic patient diagnosed by Lydia as having AIDS. He told how she insisted on being a partner with her patients in the treatment of the disease. She also considered not only their disease but other aspects of their lives. Of Lydia, Jay said, “Those of us with AIDS think she walks on water.”

Now, as we bring Lydia into focus, we ask, “What was it about her that brought forth such an outpouring of grief and love?”

Then, Lydia’s life as a lesbian.

The day after Lydia’s death, Ann Clendenin, her spouse, seriously injured in the accident, looked up from her hospital bed through blackened eyes and said, “We’ve lost a very special person and,” she paused to gain control of her voice, “I feel so lucky she chose me.” Their relationship from friendship, to commitment, and finally to marriage heartened members of the gay and lesbian communities.

The Catharsis

We seldom see a grown man cry, yet Aristotle told us that in a well-made tragedy the fable alone should inspire pity and fear. No need for spectacle, specifics, irrelevant details, costume. And thus this stranger

from another city stands in our yard, hearts of our Lydia and begins to weep. “I had not known of such a person,” he blubbers.

“and I am so sorry I missed her.” We comfort him, lamenting his loss.

—David Ray

A member of Penn Valley (Mo.) Meeting. David Ray is the author of a number of books of poetry, including Sam’s Book.
of Kansas City and of Quakerdom. Heterosexuals as well, through Lydia and Ann’s patient example, gained increased understanding of a lifestyle different from their own. The couple did not look upon themselves as trailblazers; nevertheless, their straightforward path has influenced others.

In the summer of 1987, Lydia and Ann brought their request for marriage to the meeting. When the clearness committee met with Ann and Lydia, it was clear they expected to be treated like any other couple asking to be married under the care of the meeting. The committee attempted to do that, eventually recommending their marriage. The wedding, a joyful celebration, took place October 10, 1987.

In the 1988 minute book of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), the marriage of Lydia Anne Moore and Mary Ann Clendenin is noted in the yearly meeting statistics. Notice of their marriage was also listed in the FRIENDS JOURNAL. It was one of the earlier lesbian marriages within Friends meetings.

Many persons in the gay and lesbian communities of Kansas City rejoiced in this marriage. A few eased out of the “closet.” Others felt more relaxed in their way of life because this doctor and her beloved had the courage to quietly be who they were without fanfare.

**Lydia, the Quaker.**

Daisy Newman, in her book *The Procession of Friends,* wrote of those anonymous Friends at the heart of Quakerism “whose diligence in love illuminated their homes, their fields, their meetings, their neighborhoods, their classrooms, their offices…”

Lydia qualified as one of those anonymous Friends. A birthright Friend with a long Quaker lineage, the daughter of Tom and Anne Moore of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, she was a much-loved member of Penn Valley Meeting at the time of her death. Penn Valley Meeting remembers Lydia for her tall, lanky figure; her gift of discernment; her beeper; her beautiful, long brown hair; her hugs; her floor chats with the children; and so much more.

Missouri Valley Friends Conference attenders recall Lydia’s presence at MVFC since childhood and her growth “up, and up and up”; her radiant personality; her playful nature; her gentle spirit… No doubt Friends in Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), the local American Friends Service Committee, the national board of AFSC, Friends General Conference, and Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns can recount similar memories. Lydia was a person you noticed and remembered without any attempt on her part to gain your attention.

**Then there was Lydia just being Lydia.**

A very appealing piece of Lydia’s portrait would show her in a pair of old overalls acquired during medical school, working in her yard and garden. Perhaps her most prized possession was a chipper/shredder (with which she cut off the end of her right index finger and afterward declared the bobbed finger increased her compassion). She was an inveterate recycler. When she spotted an object on the side of the street that might work into some far distant plan, she stopped, put it in her truck, and took it home for storage in the basement. There wasn’t a piece of paper or a magazine that Lydia felt unworthy enough to trash without serious deliberation.

There were many other things Lydia might have done. (Ann remarked, “Lydia could do almost anything, except sing.”) She simply did not have the time to do all she wanted to do. The long hours spent in a practice where she happily served those in need of her skills sometimes left her frustrated with the price she, Ann, and her family and friends paid. The pace of her life didn’t leave enough of her to go around. At the time of her death, she was exploring options for change.

This was our Lydia. Once in a while we look up into the heavens and see a star that stands out from the others. We don’t know just how it is special, but we know it is. Such a star in the human heavens was Lydia.

Her death leaves us groping for words. It’s as if we are struck dumb. So we mouth words to describe her—but none, not even all, really reach the heart of it.

Insofar as we human beings are able, given the imperfections of our world and ourselves, Lydia, apparently without conscious thought, came as close as any to fulfilling the admonition of George Fox to “walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.”
A wonderful solitude surrounds each single one of the millions of Chinese people. If they like, they can pull down a clear curtain which closes them completely away from everyone else in the whole world. They can enter into the center of their being.

At the university where I teach, early every morning I head out to the track on the playing field along a path, which crosses a small wooded area. There I pass the slow-moving figures of men and women concentrating on their tai chi. I can tell that they feel themselves alone. They are not surprising to me: I am in China where the dance began long ago. I half-expect them, and their graceful motions raise my spirit so that I always feel mildly happy as I reach the track and join the others circling the field—three of us, then ten of us, twenty of us, and, by 6:30 a.m., whole teams of students out for a warm-up jog before their regular physical education class.

And all during the fine weather our exercise is accompanied by ten minutes of the painless but annoying wake-up music, which floats over the campus every day at 6:15 a.m.

One morning a while ago I heard a new sound—a single note, which gradually grew stronger and stronger before it ceased abruptly, then again, the same long note sounding across the field. And once again.

Seeking the source, I saw a man at the edge of the playing field lean slowly backwards, and as he leaned he pushed that single long note outward from his body. Then he stopped, straightened up, and began again—arching back, sounding the long note, and ceasing. He was alone, his utter solitude closing around him in that one sound, entirely indifferent to all the rest of us on that field. Yet we were affected by him, our spirits rising as the sound grew louder, his single note becoming our own morning hymn.

He has since appeared every day—expected, welcome, and solitary.

Then another morning brought us another singer. This was a girl holding a book, who stood at the opposite end from the man on the field itself, off the track. She walked a few paces back and forth to the sound of her slow song—and this was a song—her voice purely lyrical, rising and flowing over us like a morning mist. Like the man, she took no notice of the runners, but paced absolutely alone, absorbed in her own music. Yet though she was apparently unconscious of us, we were all affected by her—impossible not to be filled with the calm of her spirit.

For a while the pressure of work kept me from going to the track. Then, when I did go back, I discovered yet a third singer, a third song, a third mood. This was a baritone who walked across the middle of the field, equally distant from the singers of the single note and the soprano song. He sang one note first, and slowly added more as he crossed, augmenting the note until it became a scale, repeating the scale until it became a song. He then disappeared behind the tennis backboard, and remained there, bouncing his song against the board for 15 minutes or more. I found myself doing a couple more laps just to listen, to absorb the new energy, the new music. And he too was isolated, unmindful of us.

That morning I carried such happiness with me that when I left the track I didn’t feel like stopping, and I decided to continue my walk as far as the little park near the university entry gate. I don’t know why I chose that place, but when I arrived I found a dozen or so old men airing their birds, and their birds sang from their cages in the trees as the men talked quietly beneath them, visiting with each other.

All these songs continually bless the air they rise into. They were sung, they are sung, regardless of whether or not anyone is listening. And when we do listen, we hear clear voices riding like promises on the wind, solitary and free.
Moving Beyond the Stereotypes

by Greg Pahl

It sounded intriguing. "Christocentric and Universalist Friends," the title of workshop number 11 at this year’s Friends General Conference. There were so many other tempting workshop choices it was hard to make a decision, but finally, after a good deal of vacillation, I opted for what I assumed would be a lively exchange of differing views on a controversial topic, if nothing else. I was wrong. What actually took place was something altogether different from what I, and many of the other participants, had expected.

The 22 participants represented a fairly good cross-section of Quakerism, both geographically and philosophically. Marty Grundy, from Cleveland Heights, and Connie McPeak, from Painesville, Ohio, the workshop co-leaders, began by asking us a series of questions. Did we like cats? Did we like chocolate? And so on. Those who answered in the affirmative went to one side of the classroom, those in the negative to the other side. As the questions continued, the groups shifted, and it quickly became apparent that each of us had our own unique set of preferences. When the last groups had formed, Marty said, “Now, this is the last time we’ll separate ourselves by any kind of labels.”

She then asked each of us to share our favorite personal terminology for “God” with the rest of the group. The diversity of the responses was impressive: God; Dear God; Dearest God; God the Father; Awe of God; Spirit; Holy Spirit; Spirit of Christ; Energy; Consciousness; Loving, Suffering Companion; DNA of the Universe; Lord; Lord Jesus Christ; Beloved Teacher; The Divine; Transcendent Oneness; Ground of Our Being; Source of All That Is; Creative Energy; Process; Love; Good; Supreme Being; Higher Power; The Grand Ah Ha. Marty then explained that rather than trying to label the divine, we would be discussing our experience of God in the succeeding days.

