FGC Friends Gather in Johnstown
Special Book Section

SHALOM
Much More than Just “Peace”
Among Friends

Seeking Guidance

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves. (Matt.10:16)

In recent days I've been struggling with a challenging personal relationship with a close family member. As I've weighed the choices I have to make and how best to convey my loving intentions, I've found myself caught in the dilemma of needing to stay fully present to a situation that also requires completely letting go. I find this to be a most difficult thing to do: to balance giving my most nurturing, selfless love and maintaining reasonable, appropriate boundaries for myself without inflicting pain on the other party. One reason it's so challenging is that the landscape of the relationship is always shifting. An astute friend in whom I confided, commented that my dilemma would require the wisdom of a serpent and the innocence of a dove. Her comment led me to reflect on the biblical passage above from the book of Matthew.

As I sat in meeting for worship this week, listening to Friends struggle with how we collectively can remain harmless yet still be effective in our efforts to mend what's wrong in the world, it occurred to me that my personal dilemma is quite similar to one that grips many Friends. How do we stay present to the pain and suffering in the world without becoming numb, overwhelmed, depressed, or defeated? How do we stay present without losing ourselves in this pain and suffering? How do we, as Friends, avoid taking sides so that we can remain open to that of God in every adversary, every oppressor, every human who commits atrocious behaviors, yet still is a child of God? Where do we find the wisdom and strength for this? More importantly, what can we offer the world as our particular wisdom about how effectively to mediate terrible and violent conflicts, or situations that could become that way, without violent interventions?

The tenth chapter of Matthew in which Jesus charges his disciples for their work in the world offers relevant advice for consideration. With apology for my lack of biblical scholarship, I offer my personal interpretation of the guidance given: Begin your work with your own people. Don't fret about funding, your work will be worthy of recompense. Both physical sustenance and the right words for the work that you do will be provided by the Spirit. Don't linger or trouble yourself over outcomes; some people will receive your work well, others will not. The outcomes are in the hands of the Spirit; you are not to be troubled by them. But have no illusions, you will be despised and denounced for your efforts to speak Truth. You will need to be both very wise and very harmless in doing this work. Do not fear others, no matter how threatening they may be. Follow the guidance of Spirit in all things. Know you are very precious in the sight of God. Know, too, that you may be called to sacrifice all for the sake of this work. In learning to focus not on yourself but on God's calling, you will find your life. And therein will be your reward.

Are we Friends becoming too focused on outcomes instead of God's guidance? Do we trust enough in Spirit and follow the guidance we are given, or are we pushing our own agendas—our personal visions of the peaceable kingdom? That brings me to the themes in this issue, and in particular, to Anthony Prete's plenary address at the Friends General Conference Gathering on "Shalom: Much More Than Just 'Peace'" (p.6), in which he takes up closely related queries. Anthony Prete is a biblical scholar, and I commend his examination and interpretation of the word "shalom" to you.
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Front cover photo by Sarah Richardson.
Cover photo and photo at right:
FGC Gathering attenders added their prayerful and creative “feathers” to the dove logo of this year’s Gathering.
Blue hair

It's my opinion that Tristan Wilson was being a precocious camp counselor when she permitted youngsters to experiment with removable blue hair dye (“Freedom and Responsibility,” FJ June). By my lights as a 67-year-old “grammy,” former teacher of youngsters of all school ages including adults, Tristan did the sensible thing. This was camp, and her reasoning soared beyond spilled ink.

Lots of organizations, including camps and schools, begin with a mission to encourage creativity and self-direction, and gradually twist directions, as if following a mission to protect the institution’s own property and reputation, the creativity and self-direction of its customers be damned. Those new missions tend to replace fun with punishment, such as scrubbing a spot of color from a camp porch, or raking rocks! Tristan also recognized the motives behind the overreaction of the other leaders—fear of criticism. Tristan understood correctly that she was there to help other young people, not to protect her own reputation as a counselor.

Jan Saecker
Marquesan, Wis.