“The way each of us experiences God is different, but each experience is equally valid,” Marty said at the beginning of our second session. The group was then asked to think about times when things were going well in our lives, and to try to identify what was at work or how it happened. Many of the responses contained references to brief moments of mental clarity and receptiveness to objects or sensations in the immediate environment, resulting in a feeling of peaceful connection or heightened awareness or love. Most of the participants noted that these moments came about on an irregular basis, but that meditational breathing or walking exercises or even an activity such as gardening could trigger them.

The workshop then broke into small groups to discuss the periods in our lives when things were not going so well—when we were not in touch with God. We were asked to consider what was at work during these times. When the group reassembled, there was a wide range of answers. Fear, guilt, shame, issues of control, anger, dishonesty, feelings of powerlessness, stifled feelings, meanness, cynicism, isolation, lack of communication, conflict, and alienation were considered the main culprits. “When I keep getting involved with these negative things, and I know I shouldn’t, over and over again, I see that God is missing,” one Friend observed.

At this point, another Friend expressed confusion about the direction the workshop was taking, and failed to see the relevance of the discussion to the workshop title. Another participant voiced some strong discomfort with the session’s emphasis on the negative, dark side of our experiences. “It reminds me too much of the rather fundamentalist religious background I thought I’d left behind,” he said.

Another Friend disagreed, and felt that it was important to view “both sides of the coin” in order to gain a complete picture, although she was also unsure just how that picture was going to fit into the context of the workshop. The session ended without any resolution of the concerns that had been raised.

“We already seem to be running into difficulty, and we haven’t even started to discuss Christocentric or Universalist beliefs yet,” I said to a Friend later in the day. I was beginning to wonder how we were going to manage to accomplish that without really getting into trouble.

At the beginning of the next session, a number of the workshop participants indicated that, upon reflection, they felt the focus on our “dark sides” on the previous day had been both necessary and useful to the process. “I accept my dark side just as much as my light side. In order to heal, we need to fully explore the dark side and the hurts that are present there,” one Friend said. The workshop continued, although many of us continued to wonder when we were going to get to the real heart of the discussion.

Connie and Marty then asked the group to consider how each of us experienced something greater than ourselves, and how it affected us. Once again, we broke down...
into smaller discussion groups. When the groups reassembled, there seemed to be general agreement that the simple act of being still and listening tended to encourage moments of connection. As in the preceding days, there was a great diversity of experiences.

Most of the participants described a series of many small connections—seeing a blue bird in a tree or a drop of moisture on a blade of grass reflecting the sunlight or moonlight—anything that focused one’s attention on the present moment. Many had experienced small promptings at one time or another and felt in touch with something beyond their normal condition at those moments. Receiving and sharing messages in meeting for worship was felt to be one of the most common examples. The act of sharing our experiences with one another in the workshop itself was viewed as another. Although physical location was generally not felt to be a primary factor, some Friends related experiences that had taken place on the beach, on a mountain top, or while living with Native Americans. Most of the experiences tended to be cumulative in nature, although one Friend related having a major, transcendent adolescent experience of light, and felt that she had been spoken directly to by God.

By the end of the third session, while we had shared an impressive number of interesting personal experiences, we had not yet discussed Christocentric and Universalist Friends.

“I went to a Bible-focused discussion group last night, and I must say that yesterday’s session helped me to bridge the gap between different theologies,” one Friend said, before the beginning of the fourth session. “I was able to appreciate the message that was behind the traditional words that used to make me feel so uncomfortable.”

Once again, we broke down into smaller groups, this time to discuss the question of choice. It was pointed out that we all have the option of continuing along our normal paths, or we can intentionally turn towards God. We explored the reasons why we did or did not make that choice at various times in our lives. Issues of “my” will versus “God’s” will were raised, and one major reason for not turning to God was the fear that what we would be expected to do would be difficult or not what we wanted. Surrender of control was a major issue, and becoming a channel for something greater than ourselves was viewed as a difficult decision for many participants.

“I had to suspend the skeptic in myself in order to see what might happen if I let go of control,” a Friend recounted. “At one point, nothing felt safe, and I finally had to say, ‘O.K., I give up.’ Ever since then, I have tried to be open to what a greater wisdom wants me to do—there have been wonderful surprises and a great deal of joy as a result.”

“Way will open when we get out of the way,” another Friend observed.

“I think I see a real sense of tenderness and respect for each other developing here,” Marty observed at the beginning of the fifth session. It was true. A feeling of trust had also developed that allowed the participants to share their experiences without fear of being judged or labeled. Once again, we broke down into small groups to discuss our individual experiences of leadings, nudges, hunches, callings (or whatever term we felt comfortable with) that led to some sort of personal action.

One Friend described his decision to return his draft card in the 1950s, an act which marked the beginning of his role as a “radical pacifist,” which eventually resulted in his imprisonment for a year. “I didn’t see it as a formal leading at the time, but it certainly was a major life-altering event,” he said. Another Friend said that her leadings had “led to a saner way of living” and improved her home life and parenting skills. “Learning to let go of tight control of my daughter was a very positive step—for both her and me,” she said.

“When I get to a point where I’m not clear on what I should do, if I wait patiently for the promptings—sometimes big, sometimes small—I eventually gain the clarity I’m looking for.”

It was felt that with many leadings there is a gradual build-up process from first insight, through gathering information or weighing options, to the “crunch point” where a decision on whether to act or not has to be made. A number of the participants noted that leadings frequently do not turn out the way you had imagined. It was felt that looking at “failed leadings” can also be useful, and that sometimes a
failed leading “failed” mainly because what you thought you were going to gain from it does not occur, but that frequently something of even greater value can come from the experience. For many of the participants, leadings have been life-giving, and have helped them to find direction at key moments in their lives. “To see things actually happening as a result of a leading—there’s something really thrilling about it,” another participant said.

We still hadn’t discussed Christocentric and Universalist Friends, and some of us were beginning to wonder when it was going to happen. “We’ve only got one session left—it’s tomorrow or never,” one participant commented as we left the classroom.

On the final day of the workshop, it was time to pull all the lose threads together and compare what we had learned. We never really did discuss Christocentric and Universalist Friends directly, but by this time most of the group had more or less figured out why.

“This sure wasn’t what I expected at all, but I’m glad I stayed,” one participant said. “I hoped to learn more directly about Christocentric and Universalist Friends, but the emphasis on individual experience was a valid and useful approach.”

“It was a pleasant surprise to be able to get so deep with our sharing without all the usual labels getting in the way,” another participant said.

“If you ignore the first part of the workshop title, I think we’ve done pretty well,” another Friend commented. “The fine print in the Advance Program said: ‘Exploring our common experience of the Divine, moving beyond the stereotypes of words to a deeper understanding of our Quaker journey,’ and that’s just what we’ve been doing. We’ve been sharing our experiences rather than going through an intellectual exercise, and that’s made all the difference,” he added.

“I’ve had a number of little insights and openings that, taken together, have had a substantial impact on my thinking,” another participant said. “Almost everything at the conference has seemed to tie in with our workshop one way or another, it’s been very exciting.”

“My struggle, but also my joy, has been overcoming the words that divide us, both here in the workshop and at the conference. I have become more comfortable with other people’s experience and their descriptions of them and less threatened by them,” another Friend said.

“This has really helped me to feel the joy of other people’s experience.”

“What we’ve done here, sharing our spiritual experiences, is one way to help break down the artificial barriers we find within our own meetings,” another participant said.

“I wanted to learn more about Christocentric and Universalist Friends, but what I actually learned was that I need to learn more about myself,” another Friend said. “I hope to take some of

Continued on next page

some people came to our workshop because polarization in their meetings hampers ministry and threatens to tear the meeting apart. Some acknowledged at the end that they had not read the description of the workshop. It said: “Exploring our common experience of the Divine, moving beyond the stereotypes of words to a deeper understanding of our Quaker journey.” Come prepared to suspend your disbelief, hungering for a relational experience with the Divine, expecting to be touched and taught by the Inward Teacher.”

Some participants expressed disappointment that we did not grapple frontally with the theological differences between “Christocentric” and “universalist” approaches to unprogrammed Quakerism. My experience with such grappling comes from the eight-year exercise in my meeting with the issue of same-gender marriage, in which we grappled frontally, sideways, and from the back. I have come to realize that issues that live in our hearts and guts (or whatever image or geography best describes this for you) cannot be solved or resolved by the intellect alone. Issues that touch us psychologically and spiritually must be addressed on several levels in addition to our most creative and careful thinking.