The power of Truth

It was with interest that I read your June FRIENDS JOURNAL. Though many thoughts caught my mind’s eye, it was a letter to the editor concerning the manipulation of Truth by past and present presidents (“Thoughts from a peace vigil,” by Irving Hollinghead, FJ Forum) contrasted by a personal expression from Demie Kurz featured in “Quaker Profiles,” that caught my heart’s eye.

Demie Kurz says, “Truth is very very important to me.” Recently my eye was caught by a bumper sticker that read, “In an age of deceit a word of truth is as powerful as an atomic bomb.”

Well, perhaps we would prefer a water analogy. It starts with one drop, seeps our everywhere, ruins the best-laid plans, is capable of a raging torrent and without it life would not exist.

The prophet John wrote, “Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light. . . . Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the Truth comes into the light.”

A more contemporary prophet, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, said, “To do evil a human being must first of all believe that what he’s doing is good. . . . Ideology—that is what gives devildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness. . . . That is the social theory which helps to make his acts seem good instead of bad in his own and others’ eyes, so that he won’t hear reproaches and curses but will receive praise and honors.”

What personal ideologies do we hold that obscure the Truth?

Jesus the Christ said, “I am the way, the Truth and the Life,” and “I am the living water.”

In a world of shadows He is the atomic bomb that we need.

Scott Reichley
Summertown, Pa.

Please imagine other faces, too

I was distraught to see the photograph of Noora Abbas’s smiling, scarred face that Marjorie Schier sent with her letter to the July Forum (“Collateral Damage”). And I was distressed to learn that her parents were killed by a U.S. bombing strike in Baghdad. As many Friends know, I have come to support the use of force in self-defense and in defense of human rights. But I am still sickened when such force injures innocent little girls and kills their parents. Characterizing such attacks as “collateral damage” is genuinely profane.

I would ask Friends to try to imagine the faces of other little girls and boys, equally innocent, who were slaughtered by Saddam Hussein’s forces and buried in vast mass graves. I’ve been to those graves. If there is anything to equal the outrage of seeing scars on a small girl’s face, it’s the faceless skeleton of a child.

I would ask Friends to try to imagine the faces of mothers and fathers who were apprehended, tortured, and murdered in Saddam Hussein’s numerous prisons. Did any Quaker meeting ever make an effort to bring over their families? It would have been impossible, of course—the regime would not let them leave. But that’s also the point. You didn’t see pictures of the two million Iraqis that human rights groups now estimate were killed during Saddam Hussein’s long reign on al-Jazeera, BBC, or in FRIENDS JOURNAL, because Iraq under Saddam was a closed, savage tyranny. Those two million people weren’t killed as collateral damage, but specifically slaughtered to help the regime hold a death grip on its own people. I struggle with the fact that my support of military force to stop murderers can have the consequence of killing innocents. I hope that FRIENDS JOURNAL readers will open their hearts to the possibility that their pacifism may do the same.

Scott Simon
Washington, D.C.

Membership questions

I would like to compliment Teddy Milne for the recent thoughtful column “Some Thoughts on Membership” (FJ July) and make some additional comments. This is a subject close to my heart and life. My husband and I have raised our Quaker family many miles from any Quaker meeting. We have maintained our membership in the meeting where we were married and into which our sons were welcomed at birth. One of them has continued to keep membership there although he has participated in a local meeting at any time they have lived where that was possible.

The other son, a CO during the Vietnam War, was informed by the meeting that since he was not contributing, he would be removed from the roll. I understand fully the financial reasons for this. I worked as financial secretary for a mainstream church for some years where this was the usual practice. However, I would have hoped that there had been some type of affiliation register for young people who are sincerely interested in the Quaker mission, but who are not able to participate on an active basis.

Friends often speak of a lack of interest and of diminishing membership and it seems unfortunate that we feel we must drop people who are either physically or financially at a distance. The use, as suggested by Teddy Milne, of a yearly meeting database, would seem to be helpful in this regard. This should include those persons who have been members of a meeting for years, but have moved to an area where no meeting is available as well as young folks just getting established. I would hope that there will be further discussion and prayerful consideration toward the goal of better preserving our membership.