What we tried to do in the workshop, then, was to eschew labels and overt theology, and approach the issues experientially. Each person reflected on his or her “condition”; a few disliked the negativity that surfaced. Next we looked to our own experiences of what or who spoke to our condition. Then we reflected on our response. We spoke a lot about leadings or nudges we have experienced, and what we have learned as we follow or disregard them.

We initially hoped that by listening carefully to each other’s experiences, we would find common threads and points of convergence. We hoped that there would be “aha!” moments when one person would say to another, “Oh! You call it that, and I have called it this, and they are really the same!”

This is not what happened. Instead, something/someone else came into the equation, moved among and within us, and brought a different ending. Each night the leaders prayed for each participant. Each night they held up the day’s work and asked for help in facilitating the next day’s process. By the middle of the week there was concern because things were going so quietly. Nobody was expressing distress about the workshop, but there
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this back to my meeting."

"It's been very clarifying for me," another participant said. "Hearing the individual experiences. I had a hard time identifying who was who in terms of Christocentric or Universalist beliefs."

And that, ultimately, was the main point of the workshop.

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were no dramatic breakthroughs, either. The work had been taken out of the leaders' hands and was taking place within each member of the group.

On the last day, when we were trying to articulate what each of us had discovered in the week, some expressed frustration that we had not boldly confronted the issues and wrestled them into submission. Someone suggested that since even after a week of deep, personal sharing, we were unclear where most of us stood theologically, we stand up and form ourselves into a line, with "Jesus freaks" at one end and "atheistic unitarians" at the other. We postponed this exercise until everyone had had an opportunity to speak of what they had learned or discovered. Then, right in the last few minutes at that final session, we experience unity. This is what Barry Morley writes about in his Pendle Hill pamphlet, Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting. This is the root Quaker experience upon which all else is based. It was very quiet, very unspectacular. If we hadn't spoken of it, we might not even have noticed. Our differences disappeared. We were united. We did not want to label and arrange ourselves in a line along a theological spectrum. We realized, in that moment, that we were all held in love, and held each other in love and affection. Labels were irrelevant.

We suggest this is an answer to the polarization within our meetings. The answer is not a theological formulation. It is an experience, arrived at through a process. This involves an openness to something beyond each individual that knits us together, subtly, quietly, but in a way that is very real. It implies that perhaps we have been asking the wrong question, seeking resolution the wrong way. In fact, everyone in the group, despite initial hesitation, discovered they were willing to suspend their disbelief and be "taught by the Inward Teacher." People who love a good argument, who delight in making fine distinctions and drawing on a broad and erudite familiarity with others' ideas, put this aside and listened with quiet respect to each other's experience.

We spoke very little of unconditional love. Instead, participants were demonstrating it. As we listened, tenderly and respectfully, we discovered a great deal of affection for each other. Through the safety and trust built among us, individuals accepted affirmation and validation of their experiences. There were many small and treasured moments when someone would come to understand their own experiences in a new way.

I have found that the prerequisite for creating the space in which the Spirit can work involves a letting go of my own desire to control the outcome. It may take the form of listening to another with a tender and open heart, accepting in love, without judgement, what their experience has been. It may take the form of acknowledging that we are powerless to craft a solution that will be acceptable to all.

At its core, the ultimate authority for us as Friends is our own experience of something other than our conscious self. Early Friends described this as being taught by the Inward Teacher. That, in a stark and simplified sentence, is what Quakerism is about!

Or rather, that is the first motion, the starting place for Quakerism. As you are willing to reflect on your experience, and to the degree that you yearn to move toward increasing these experiences, you will move deeper into the possibilities that Quakerism offers. In the final analysis, Quakerism is not a head trip. It is an experiential, whole-life, heart trip. It is confirmed and moves forward by moments of unity when Friends, as a group, experience being melded and melted into a community that is more than just a group of people. We are in the presence of God.
Some Advice
From John Woolman
on Meeting for Business

by Michael Birkel

Like other traveling ministers in his
day, John Woolman attended his
share of business meetings. After
attending a couple of particularly long-
winded gatherings in the fall of 1758, he
recorded astute observations in his Jour-
nal. When he writes in his unassuming,
even understated style, “Here I had occa-
sion to consider,” he leaves it up to read-
ers’ imagination and memory of their own
experiences at business meeting to fill in
the gap—and perhaps to groan. It’s hardly
a satisfying endeavor to try to reduce
Woolman’s wisdom to rules of thumb,
but we might summarize his points. (All
passages are quoted from Phillips
Moulton’s edition of The Journal and
Major Essays of John Woolman, Oxford,
1971.)

Know whereof you speak, and
speak from the center rather
than from preconceived notions.
Each of these Quarterly Meetings were large
and sat near eight hour. Here I had occasion to
consider that it is a weighty thing to speak
much in large meetings for business. First,
extcept our minds are rightly prepared and we
clearly understand the case we speak to; in-
stead of forwarding, we hinder business and
make more labor for those on whom the bur-
den of the work is laid.

Speak with economy, attending
more to the matter at hand than
to yourself as speaker.
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 busi-
ness and proper weight on our minds to speak,
it behooves us to avoid useless apologies and
repetitions. Where people are gathered from
afar, and adjourning a meeting of business
attended with great difficulty, it behooves us
all to be cautious how they detain a meeting,
especially when they have set six or seven
hours and a good way to ride home.

Imagine how it feels to others.
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 imprison-
ing one man five hours without cause. After
this meeting I rode home.

That final sentence, coming as it does
after “I had occasion to consider” and “a
good way to ride home,” again reveals
Woolman’s mastery of understatement—
and invites us to take solace in this candid
disclosure that even the saints had their
limits with windy Friends.

But there were other business meet-
ings as well, many in which John
Woolman was led to take the unpopular
side in a controversial issue. He gave
literally decades of his life to the cause of
ending slavery, particularly slave holding
by his fellow Quakers. He labored to bring
yearly meetings to clearness on the evils
of slavery and, when it finally came, to
minute that clearness. When the English
and French exported their rivalries to the
North American continent during the
Seven Year’s War, he opposed the pay-
ment of war taxes, which was certainly a
minority view among Friends at that time.

So John Woolman often went to busi-
ness meetings anticipating conflict. As a
result, he had a few things to say about
such conflict, and here his advice is timely:
Don't pretend the conflict isn't there.
To see the failings of our friends, and think
hard of them, without opening that which
ought to open, and still carry the face of friendship—this tends to undermine the foundation
of true unity.

Value real community.
Like his contemporaries, Woolman placed a great value on community. The community was where the leadings of the Holy Spirit were discerned. True ministry arises from the center but happens only in community: one’s ministry begins in one’s own community and from there travels out, with the blessing of the home community. Even when Woolman had to wait for most of the rest of Quakerism to catch up with him on many controversial issues, he continued to believe that the gathered body open to divine guidance was the place where wisdom becomes incarnate. He cared enough for his own community—the Society of Friends—to seek patiently to teach it. He was not the sort of purist who chose schism and separatism as the solution to a community that does not always live up to its ideals.

Keep your eye single to righteousness, not self-image or self-righteousness.
Purity was a focal concern for John Woolman, but it was not a purity that worried most of all about keeping his own hands clean. Instead, he believed in a profound connectedness of things and that he was in fact tainted by the injustices of the world. But this did not lead to a paralyzing guilt. It led him instead to focus on those injustices and how to play a role in bringing about their transformation. The great thing about this focus, this singleness of vision, is that it freed him from self-righteousness—that enormous temptation for the morally sensitive. Just as a misplaced concern for appearances can tempt us to ignore and avoid conflict, so likewise an overgrown concern for our individual appearance as a good person can pose a significant obstacle to resolving differences and arriving at unity.

Strive to reach the pure witness in others.
John Woolman used the expression “the pure witness” to refer to what many modern Friends call “the Inner Light.” When the pure witness within us is reached, we are open to spiritual growth, ready to receive what to us is new truth. In the language of Woolman, our hearts are enlarged in love and our minds are purified to understand the true nature of righteousness. As Friends, we believe the Spirit of God can lead us into truth and unity, when we are truly open. We can become bearers of that truth for one another, but this is a delicate task. If we feel led to be such bearers, particularly on controversial matters where there is not unity, then we must speak in a way that invites genuine listening.

Humility and charity work best.
John Woolman was not the only Friend in his day opposed to slavery. He knew of others whose harangues against Quaker slave holders had little effect in changing them. Woolman seems to hint at such when he writes:

If such who were at times under sufferings on account of some scruples of conscience kept low and humble and in their conduct manifested a spirit of true charity, it would be more likely to reach the witness in others, and be of more service in the church, than if their sufferings were attended with a contrary spirit and conduct.