Margie M. Holland
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Another membership option

The column “Some Thoughts on Membership” (FJ July) raises some interesting questions. May I introduce another option, which some people are finding helpful? The Wider Quaker Fellowship, which is administered by Friends World Committee for Consultation, is a
Knowing and Not Knowing

As a member of the delegation whose trip inspired Stanley Zarowin’s article, “A Visit to Israel by a Quaker Jew Born in Palestine” (FJ/Sept.), and as a member of one of the several U.S. Quaker groups . . . making sizable financial contributions to Ramallah Meeting to improve the little-used meetinghouse, I have experienced Stanley’s challenges on that issue as an invitation to revisit the question, “Why?” On one level it didn’t make sense when Philadelphia Yearly Meeting made its decision at our Sessions in March of 2002 to commit significant funds for that purpose. It made even less sense shortly thereafter when very active fighting, destruction of Yassin Arafat’s compound, and curfews made it clear that the situation in Ramallah and the entire area was dire and unstable. When the first $50,000 was sent there was no assurance that a restored meetinghouse would not again be significantly damaged by the fighting (as it had been in the first Intifada). Yet we also knew that if a new roof were not in place before the next winter season, the increased damage from the rains would make the situation far worse.

My experience has taught me that when the Spirit moves us to a significant decision it does not always “make sense.” Perhaps the not making sense is because the action is one of faith. It is following the leading of the Spirit to that place which often the powers and principalities of the world fear to go: a place characterized by vulnerability, a witnessing to the worth of every living thing and a readiness to listen. There is no defense in that place except in knowing that the only thing, in the end, that will transform our world will be the power of love at work. It is the choosing of what we Friends know to be essential—the living of lives of integrity in which there is congruity between our inward knowing and our outer actions.

Yet, if there is anything which a conflict such as that which goes on daily in Israel and Palestine puts solidly in front of us, it is the challenge of how we make our testimonies real in the face of suffering, violence, and injustice. How do we speak out clearly against wrong acts which daily deepen the hatred which fuels the conflict, yet not demonize (nor dehumanize) all those trapped in the conflict? How do we take seriously the charge made frequently that Quakers are pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli (which often is translated into anti-Semitic)? How do we allow ourselves to be truly touched by the suffering that is occurring when that awareness leads us to a feeling of helplessness because we cannot alleviate the suffering? How do we take care that our commitment to working against injustice in other countries does not serve as a diversion keeping us from seeing the injustices in our own communities and country, injustices in whose perpetration we have a role? How do we keep from being overwhelmed and disempowered by the questions themselves, given the reality that there is no way in which we can ever know the answers—though that does not excuse us from seeking them?

My sense is that continued effort to grow into a place of greater humility is the path which will lead us to greater faithfulness. Jean Zaru, clerk of Ramallah Meeting, addressed us at our yearly meeting Sessions in 2002. The minutes of that Session state in part, “[Jean] pointed out that crucial to transformation is the public cry of pain. The communication of grief and anguish is necessary to penetrate the numbness of history and open the way for newness of life, justice, and peace. She called on us to listen and to create the space where this grief, this truth can be brought forth.”

Please God, anything but this. Many in our country are ready to take up guns and risk their lives trying to wipe out the perpetrators of injustice. Many of us are ready to work hard for peace from inside our cocoons of denial. Isn’t it enough to let in the anguish in little pieces? Those of us old enough to remember a Vietnamese child running down the street aflame from our napalm know what it is like to have the numbness shattered. The Iraqi boy this spring who wanted his hands back so he could fulfill his dream of being a doctor did it too. But to lay aside our numbness and our privilege and to walk hand in hand with the oppressed and the suffering, feeling their anguish and allowing them to be our teachers—that is what Jesus did. Is that what’s being asked of us as well?

It would not be truthful for me to say that I thought members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting had all of this in our thoughts when the Spirit led us to our decision to commit funds for the rehabilitation of the meetinghouse in Ramallah and, if the way opens, to partner with our Friends in Palestine. But, I do believe that in leading us the Spirit has given us opportunity to grow into that awareness. I do know our action has brought some hope through offering employment in the face of an impoverished economy and through our saying symbolically that we believe this (Palestine) to be a place of worth. I do know that a small international group of Friends (including some associated with American Friends Service Committee) is working in partnership with Friends in Ramallah to think about ways in which the meetinghouse can be a vital place of coming together as concerned Palestinians and Israelis continue to seek peace.

The meetinghouse is essentially complete, but has no bathrooms and no smaller meeting spaces until the annex is also rebuilt; the funds for these improvements have not yet been found. I believe the question for each of us to address is: What is the opportunity in front of me (us) for making the Spirit manifest in this moment and in this place? What is my contribution to keeping hope alive in the darkness that surrounds us?

Arlene Kelly

Arlene Kelly is a member of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting, and recently stepped down after four years’ service as clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Program started many years ago by Rufus Jones to enable isolated Friends to keep in touch with the wider family of Friends. The Fellowship is open to people living in areas where there are no established meetings for worship and for those who, for other reasons, are not yet members of a monthly meeting. WQF mailings bring articles and copies of talks, which may not yet be readily available. One collection being prepared for mailing soon will be by, about, and relating to youth.

Phil Gilbert
Kennett Square, Pa.
begin with two queries: To what extent might our opposition to war be diverting us from addressing the conditions that create war? And: To what extent might our dedication to social activism be preventing us from utilizing God's role in social change?

Over the years, as I've delved more deeply into the Scriptures, I have increasingly found Quaker convictions expressed and endorsed there. One example is the Hebrew word shalom. As I came to uncover its broad and rich biblical meaning, I recognized that it mirrors what George

Anthony (Tony) Prete is a member of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting. This article is based on the closing plenary address he delivered at the 2003 Friends General Conference Gathering in Johnstown, Pa. The talk is available on a CD prepared by Quaker Press of FGC at <www.quakerbooks.org>. ©2003 Anthony Prete

SHALOM
MUCH MORE THAN JUST "PEACE"
by Anthony Prete

November 2003 FRIENDS JOURNAL
Fox described as “that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars.”

Most people understand shalom to mean “peace” in the sense of “the absence of conflict.” While correct, this reflects the end result of biblical shalom, not the substance. To get at the substance of shalom, we have to begin with the verb, since Hebrew is primarily a language of action, not of concepts, a language that favors the dynamic over the static.

This much is clear: shalom, no matter how casual its use, is tied directly to justice. Even in biblical times, the slogan was true: “No Justice, No Peace.” We’ll see just how true as we unpack the range of meanings that shalom has in the biblical text. We begin with the verb, with the action of “doing shalom.”

In concrete, everyday use, the verb form of shalom means “to pay.” This payment is not a gift or a favor, but is an obligation arising out of an agreement you and I might enter. Such an agreement demands a relationship of trust. We must be willing to trust each other and to respect what that trust requires, otherwise one of us might ignore or distort our obligations. When we fulfill those obligations, we are doing shalom.

The Bible also uses shalom as a legal term. In the Book of Exodus, the section following the Ten Commandments includes lots of concrete applications. Among them are 14 practical rules about losing, stealing, or damaging someone else’s property. Here’s the first one:

If someone leaves a pit open, or digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, the owner of the pit shall make restitution, giving money to the animal’s owner, but keeping the dead animal (Exod. 21:33–34).

The Hebrew word that is translated “shall make restitution” is the verb form of shalom. Here the issue is not so much relationship as responsibility—like the sign you might see today in pottery shops: “You break it, you bought it.” Put another way, if I cause you loss, I’m obliged to make good for what I’ve destroyed or taken. Again, I’m not doing you a favor, or acting out of the goodness of my heart. I’m doing what justice demands. That, too, is doing shalom.

So, when the Bible uses shalom as a verb, it’s talking about holding up my side of an agreement, or making restitution if I have deprived you of something that is rightfully yours—even if I did it unknowingly or by mistake. Both these uses involve tangible, precise actions—actions that produce or restore an element of equilibrium.

As a noun, shalom has the basic meaning of “sufficiency.” Again, the context is concrete. The sufficiency involves food, shelter, clothing, land, or work. It also includes the feeling of being satisfied because one’s legitimate desires have been met. Note that I said desires, not needs. Biblical shalom is not sufficiency in the sense of having just enough to get by. It is sufficiency on a grander scale. It is sufficiency in the face of abundance, not sufficiency in the face of scarcity.