It has been my experience at some meetings for business that some Friends were so zealous to be at the cutting edge of Quakerism that they didn’t seem to mind who got cut off along the way. Other Friends were engaged in an honest searching of their souls, which is not a nasty business. Zeal is not always known for its patience, and there were some unkind grumblings and accusations of stalling and maneuvering. Although my personal stand on the controversial issue lay more with the progressive party, it hurt to watch seasoned Friends, who were still struggling to find their way, treated in an unvalued manner.

Righteousness and love are inseparable.
For John Woolman, justice and righteousness are what love of God and neighbor look like. They are the shape that love takes when it is lived out. When we allow ourselves to be touched by the Spirit of God, “a tenderness of heart is felt toward all people, even such who as to outward circumstances may be to us as the Jews were to the Samaritans.” When our concern for justice and righteousness is firmly grounded in universal love, we can stay centered in that love when controversy arises in business meetings. A measure of the universality of John Woolman’s love is that he was able to love those whom it is often hardest to love: those fellow Quakers with whom he strongly disagreed.
Restorative Illness
by Carole Hope Depp

Sneezing, coughing, a fever! I can't believe this is happening to me! I take good care of myself, eat well, get lots of rest, and am conscientious about fresh air and exercise. How could I be sick?

First, denial: This can't happen to me. Next, anger: How dare this happen to me! And then, reluctantly, acceptance: I feel terrible!

About the fourth day into the flu and cancellation of all plans for the week, with time on my hands, I began to wonder what might be the lesson I was meant to learn from this experience. Could it be that I had less control over my life than I thought? Did I need another reminder that I take my usual good health too much for granted? Do I have more difficulty accepting illness than others because I am one of the thirty million persons living in this country without health insurance? When our daughter was born eleven years ago, I chose to give up my career in order to stay at home with her and to advance my husband's and my plans to live more simply in accordance with our consciences. My husband chose to retire early two years ago so that we could live on less than a taxable income in order to avoid paying for our government's violence and militarism. While living in greater peace with our consciences has been a blessing, living without health insurance can be a source of anxiety at times. Perhaps my health and well-being were more a matter of fate than careful planning. The realization struck like lightning that anyone could at anytime be hit with catastrophe far beyond her power and control.

A sobering thought and a humbling one: I can take the best possible care of myself and still not avoid illness and adversity. Anything can happen at any moment. While I may be wise to lead a healthy lifestyle, I am wiser yet to be aware of my limitations. How foolish I was to think I could control illness and health. I can appreciate good health when I have it and can accept ill health when it happens. This was a lesson of which I needed reminding. Illness is a brush with mortality and our ultimate lack of control over life and death.

My week-long bout with the flu slowed me down. I had ample opportunity for reflection, reading, and writing in my journal. Gradually I entered the recovery phase. I could go out again. A trip to the grocery store was a big event! Reentry and a fresh perspective.

Weeks later while reading a book about crime and justice, by Howard Zehr, I began to realize that my experience with illness was not only about power and control but also about justice. Because I lived a healthy lifestyle, I not only expected good health, I also believed I deserved good health. That was what the anger was all about. Zehr's book refreshed my memory that the Bible is full of stories where God is merciful and does not give the individuals what they deserve (such as in Cain's case, where the usual death penalty was not applied to murder). I knew that none of us should hope to get what we deserve considering our potential for love and kindness and how miserably short we fall of that potential.

Finally, the lesson was complete. I am sick not because I deserve it, and recover not because I deserve recovery, but because a power beyond my power is in control.

A past clerk of Richmond (Va.) Meeting, Carole Depp is currently an attender at Ashland (Va.) Preparative Meeting.
Witness

Is Prison Ministry for You?

by Jack Fogarty

For centuries Quakers have been involved in prisons, both inside and out. Many individuals in Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings do prison visitation, teach, or are otherwise employed in correctional institutions. As one example, for over a decade Baltimore Friends have held a regular Monday night Quaker meeting for worship at the Patuxent Institution in Jessup, Maryland, and have just started another one at the Maryland Correctional Institution-Jessup (MCI-J). Participants in these services have come from Sandy Spring, Homewood, Adelphi, Gunpowder, Annapolis, Pipe Creek, and Frederick meetings. Two meetings are being held monthly at the Eastern Correctional Institution near Salisbury, Maryland, by Salisbury Friends Meeting, which is part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Frederick and Pipe Creek Friends regularly visit at MCI-Hagerstown as well. In 1994 the Committee on Criminal and Restorative Justice was officially established in Baltimore Yearly Meeting to encourage monthly meetings to become more active in prison ministry and social justice in their areas.

Quaker prison ministry can take many forms. For a Quaker meeting to be established in a prison, the prisoners themselves must request it. A prison is a noisy place for "silent" worship, but once they're used to the idea, prisoners seem to appreciate a time of quiet. Yes, a prison can be scary the first time those iron gates and bars close behind you, but as a volunteer you're welcomed by men (and women) who need contact with people "on the street."

Holding a meeting for worship is certainly not the only way you can help. Volunteers are often needed as classroom teachers, librarians, and tutors, as the literacy rate is apt to be low in a prison population. Are you good at mediation? Counseling? Listening? Many prisoners were abused as children, sexually and otherwise. They may need a group facilitator—or just a good listener! Are you a lawyer willing to put in some "pro bono" time? Call the Volunteer Coordinator in your local "correctional" facility to see how you can help.

Yes, violence is frequently a way of life for those caught in the loop of crime, but there is a Quaker program designed to introduce prisoners to another way of looking at themselves and others. This is the Alternatives to Violence Project or AVP, as it is called. This project started in New York Yearly Meeting and is spreading. The AVP 20-hour 20-prisoner weekend workshops are done in Goochland, Virginia, and in three Baltimore-area prisons. Volunteers go through the AVP training, plus a training-for-trainers session, before running the in-prison workshops. The goal of AVP is to bolster prisoner self-image and present new ways to avoid confrontation. Often this is the first time a prisoner has considered anything except belligerence!

Many prisoners have no one to visit them. Consider joining the Prisoner Visitations and Support organization. Quaker Lake (Va.) Friends have adopted the death row prisoners at Mecklenburg Prison. Too much? Perhaps you'd be willing to spend just Christmas morning in jail with the Holiday Project team in your city. On a lesser note, the Friends House (retirement community) in Sandy Spring, Maryland, donates their old magazines to a nearby detention center.

Meetings can actively assist released prisoners adjusting to a world in which they have to make their own decisions after existing in a regulated environment. Four Baltimore-area meetings assisted one member in making the transition and are considering two others as their sentences wind down. "Support" can be limited financial backing and/or providing resource persons to help parolees find suitable living arrangements and employment. Volunteer at the Offender Restoration and Support facility in your area.

A more distant but still personal contact is writing to those behind bars. Names (and numbers) may be obtained from those who are involved in direct visitation, but who are not able to be "pen pals" to everyone who needs it. As always, you don't need to promise more than you want to fulfill—these people will get out someday.

And moving along to the social justice arena, legislators must be educated that "lock 'em up and throw away the key" practices are expensive for taxpayers and not corrective for the criminals. Long sentences are only vindictive and diminish a person's ability to recover life in the "real world." True, the young will age before they get out—and that helps—but at $55 a day per prisoner, we surely ought to do more than warehouse human beings! The United States has the highest per capita number of its citizens behind bars of any country, and most corrections professionals agree this is not the way to "correct" people. Write to your government officials and local newspapers suggesting alternatives to incarceration. How do you feel about the death penalty? Let them know!

Often prison officials wish they were better known in their community. Check on the possibility of "field trips" to correctional facilities for your scout troop or high school social studies class. (Security considerations always rule.)

Talk about what you and your meeting can do to continue this tradition of Quaker activism for better handling of our criminal "justice" system. As you can tell by now, I would like to convince monthly meetings to do a relationship with a prison near you. Want to do something about crime? Get to know a criminal! Bring a Quaker viewpoint to those who may not have heard of non-violence. If you would like to make a real difference in lives, perhaps prison ministry is for you.

For more prisoner support information, contact:
- AVP-USA, P.O. Box 2974, Liverpool, NY 13089-2974, telephone: (315) 453-7311
- Prisoner Visitations and Support, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102, telephone (215) 341-7117
- Criminal and Restorative Justice Committee, c/o Baltimore Yearly Meeting, 17100 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring, MD 20860
Reports

Intermountain Yearly Meeting

For 20 years Friends scattered throughout the Southwestern United States have gathered to reconnect and support one another under the care of Intermountain Yearly Meeting.

In years past we have grappled with issues which have tested our endurance and our commitment and which left us at once energized and exhausted from the struggle to overcome personal agendas and rightly honor that of God in each of us.

Challenged to explore the theme of “Living the Community of Faith,” in Durango, Colorado, June 15–19, 1994, we approached our time together in a spirit of acceptance and healing. Striving to understand “community” in all its forms, we sought spiritual connection to the Light as individuals and as a corporate body, recognizing our hunger for guidance from the “still, small voice.” We looked at communities ranging from personal to local to global in all their intimacy and vulnerability. We have heretofore trusted one another to come together in meaningful spiritual connection, but this year we approached one another with a new tenderness born of reconciliation and the grace of God.

We welcomed our guest speaker, Dorian Bales, a Friend from the pastoral tradition and cofounder of the Friends of Jesus Community in Wichita, Kansas. He stated that reconciliation is the key to community. To be successful we must be “knit to each other and knit to the Lord.” He invited us to reconcile our faith through action as exemplified by the radical Jesus. As we anticipate the FWCC Triennial in New Mexico, hear about current AFSC concerns, and learn more about the Peace Team Project, our sense of community takes on world-wide proportions.

We challenged ourselves to articulate the core of our beliefs in undertaking the crafting of our own “Faith and Practice.” We are humbly drawn to this adventure, while some of us fear that the printed words of “Faith and Practice” will hinder continuing revelation. Ours is a community of wide-ranging individuals, and we cherish the diversity of our spiritual foundations, even as we grieve the absence of some familiar faces in this year of our reconciliation.

Through it all the children remained motivated and have inspired us with fun, including time for Messy Games for all ages. Senior Young Friends report an increasing attention to matters of the Light. They also considered the development of a new, older group of Young Friends that would facilitate the transition of Senior Young Friends to adult Friends and address the increasing problem of mid-20s dropout. We are enriched by them all.

May we hear the call when it comes and heed it with vigor. May we choose to make a difference. May we never forget to nurture one another, even as we are ourselves nurtured by that of God in our hearts.

—Bill and Genie Durland, Co-clerks

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North Pacific Yearly Meeting

North Pacific Yearly Meeting gathered for our 22nd annual session, held in Corvallis, Oregon, July 14–17, 1994. During these four days we created a colorful mural of hands that attested to the presence of 304 adults, 60 Junior Friends, and 71 children. It also reminded us that “there are no hands but ours to do God’s work.”

The theme of our gathering was from Micah 6:8—“Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God: turning faith into action.” Our Friend in residence, Mary Garman, challenged us to know, understand, and reclaim the concept of righteousness. Through poetry and heroic stories she demonstrated that righteousness, justice, and peace are part of Creation. She cautioned us to differentiate between righteousness and self-righteousness, noting that it is frequently the marginalized and afflicted who call us back into right relationship with others and with the Divine.

After two years of prayerful consideration and seasonings, the Mulling-Over Committee forwarded proposals for changes in yearly meeting structure allowing our Steering Committee to focus on the spiritual well-being of meetings. We hope the modification will allow more effective nurturing and communication among our 40 widely scattered meetings, preparative meetings, and worship groups, as well as isolated Friends in five states.

Concern for our young people continues to be expressed in the State of Society reports and in plenary sessions. Our intergenerational worship-sharing continued this year. Junior Friends have representatives on the Mulling-Over Committee and Steering Committee, but we must remain mindful that inclusion of Junior Friends is an on-going process.

Prior to annual session, Donna Sweeney, Quaker educator, gave a workshop of Quaker religious education for children. She encouraged us to meet children where they are, using stories, games, and exercises to help children discover their own inner wisdom. Throughout the gathering she provided skillful leadership with the various age groups. Her work touched our hunger for a deeper ability to nourish our children’s spiritual lives.

This year’s presentation by a Quaker organization was led by the AFSC regional executive director, Judith Kolokoff, and a panel from the Gay and Lesbian Youth Program. Participating young people brought a human face and experience to the debate on gay rights. They introduced the work of Lamb House, a place of safety, fellowship, and support for gay youth.

We approved minutes on three concerns: support for the U.S. Peace Tax Fund Bill, which would provide a legal alternative to paying for war with our taxes; backing for the Code of Conduct for Arms Transfers Act as a first step in halting the international arms trade; and a minute challenging us to find a “Loving Response to Hostility toward Homosexual People.” Seeing on-going campaigns to establish legal discrimination based on sexual orientation, accompanied by escalating violence against sexual minorities, we acknowledged our own tendency to “match this energy” by reacting negatively; but we assert that all violence separates us from ourselves, from God, and from each other. As Friends, we seek a response that arises from the Light within and cares for the human dignity of all people affected by conflict.

We have sensed a growing spirit of willingness to work toward unity. Our annual session has challenged us with new possibilities for turning our faith into action. Our charge is to be faithful, even if we are not successful by worldly standards.

—Marge Abbott, Clerk

Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church

“Communion with God” was the theme of Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church, as over 500 Friends met July 24–29, 1994, for the 102nd annual session at George Fox College in Newberg, Oregon. In addition, about 150 high school Friends and children met in separate locations.

Although membership in Northwest Yearly Meeting has decreased from an 8,000 high to the current 6,200, there has been a marked shift and growth taking place primarily in Newberg, Portland, and West Hills, Oregon. This is partly due to the vigorous youth and young adult programs of the last ten years. Elders of each church select middle school students of promise for an intensive conference on Friends history, beliefs, testimonies, the Bible, and the central place of Jesus. Each student has an adult mentor who helps counsel. This is a serious program, but does not replace “fun” or service weekends. One cannot but be impressed with the enthusiasm of these young people who sat attentively during the two-hour evening services that featured Calvin Miller, Baptist teacher and writer, whose amusing stories and homilies held his audience spell-bound.

Another highlight of NWYM was the participation of members in daily meetings of boards and workshops. Boards include education, evangelism, stewardship, missions, social concerns, ministerial service with commission on media, family life, and ethnic ministries. Thirty-six workshops covered a wide spectrum from an update on Evangelical Friends Missions, relations among pastors, elders, and the congregation, to death as a
decision, practical simplicity, active nonviolence, and racial prejudice.

The Board of Missions reviewed its work in Bolivia and Peru, and heard a report from Bernabe Yujra, secretary of Social Concerns of Bolivia Yearly Meeting. Friends were concerned for their mission in Rwanda and have already sent $15,000 for relief of the suffering.

Friends lamented the demise of the Evangelical Friend. Fear was expressed that the new eight-page newsletter would not be able to include expression of concern and articles on issues facing Friends today.

The yearly meeting includes one or two Spanish-speaking churches, but there were few Hispanic members in attendance, except the two Friends from Bolivia, and no English-Spanish interpretation was provided.

Some Friends from Northwest and Pacific yearly meetings met privately to review the 1992 Western Gathering and share their vision for the future of relationships. These included a ministry of joint intervisitation, a western hospitality directory, literature exchange, and participation in the 1995 annual meeting of FWCC, Section of the Americas in Portland, and the Women's Theological Group conference in Newberg, Oregon, June 8-11, 1995.

—Robert S. Vogel

New York Yearly Meeting

Four hundred and eighty adults and 169 children gathered for the 299th session of New York Yearly Meeting July 24-30, 1994, at Silver Bay on Lake George, N.Y.

Our keynote speaker, Marlene Morrison Pedigo of the Chicago Fellowship of Friends, brought us a message of renewal through Christ as the seed. Referring to her childhood on an Iowa farm, she reminded us of the slow growth of seeds in darkness underground. We try to remember this process in all of our meetings. A Friend introduced us to the idea of “pointless significance.” Our process is mysterious, full of seemingly pointless moments whose significance is only later uncovered. And just as plants grow in the garden, we need the light of Jesus, a theme brought forth by Noel Palmer of Westbury (N.Y.) Meeting, during opening worship. Noel also asked us what it meant to be friends of Jesus. “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends.” (John 15:15) The light of Jesus is abundant. God’s garden is infinite.

Early friends realized the Garden of Eden was replaced with expulsion from the garden and separation from God. Betty Polster from Canadian Yearly Meeting explained in Bible Study, as she led us to explore early Friends’ responses to the Bible. Through the life and power of the spirit, identified by George Fox as “even one, Christ Jesus,” she continued, “we are enabled to return to the harmony of the garden. We now find ‘all things new.’” (Rev), a renewed creation of closeness to God.”

By deepening its spirituality and asking itself what it can do to make its witness more effective and more deeply rooted in faith, the Renewal Committee told us the yearly meeting might be renewed. They went on to conclude that the only way to renew the yearly meeting is for each individual, each monthly meeting, each regional, quarterly, and half-yearly meeting, and each committee throughout the yearly meeting to rededicate itself to revitalization.

A young Friend reminded us that children and young adults are an essential part of renewal. Their nurture and inclusion are vital. In gardening, one of the greatest challenges to a new plant seeking the sun’s light is that other more developed plants may inadvertently get in the way, blocking the natural process of the new plant’s growth cycle. We see our youth and children as a reminder of the presence of the Spirit in all our efforts to live more spiritual lives. Many of us find great joy through the renewal of family relationships and the inter-generational nature of yearly meeting, where participants of all ages worship, work, and play together.