We need to acknowledge, of course, that today shalom as “sufficiency on a grand scale” is a long way off. Who among us is not aware, as we look around the world, that even in the face of abundance, sufficiency is in short supply? You know the numbers: on planet Earth, 80 percent of the food—less than half a pancake each, hardly a healthy start to their day.

The sufficiency in the face of abundance, not a conviction of scarcity—and offers powerful examples of both. For scarcity, we have the Genesis story of Pharaoh, the original inside trader. Tipped off by Joseph that after seven years of plenty the bottom will fall out of the grain market, Pharaoh panics. Though arguably the richest person in the world, he spends the seven good years creaming off one-fifth of every grain harvest from every field in Egypt—so driven is he by the prospect of not having enough.

When the crash comes, the Egyptians have plenty of grain—enough for seven-and-a-half pancakes each, every morning. But to get their own grain back, they have to buy it. For those without money, the grain is not available. What’s more, Pharaoh has a monopoly, so he can ratchet up the price as much as he wants. Where shared abundance could have saved everyone, scarcity starts taking its toll, as some go hungry and others fill the Pharaoh’s coffers with their money.

After the first year, the money runs out. Does Pharaoh decide to give the grain back to the people he took it from? He does not. His conviction of scarcity will not allow that. So the people are forced to hand over their livestock in exchange for grain. Then the livestock runs out; what else can they sell? Genesis tells us their wrenching decision: “Buy us and our land in exchange for food” (Gen. 47:19). Pharaoh now owns their money, their livestock, their land, and their bodies—all in exchange for the grain he commandeered from them in the first place. So we’re not surprised to read, two verses later: “As for the people, Pharaoh made slaves of them from one end of Egypt to the other” (Gen. 47:21).

From scarcity to slavery—it’s a recurring story, reverberating down the centuries. Greed creates scarcity, thrives on scarcity, celebrates scarcity. Why else do we have today a government that keeps people shackled to crumbling cities through an economic system that fawns on the wealthy? Why else do we have an entrepreneurial empire that feeds off scarcity, and media that sell scarcity? The answer: because those who control the government, the economy, the stores, and the television sets are the true believers in scarcity. And that leaves 80 percent to consume 20 percent—take your half a
pancake and shut up. The age of the pharaohs continues.

There is no peace in that, no sufficiency, no balance, no shalom. It is—as George Fox so keenly observed—the occasion from which wars come. Those who have, keep on taking; those who have not, lose the little they have. If the losers do not take up arms, the takers will.

The God of the Bible offers a different scenario. It, too, begins in Egypt, but the real action occurs in the wilderness—where survival depends on sharing. A band of escaped slaves, led by a rebel Egyptian, has been trudging through the desert for about six weeks when food runs out. The ragtag crew takes out its frustration on Moses, accusing him of bringing them out there just to kill them. But their God, Yahweh, has a solution—and a proviso. Yahweh will cause bread to fall every morning. Moses is told, but they are to collect only enough for the day.

The next morning, the ground is covered with a fine, flaky substance. It's the bread, Moses explains, and he tells them about God's proviso. They agree. The text reads: "They gathered as much as each of them needed" (Exod. 16:21).

As much as each of them needed. Can you imagine how difficult that must have been? They were so hungry that slavery in Egypt looked good by comparison. Now they're being asked to trust that each day will bring a new supply. Unlike Pharaoh's granaries, the supply will not run out. Instead of money and livestock, their currency is trust, trust that there will always be enough. And they manage to pull it off. Each day, they have as much as they need—they have sufficiency, they have shalom.

When this manna story is retold and reinterpreted in the New Testament, the outcome is just as amazing: a deserted place, a hungry crowd—this time 5,000-plus women and children—and just five loaves and two fishes. But the meager food is distributed, and whether by miracle or by neighbourly generosity, all are fed. The text tells us, and were filled. What's more, the leftovers filled 12 baskets. Scarcity transformed into abundance. Shalom reaffirmed once again.