During the past 17 years, as we have labored over revision of “Faith and Practice,” sessions have sometimes been stormy. This year, we, as the branches of the vine, have borne good fruit. This has required patient cultivation. The Practice section was approved in 1987, and this year the yearly meeting has approved all parts of the Faith section; most for final reading. The parts of the Faith section on Covenant relationships and Children were given preliminary approval. Although we have reached a sense of the meeting, we have often grieved during this process, and some Friends still feel not heard. We pray that from this pain may come new growth.

—George Rubin, Clerk

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Friends Journal January 1995
News of Friends

William Penn's 350th anniversary and continuing legacy was celebrated in Philadelphia, Pa., on Oct. 22, 1994, with a day full of activities. Beginning with morning worship at the historic Arch Street Meetinghouse, over 577 Friends from as far away as North Carolina, Oregon, Canada, England, and Japan then assembled and began a procession through the streets of Philadelphia to Penn's Landing. Leading the procession was a banner stating Penn's guiding principle, "Let us then try what love will do." The Arch Street Meetinghouse location featured historical and information displays, video and slide presentations, music, dancing, a dramatization of "The Trial of William Penn and William Mead," and arts and crafts. Penn's Landing events attracted a larger crowd, estimated at 3,000-4,000 people. Here activities, exhibitions, entertainment, and displays featured Penn's contributions and how his vision has impact on us today. In addition, many Quaker and peace-related organizations were represented at information booths. One of the afternoon's highlights came during Quaker singer Susan Stark's performance, when actors portraying William and Hannah Penn arrived on Philadelphia's tall ship, "Gazela." Quaker poets, musicians, actors, and storytellers also participated at other locations throughout the Philadelphia area and in meetings throughout the world.

Live Oak (Tex.) Meeting is coming to the aid of members hurt by flooding in the Houston, Tex., area. The good news is that no Live Oak Meeting members were injured or killed. The bad news includes severe property damage and the loss of several homes. When the San Jacinto River swelled beyond its banks in mid-October, one member's home disappeared, swept away in the cresting water. A neighboring member saw the house she built herself completely flooded and virtually destroyed. Neither have flood insurance. As a result, Live Oak's meeting for business on Oct. 23, 1994, established a Flood Victims Fund. The meeting also contributed $200 to each to provide them with immediate cash. Messages of support have been arriving from throughout the United States, and, thanks to donations from individuals and area meetings, the Flood Victims Fund totaled $4,360 as of Nov. 14. Meeting members immediately formed work crews to help with the flood clean-up, and the homeowners want to rebuild. Another result of the flooding was the cancellation of a weekend retreat with San Antonio (Tex.) Meeting. Apparently the road leading to the site was underwater! Those wishing to contribute to the Flood Victims Fund may send checks, made out to "Live Oak Friends Meeting," to the meeting at 1003 Alexander St., Houston, TX 77008. (From The Acorn, November 1994, and Mel Boeger)

Alternatives to Violence training is in Miami, Fla., thanks to the dedicated work of Friends on the AVP ad hoc subcommittee of Peace and Social Concerns in Miami (Fla.) Meeting. The programs were filled to capacity when 22 people participated in the Oct. 7-9 training, and 16 people attended the Oct. 14-16 train-the-trainer module. The effort received excellent financial support from the community, with adequate monies raised to cover all expenses, food, and planning for a future event. Stephen Angell, from New York Yearly Meeting, co-facilitated the workshops. (From Quaker Quarterly, Fall 1994)
Bulletin Board

"Simple Riches: Reflections on the Work of The Quaker Parent," is the title of the 25th annual Quaker Lecture in Florida, sponsored by Southeastern Yearly Meeting, Jan. 15-16. Judy and Denis Nicholson Asselin, members of Westtown (Pa.) Meeting, will be the featured speakers for this Michener Lecture and Seminar at the Orlando (Fla.) Meetinghouse. In addition, "A Kid's Care for Everything and Everyone" Seminar for Children ages 4-14 will be lead by Joan Michener Nicholson, daughter of Dwight and Ardis Michener whose memorial fund is subsidizing the event. For more information, contact Cathy Gaskill, Box 93, Windermere, FL 34786, telephone (407) 876-2191.

Does your meeting have an established practice regarding "caring for the dead and bereaved?" Monadnock (N.H.) Meeting would like to know. The meeting, now having a meetinghouse and a plot of land, has appointed a committee to explore the possibility of more specific care and nurturance, records, advanced directives, and possibly a burial ground. The committee is asking other meetings who, through experience and practice, may have information and advice to share. Contact Friends Care for Their Own Dead Committee, Monadnock Monthly Meeting, 300A Lehinen Rd., Peterborough, NH 03458.

Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (FLGC) will meet in Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 17-20, for their annual midwinter gathering. This year's theme, "A Joyful Visitation of the Spirit... Called to Be Queer," will be addressed by keynote speakers Judy Williams and Ron Mattson. In addition to worship and fellowship, the weekend will include business sessions, consideration of bisexuality as it relates to the FLGC community and name, and a panel of Friends whose ministries focus on addressing homophobia and gay rights within the Society of Friends and the wider community. Entertainment for the gathering will include a coffeehouse, an art exhibit, and a dance. For more information, contact Jeff Keith, Registrar, 2032 South Bouvier St., Philadelphia, PA 19145.

Summer community service opportunities in Mexico and Cuba are available to young adults through the American Friends Service Committee. For over 50 years in Mexico and since 1981 in Cuba, the AFSC has sponsored community service and dialogue opportunities for young people ages 18-26. People with good Spanish language skills who are willing to engage in physical labor with other international volunteers are encouraged to apply. Cost for the Mexico program is $750 plus airfare, the Cuba program is $300 plus airfare. Partial scholarships are available. For more information, contact Personnel Dept., AFSC, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, telephone (215) 241-7295. (From the Fall 1994 Peace Resource Center Newsletter)

The 1995 Transcontinental USA Peace Walk is being organized to mark the 50th anniversary of the nuclear age and the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The nine-month trek across the United States visiting military bases and weapons centers will protest the continued preparations for conventional, nuclear, and space wars. Beginning at the Trinity Atom Bomb Test Site in New Mexico on March 30, the walkers will proceed to Los Alamos, Colorado Springs, U.S. Space Command, and various centers of the Pentagon's high-tech global war machine. The group will then split, with some participants heading east and ending their journey at Cape Canaveral, and the other walkers heading west to visit areas including Nevada Test Sites and Vandenberg Air Force Base. For more information, contact "Hope From the Ashes," P.O. Box 7061, Santa Cruz, CA 95061. (From the May 1994 New Zealand Friends Newsletter)

Calendar

JANUARY
6-14—Australia Yearly Meeting, Hobart, Adelaide Hills, Australia. Contact Topsy Evans, Box 119, N. Hobart 7002, Tasmania, Australia, telephone 002-349055.
29—1995 "Soupers Bowl," an effort to raise money for the hungry and homeless. Begun in 1990 by a Presbyterian Youth Fellowship group in Columbus, S.C., the idea is for church youth to collect one dollar from each church attender who is planning on watching the game on Super Bowl Sunday, then donate the money to soup kitchens, food banks, shelters, and other helping ministries. To order a "Soupers Bowl EvaKit," telephone (800) 358-SOUP.
In January—Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting, South Africa. Contact Anita Kromberg and Richard Steele, Box 15045, Bellair, Durban, 4006 South Africa, telephone (031) 301-5663.
FEBRUARY
2-5—Quaker Silent Retreat at Camp Huston, Gold Bar, Wash. Sponsored by Pacific Northwest Quarterly Meeting, participants will create a temporary intentional community in which silence is fundamental to fellowship through meetings for worship, vegetarian meetings for cooking and eating, and unscheduled time. Young people willing to accept the discipline of silence are also welcome, however no child care will be provided. The retreat costs $40 and registration is due by Jan. 31. Telephone Deborah Gottlieb Lewis at (206) 385-7070, or Margaret R. Gottlieb at (206) 526-5412.
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Books

Jesus, A Life

Early Quakers would have found great empathy with A. N. Wilson's intuitive interpretation of the present activity in historical research into the life of Jesus. This search has never had so many new materials, both documentary and archeological. Wilson has kept up with all of them. Many of Wilson's conclusions are confirmatory of George Fox's insights into the message Jesus sought to bring to his society's practices, both public and private. From examination of recently discovered documentation contemporaneous with the life of Jesus, Wilson infers that: "The feeding was Jesus' greatest sign. Make the men sit down!... That meant to live together in peace and to accept their unity as sons and daughters of the creator." Out of Jesus' practical expedient may have grown the miracle of the fishes, as seated neighbors lay aside their divisive passions and shared their small packages of food with the net effect that the multitude was fed.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer's book, The Search for the Historical Jesus, popularized many years ago, was a largely academic enterprise. With materials unearthed since then, Wilson gives us new insights into Jesus, sometimes in overlooked, important ways. For example: "Christianity gave to the human race a sense of the individual, slave or free, male or female, Gentile or Jew." Again: "It is precisely because he refused to define himself that he was so vulnerable to the assaults of theologians and fantasists." Wilson's book is based soundly on scholarship, but reads like an unfolding story. Wilson brings us a reminder that we have not come to the end of knowing all of Jesus' profound insights into human nature.