The biblical word shalom, which we've just explored, extends from its basic meanings to a cluster of additional meanings. For the verb, the basic meaning was "to pay" and "to make reparation." Other meanings for shalom as a verb are: to restore, to finish, to heal, to reward. All of these involve answering the obligation to meet a neighbor's need. All are works of justice.

The same justice lies at the root of the noun, shalom. Its primary meaning was "sufficiency"—everyone having what they need, and trusting that their needs will continue to be met. The noun encompasses even more than the verb: completeness, soundness, welfare, safety, health, prosperity, quiet, tranquility, contentment.

They sound wonderful, don't they—these translations of shalom? They express the peace that many of us dream of achieving. But is it really peace that we seek, or just peace of mind? Is our peace grounded in justice, or perhaps just in politeness or civility or political correctness? If we seek it because it extends the benefits of abundance, because it stems the spread of scarcity, because it sides with those who are deprived of sufficiency, who are left holding empty promises worth no more than yesterday's lottery ticket, whose homes and possessions and bodies have been stolen, damaged, or destroyed—then yes, "coming to peace" (the Gathering's theme) is indeed coming to shalom.

But "peace"—be it world peace or our own peace and quiet—that is sought without regard for the demands of justice, that is obtained without being measured against sufficiency for others—or worse, at the expense of their sufficiency—such a peace, however inviting, is not shalom.

No justice, no peace.

Shalom is something we do, not something we feel. It does not come just from being nice to each other, or accepting each other, or forgiving and encouraging each other. Shalom comes from exercising justice toward each other, and for many of us that means going beyond our family and friends, going instead to our brothers and sisters who do not have sufficiency, whose needs are not met, whose agreements are broken, whose possessions are taken and not returned. Only when we can say we have tried to right these wrongs, to reject the mentality of scarcity that they spring from and replace it with a mentality of abundance that is for all to enjoy—only then can we say we are coming to shalom.

Additional evidence of the link between shalom and justice appears in the Bible's directives for the Jubilee year—found in the 25th chapter of Leviticus. Held every 50th year, the Jubilee was the time to "proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants" (v. 10). During Jubilee, debts were forgiven, property restored, the needy cared for, and the indentured laborers set free. All these were acts of justice, and the beneficiaries experienced shalom. Biblical shalom is not something one attains for oneself; it is bestowed by another—just as when we leave this Gathering with a deeper sense of coming to peace, we have not ourselves but each other to thank.

That, then, is what I see the Bible saying about shalom. It is the flower that blooms only on the tree of justice, planted near the waters of abundance, warmed by the light of truth and faithfulness.

I started with two queries: To what extent might our opposition to war be diverting us from addressing the conditions that create war? And: To what extent might our dedication to social activism be preventing us from utilizing God's role in social change? I hope that my comments about shalom shed some light on the first. Now I turn to the second.

In the Scriptures, the opposite of shalom is not war, it is chaos. I don't mean the chaos of string-theory enthusiasts or traffic jams or a teenager's bedroom. Biblical chaos is the condition that existed before creation. And biblical creation is the taming of chaos so that abundance can abound and shalom can blossom.

For the ancient peoples, chaos was a
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constant threat. Without warning, forces of confusion, diminishment, and destruction could strike, bringing individual difficulty, social strife, or even the collapse of the cosmic order. Shalom was the alternative to chaos, a refuge from its frightening specter and a bulwark that kept it at bay.

The foundation for Israel’s assurance that shalom would overcome chaos is in the opening pages of the Bible, the seven-day account of Creation (Gen. 1:1-2:3).

This is a highly crafted text, with significance in every word. The Hebrew begins with a 19-word convoluted sentence that takes up the first two verses. Don’t let the English translation fool you; this is a tough sentence to untangle. It says that when God started creating, there already existed the heavens, the world, and something called the “deep.” The world, we’re told, is tohu vaohu—an expression whose meaning is unsure because it appears elsewhere only in Jeremiah 4:23, where it refers back to the pre-creation condition. Many translations say “waste and void,” but more to the point might be “a shapeless mess.” The “deep” is water, but from a fish’s point of view—everywhere you look. The only harbinger of hope is God’s ruah (“breath” or “wind” or “spirit”) hovering or trembling over the deep.