Paul Furnas

From Liberal to Labour with Women's Suffrage: The Story of Catherine Marshall

This book, the first of a two-volume biography of Catherine Marshall, is of interest to contemporary Friends on several levels, and would be a valuable addition to meeting libraries. Although Catherine Marshall, who was born and lived in England from 1830 until her death in 1961, was not a Friend, the...
issues she was involved in, and a history of those issues, deeply involved Friends. The author is a member of Thousand Islands Meeting, of Canadian Yearly Meeting; she is also an Honorary Fellow at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University.

This part of Catherine Marshall’s biography covers the years of her growing up and her deepening involvement in the women’s suffrage movement. Conditions for women were very different when Catherine was growing up than those we take for granted today, even in a liberal family like the Marshalls. Her parents were both teachers, although, like most women of that time, her mother gave up teaching when her first child was expected. However, her interest in education continued, and Catherine was to benefit from the supportive educational atmosphere at home and also at her first school, a place where learning was carried out in a happy setting. She was also encouraged to think for herself; in her words “... I would try to get at the underlying truth which I felt even then [in her childhood] would reconcile and explain the apparently conflicting facts...” my very ignorance was in one way an advantage, affording as it did an outlook unclouded by prejudice, an independent attitude unfettered by conventionalities.” As the author points out, this was a remarkable way of training her mind for future political exercise.

Catherine’s personal life is of interest, but just as interesting and instructive for us is her deepening involvement in the nonviolent suffrage movement. Those of us currently concerned about peace or the environment have salutary lessons to learn from Catherine Marshall and her manner of working.

She and her co-workers in the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies (NU) were mindful of the pitfalls of being seen as attached to a particular party or class and built a network across these lines, and here too we can learn much from them.

As the author points out,

... Catherine had every reason to feel at home among Liberal and Unionist politicians, who were, almost without exception, from her own class. But we should not lose sight of the fact that one of the strongest barriers to women’s enfranchisement lay in the indoctrination of that class of man with a view which was far from a good environment for the notion of women’s equality to grow in.

Since at that time there was not universal suffrage for men either, the notion of equal rights had a long way to go.

Of great importance as a model for our own time and cause was their thoroughness of preparation. At one point “... she organized a great deal of invaluable reference material...” Immensely detailed information came to her for the compilation of trade unions, names of secretaries, whether and when they
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Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States


In the midst of the public and media clamor for harsher sentences and quicker executions of criminals, Helen Prejean's moving account of the execution of Patrick Sonnier is like a great light piercing the darkness created by ignorance and the thirst for revenge. Interwoven throughout the narrative are all the arguments and statistics necessary to dispute the efficacy of the death penalty. But most convincing is the journal account of her relationship with condemned killers. It begins when, at the request of a friend, she starts writing to Patrick Sonnier. Their correspondence flourishes and Helen extends the relationship and visits him. She gives a vivid account of the rather frightening journey the visitor must make and how her stomach can read the words Death Row better than her brain. She continues in her role of spiritual advisor for the next two years; visiting, listening, praying, and just being there for him.

Betty Polster

Betty Polster is a former clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting and former recording clerk of Friends United Meeting. She was a Friend in Residence at Woodbrooke in 1991, and currently teaches courses for Pendle Hill. She is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting, Canadian Yearly Meeting.

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had considered women’s suffrage resolutions, and if so with what result.” Nor were her efforts directed only at trade unions. “There is also a twenty-eight page typed list of ‘Liberal M.P.s, December 1913’ complete with exhaustive notes of their voting records, brief quotations from speeches, ... all duly referenced and dated... and another twelve-page one of ‘Liberal Candidates: January 1914.’”

The best strategies for electing M.P.s favorable to women’s suffrage were also debated. A constant worry was what the violent tactics of some advocates of women’s suffrage were doing to public opinion and the possible votes of M.P.s.

When I finished this book, I was sorry. Not sorry to have read it—I became deeply involved—but sorry that this volume ends with 1914. The rest of Catherine Marshall’s life, her anti-conscription efforts, and her involvement in the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, must wait for the next book. Hurry up, Jo Vellacott—I want more.

Betty Polster

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January 1995 FRIENDS JOURNAL
She does not condone his crime, rather she has the ability to see beyond it and experience him as a fellow human being created by God. It is this capacity to accept him as he is that nurtures Patrick and changes Helen from a “politically neutral” nun to an ardent activist. This is not an easy stance for her. She is appalled and disgusted at the cruelty and graft of officials; at the racism and ineptness of the judiciary; and at the hypocrisy of her own church on the question of capital punishment. She also must face the needs of the victims’ families and the conflict her relationship with Patrick, and later with Robert Lee Willie, creates.

This is not just an account of a sociological, political, and ethical problem but an engrossing, compassionate narrative enlivened with great dialogue. Helen Prejean writes with great clarity, bringing us along with her as she weaves her own spiritual journey, the lives of the inmates on Death Row, and of those of their victims’ families, with the political, sociological, and theological strands into a colorful, moving tapestry that indicts the death penalty and presents us with a clear picture of our own shadow side.

Dead Man Walking is a must for all involved in prison ministry, in assistance to homicide victims’ families, in reconciliation of prisoners and victims, as well as anyone straddling the fence or on the other side of this difficult question.

Mary M. Peel

Mary M. Peel is a member of Jacksonville (Fla.) Meeting.

In Brief

Talking Peace: A Vision for the Next Generation
By Jimmy Carter. Dutton, N.Y., 1993. 177 pages. $16.99/hardcover. In the search for peace in a world of violence and suffering, Jimmy Carter, founder of the Carter Center’s International Negotiation Network, offers a vision of hope and a challenge to youth and adults. Carter describes the missions he has undertaken since the experience of Camp David, missions ranging from mediating international conflicts, to supervising elections, to assisting in post-war reconstruction. He envisions a future in which nonviolent peacemaking can greatly lessen the killing, destruction, and disruption of warfare. Carter stresses the power of citizen activity in a world where peace advocacy and citizen diplomacy can meet crises for which national leaders are not equipped. The concluding chapters carry a special message to youth. The younger generation has the future in its hands, and each person can take initiatives toward the vision of a better, more peaceful, and more challenging world.

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Earl J. Ball, Headmaster

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Friends Journal January 1995
Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Alderson—Caleb Benjamin Alderson, on April 4, 1994, to Susan Alderson and Thomas Doran, of Rogue Valley (Oreg.) Meeting.


Czarnik-Neimeyer—Jacob Nicholas Czarnik-Neimeyer, on May 10, 1994, to Cindy and Jake Czarnik-Neimeyer, of Madison (Wisc.) Meeting.

Drake—Jessie Faith Drake, on July 31, 1994, to Barbara and Andy Drake. Andy is a member of Montclair (N.J.) Meeting.

Evans—Kyle Stokes Evans, on April 16, 1994, to Ellen and Peter Evans. Peter is a member of Haverford (Pa.) Meeting.

Greenler—Scott Majors Greenler, on June 18, 1994, to Karen Greenler and Penny Majors, of Madison (Wisc.) Meeting.

Hayslip—Brandon Michael Hayslip, on June 7, 1994, to Becky and Jodie Hayslip, of Ada Chapel (Ohio) Meeting.

Hornbeam—Annetta Homestead, on July 15, 1994, to Sam Branson Homestead and Leigh Homestead, of Community (Ohio) Meeting.

Keener—Jacob Giampaolo Keener, on August 8, 1994, to Alessa and Blaine Keener, of Baltimore (Md.) Meeting, Stony Run.

Ludlam—John Miller Ludlam, on Sept. 8, 1994, to Carolyn A. Miller and John M. Ludlam, of Third Haven (Md.) Meeting.

Thompson—Cassidy Dawn Thompson, on July 4, 1994, to Beth and Norval Thompson, of Third Haven (Md.) Meeting.

Walden—Emily Joyce Walden, on July 22, 1994, to Sherry and Kaven Walden, of Reno (Nev.) Meeting.

Marriages/Unions

Arment-Ruvira—Pablo Ruvira and Mary De Arment, on June 25, 1994, at and under the care of Media (Pa.) Meeting.

Boisvert-Saunders—Harold Saunders and Mary Jane Saunders, on July 4, 1994, under the care of Atlantic City Area (N.J.) Meeting, at Seaville (N.J.) Meetinghouse.

Curtin-O’Bannon—James Dean O’Bannon and Pamela Jeanne Curtin, on July 16, 1994, at and under the care of Willistown (Pa.) Meeting, of which James is a member and Pamela is an attender.

Dutton-Shen—David Shen and Judith Dutton, on June 18, 1994. Both David and Judith are members of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting.

Klimovskiy-Kronick—C. Ivar Kronick and Anya Klimovskiy, on Aug. 21, 1994. Ivar is a member of Haverford (Pa.) Meeting.

Lacey-Nalley—James Nalley and Ingrid Lacey, on July 9, 1994. Ingrid is a member of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting.

McCordle-Yang—Xiao Ming Yang and Katherine McCordle, on June 18, 1994, under the joint care of Media and Pittsburgh (Pa.) meetings.


Reilly-Kronick—Oren Collier Kronick and Kathleen Reilly, on Aug. 27, 1994, under the care of Haverford (Pa.) Meeting, of which Oren is a member.


Taylor-Rostkowski—Chuck Rostkowski and Cynthia Taylor, on June 12, 1994, under the care of Salt Lake City (Utah) Meeting.


Deaths

Bacon—Robert C. Bacon, 87, on July 6, 1994, at home. A long-time resident of Philadelphia, Pa., Bob was a graduate of Antioch College. In 1932 he married Elizabeth Newcomb, who passed away in 1985. As a young man Bob was employed in banking. He then moved to Cambridge, N.Y., where he farmed as alternative service. Later he worked at Abington Friends School, Abington, Pa., and North Country School, Lake Placid, N.Y. In 1963 he and Elizabeth became founding directors of the Youth Program at Powell House, the retreat and conference center of New York Yearly Meeting, in Old Chatham, N.Y. Since his retirement in 1970, he continued to work for peace and justice, and was active in Old Chatham (N.Y.) Meeting until his death. Bob is survived by his second wife, Kathryn P. Bacon; a son, Robert C. Bacon Jr.; a daughter, Deborah Wood; two grandchildren; and a brother, Edmund N. Bacon.

Benson—Sarah Rhodes Benson, 86, on Dec. 29, 1993, in Mooresville, N.C. Born in Germantown, Pa., Sarah graduated from Earlham College in 1919. She then taught English and was assistant dean at Westtown School for a year. In the 1930s she was very active in the Young Friends Movement, and was head resident at Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pa. In the 1940s, with her husband, Lewis Benson, she served as caretaker of the John Woolman Memorial. In recent years she was active in the New Foundation Fellowship, and traveled with her husband in ministry as far away as Japan. Sarah was a member of Manasquan (N.J.) Meeting, where she served as an Overseer and as clerk of Ministry and Counsel. Sarah was preceded in death by her husband, Lewis Benson, and mother, Anna Homey. Sarah was a member of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. They also found community, inspiration, and nurture in the Unitarian Church and the Friends Meeting in Eugene, Oreg. Len was an idealist with a genuine commitment to truth and honesty. He refused to profess beliefs he did not personally experience, and because he could not honestly say he had experienced any divine encounters, he remained an atheist. Some Friends felt uncomfortable with his disbelief, but through mutual love and openness of mind, comfort was increasingly replaced with grace and understanding. Len was an artist, showing considerable talent as a painter. He had an acquisitive mind, and was an avid reader. Len was a secular humanist with a profound vision of how the world could be if people would act ethically and responsibly. As a way of expressing his commitment to global understanding, he studied the international language of Esperanto, and carried a “World Citizen” passport. He volunteered many hours of service with Friends Committee on National Legislation, and attended annual meetings. He loved children, and was especially tender with the young Salvadoran children that were in sanctuary in the care of Eugene (Oreg.) Meeting. Len often demonstrated a deep concern for energy conservation through an interest in human-powered vehicles. He was eccentric, unpredictable, and funny, and will be deeply missed. Len is survived by his wife, Estella; and a son, Robert.

Kimball—Mary Smedley Kimball, 86, on Feb. 27, 1994, at home in Mountain Lakes, N.J. Born in Westtown, Pa., she was a direct descendant of George Smedley, who purchased land from William Penn in 1684. Mary attended the University of Pennsylvania where she earned a B.S. and a master of arts degree. She then taught English in both public and independent schools in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In 1945 she married Dudley Baldwin Kimball. While nurturing their young children, Mary shared her love of poetry as well as her deep sense of caring and concern for others. She was involved in community affairs through the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women. In 1965 Mary joined Montclair (N.J.) Meeting. Her warm greetings at the rise of meeting and her service on the Edward R. Pierson Education Fund Committee are fondly remembered. Mary is survived by two daughters, Mary K. Kimball and Jane S. Kimball; a son, J. Dudley Kimball; and two grandsons.

Lyon—Nora Lyon, 59, in Sept., 1993. Born and raised in Detroit, Mich., Nora graduated with honors from the University of Michigan. She married John Cross after graduation and the couple moved to England, where she lived until the late-1970s.

January 1995 FRIENDS JOURNAL
During this time she raised five children and she joined Ratcliff and Barking meetings. In the late-1970s she came to California to care for her father, and worked in various secretarial positions at the University of California Medical Center. In 1981 Nora married Joel Ivy under the care of Orange County (Calif.) Meeting, and in 1982 she transferred her membership to that meeting. In the mid-1980s she moved to Point Arena, Calif., with her fourth husband, Glen Lyon, where she lived the rest of her life. During Nora’s time in Orange County Meeting, she and her husband, Joel Ivy, were active on behalf of Orange County’s homeless and gay communities. Nora is survived by her husband, Glen Lyon; four children, John, Elizabeth, and Philip Cross, and Keith Surfest; and two grandchildren.

**Myers—William Allison Myers, 90, on June 27, 1994, in Palo Alto, Calif. Bill was born and raised in Crafton, Pa., a small suburb of Pittsburgh. Having always wanted to be a doctor, Bill received his medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1932, and set up a family practice in York, Pa. Bill married Zelma Tudor in 1934, and they raised two children. When World War II broke out, Bill joined the Navy as an epidemiologist, and served in the Pacific area. After the war ended, he and his wife remained in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he joined the Straub Clinic as one of Hawaii’s first-pediatricians. Always a gentle and caring person, Bill had been committed to ideals of peace and nonviolence from a young age. While at the clinic, Bill developed a friendship with Herbert Bowers who introduced him to Friends. Bill’s wife, Zelma, died in 1955, and around that time he joined Honolulu (Hawaii) Meeting. Bill married Olga Medjoff under the care of Honolulu Meeting in 1964. In 1989 the couple moved to Palo Alto, Calif., to be closer to family. Bill is survived by his wife, Olga; two children, Judy and Jim; and three grandchildren.

**Nichols—Arthur Brisbane Nichols, 85, on Nov. 27, 1993, in Lansdale, Pa. Born in Allaire, N.J., Art was raised on his family’s ancestral fruit farm in Lewiston, N.Y., where he spent his boyhood with members of the Tuscarora Native Americans. He was an ardent fisherman and hunter. Art graduated from Cornell University in 1931 and worked in Salem, N.J. Following World War II he became an automobile dealer, then a stockbroker, retiring in 1970. Art married Helene Fredrick of Salem, and they joined Salem (N.J.) Meeting, where he remained an active and inspiring member. Art reflected his spiritual concern for human rights as a member of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting’s Committee on Indian Relations. The Arthur B. Nichols Collection of Native American and Quaker Histories has been donated to the library of Niagara County Community College in Sanborn, N.Y., near the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. Art will be remembered by his special affinity for the genealogy and history of Fayette’s Colony-Salem, N.J. During his tenure as president from 1978-80, he was instrumental in expanding the library of the Salem County Historical Society. Since 1982 he served on the History Committee of Salem (N.J.) Quarterly Meeting, and assiduously researched accounts of small, early meetings for the book Salem Quaker, published in 1991. Art was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years, Helene. He is survived by a daughter, Carolyn N. English; a brother, Andrew J. Nichols; and two grandchildren, Craig and Christopher.

**Accommodations**

- **Yakima, Wash., and vicinity—Quaker family with North Carolina roots and ties to both FGC and FUM years for deeper Quaker community in central Washington. We’re living in a modest apartment but can accommodate Friends who would like to explore this region as a potential place to live. Please provide a letter of introduction from your home meeting. We attend an unprogrammed worship group here that gathers twice a month, drawing widely scattered Friends. A major hotel and wine grape producer, Yakima County is but a short drive from Seattle, Mount Ranier, Mount St. Helens, and dozens of hiking trails and wildlife areas. Come and visit; stay for worship. Contact Holly and Jeff Jennings, (509) 248-2290.


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**Display Ad Deadlines**

- **March issue:** Reservations by January 9. Ads must be received by January 17.
- **April issue:** Reserve space by February 6. Ads must be received by February 13.

- **Ad rate:** $28 per column inch, 15% discount for 6 or more consecutive insertions.

- **Classified Ad Deadline:** March issue: January 17

- **April issue:** February 13

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Vol. 40, No. 1 January 1995

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