The overall picture is chaos, and not just in the words—the sentence itself is chaotic. But the next sentence marks the beginning of chaos conquered. It has just four words, two of them repeated as a single word: literally “Said God happen light light-happen.” With exquisite simplicity and directness, the text tells us that God has started to take charge. The next sentence also has just four words, two from the sentence before: “Saw God light good.” And the final sentence: “Separated God light from darkness.” The first boundary is drawn; calm is edging out chaos.

The powerful God is taming the chaos; that much is clear. But many ancient religions claimed their gods conquered chaos. The key is in how, and here the Hebrew is clear: in each creative act, God does not command, God invites—“let there be” is an offer, not an order. Chaos is conquered because God calls and something responds. Partnerships are being called forth.

The first thing to notice, then, is that God conquers chaos by sharing power. The second is that God invites this creation to be abundantly self-sustaining—and it accepts. Sky, dry land, sea—all start to bring forth life. The sixth day is reserved for creatures that “have the breath of life”—the animals, then the earthling (for that is the meaning of the Hebrew word adam).

First God creates them “in God’s image,” which means they are to do as God does: overcome chaos. Next God tells them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and protect it [not ‘subdue’ it], and care for [not ‘have dominion over’]... every living thing that moves upon the earth.” It sounds like a command, but the text calls it a blessing, which means it’s an affirmation of the earthlings’ role and responsibility to carry on the divine defense against chaos. Finally, God gives the earthlings everything that is growing on the earth for their food.

What’s happening here? Where there was chaos there is now order. Because of that order, there is enough for everyone; the God of abundance guarantees sufficiency and in doing so, guarantees shalom.

The story puts God back in charge, assuring partnership and abundance. This means we can cross off our list of worries the words “lack of”—lack of this, lack of that. There is enough, and it’s under our control; sufficiency and satisfaction—double shalom! And that is what we wish when we greet each other with “Shalom.”

But for those who believe in scarcity—who worship a God of Scarcity—the words “lack of” stay on the top of their list. This is no accident; it is the consequence of a carefully tended ideology, born of governmental greed, entrepreneurial engorgement, and military might. Convinced that there is not enough to go around, these disciples of scarcity scramble and scheme to “get theirs,” as much “theirs” as they can, more than they need because “one never knows”—though they do know they will leave others without enough.

These purveyors of power—be they political, economic, military, psychological, or religious—have let domination, greed, and self-righteousness shove shalom into a dark corner of their hearts. And it seems that nothing we say or do can dislodge it. We strive to subvert their domination, or shame their greed, or expose their self-righteousness, but we cannot coax their shalom out of the shadows. Only God can rearrange the human heart, moving shalom to the center and protecting it from whatever threatens its position or stifles its expressions.

God can do that, but God does not. God does not awaken shalom in their hearts. God does not free them from this allegiance to scarcity. God does not stay their hand as they take what they ought to pay for, walk away from what they have destroyed or damaged, replace sufficiency with starvation. In all this, God does nothing.

What kind of a God does nothing in the face of such injustice? Who wants such a God? A God who is cold and callous and indifferent, who doesn’t seem to notice what is going on—the pain, the persecution, the sickness, the hunger, the homelessness, the tens of thousands who die of AIDS every year? How can God remain so distant, so unhearing, so disinterested, while these atrocities go on, unabated?

These questions are not mine, they are the Bible’s questions. The place you will find them is in the biblical prayers known as laments (see sidebar). And I propose these laments—or others like them—as a way of doing the work of justice so that we can come to peace.

The lament is a form of prayer so daring and frightening and demanding, that it doesn’t come easy to our lips. It is a protest, hurled not in the face of some jackboot tyrant but defiantly in the face of God. The lament is not the prayer of the timid, a beggar holding out a bowl and appealing to divine pity. The lament uses
language that is bold, graphic, and unvarnished. It blurs out what the lament is suffering and how God should be responding. The lament gives voice to pain, abuse, isolation, and oppression—dumps it all in God's lap and says, "There! Now do something about it!"

Many of us may not need the lament; our problems might not seem serious enough to risk calling God on the carpet for them. If that's true of you, pay attention: it is precisely you who need to be the voice of those who are desperate for the lament but cannot say it. You need to be their representative, their surrogate, their advocate. That's what it means to be a part of a faith community, of the human family, and yes, of the Earth itself. This is not a choice, it is an obligation arising out of the demands of justice. Indeed, it goes directly to the source of justice, God, and can set that source in motion. It is the obligation that qualifies us for the gift of shalom.

The lament testifies to a peculiar thing about the God of the Bible. Forget all you were ever told about God knowing everything. This God needs to be told. Before this God can intervene, the person suffering—or their representative—needs to tell God what is wrong, needs to make a case, needs to plead a cause. That's what the biblical text says, time and time again. The pain must be spoken, articulated, given palpable shape and form in words. Only then, it seems, can God do anything about it.

This means that God is not God spontaneously unilaterally. When God does act, it is because of a dialogue, because the gaunt face of suffering has grabbed God's attention—frequently with coarse language—and demanded God's help.

What's happening here is the playing out of a relationship, a covenant. Remember the Creation story: this God is a relational God, a God who holds us earthlings human partners in high esteem, will not violate our freedom, will not intrude unbidden into our lives. This is a profound limitation self-imposed by God on God. The same God who ardently desires our fulfillment, our happiness, our security, who offers abundance, who can calm the chaos—this God will not right our wrongs, cure our ills, fix our mistakes, clean up our messes unless beckoned into our lives. The biblical witness is consistent: God acts when God is called upon to act, and the more this call is honest, direct, specific, and demanding, the more likely God is to intervene.

We, then, are God's catalyst. We are the flame that ignites the fuse, the switch that turns on the light, the key that opens the door. The words of Isaiah are true: "we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand" (64:8). But as any skilled potter will attest, the potter responds to the clay even as the clay responds to the potter.

What, then, shall we do with this power that the potter allows to us? I put it to you that we must use it to bring about shalom—for ourselves and for everyone we are led to represent. We do it because we long for the time when hunger has been so satisfied and fear has been so relieved that the wolf and lamb can lie down together (Isa. 11:6-8). We do it by bringing scarcity before God, by presenting it in all its particular horror, pain, stench, and ugliness and saying: "Here, you need to fix this."

All the biblical laments share an essential characteristic: conviction. Their words are a cry from the heart, expressing a deep-down pain, a gnawing need, a shameful degradation—and convinced that God will alleviate it. Without that conviction, their words would be empty and nothing would change.

If it is true that all of us are called to be surrogate lamenters, then our path is clear: tell what you know about the pain that scarcity inflicts on the peoples of the world—indeed, on the very world itself. Tell what you have experienced. Tell what you have felt.

To speak with such conviction you don't have to be a victim yourself. But you do have to get close enough to the victims so that some of their pain rubs off on you, gets into your pores, is imprinted on your mind. Only then can you speak with the voice of a victim, and your speech will have conviction as it demands God's attention and God's help.

Conviction lies at the heart of every protest and every march and every petition. It may not be evident to the people around you, or if it is, they may judge it naive or bizarre. But it will be evident to God, and that is where its ultimate effectiveness lies. Whether we lament with words or with actions, as part of a marching crowd or sitting alone in our room, if we speak to God with conviction, God listens.

Continued on page 37

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AS THE CROW FLIES

Out of a green cave, the crows call, marking the day,
giving it some kind of border, some form in the struggle to begin.

Last night, down by the river, thirty crows flew overhead,
evening flocking like black clouds gathering,
a definite destination in their silent flight and fringed wings.

Not like these early morning barkers, sitting outside my
window insisting, “Listen.”
Their ebony bodies glow with mystery,
some secret they tell each other over and over again.

Not a warning, since the little birds ignore the frenzied commands.

More like invitation: sound in the morning to declare place,
silence in the evening offering distance and departure.

This morning they own the tracery of leaves, poised on the edge
of my ears almost understanding, almost there.

Thousands of years ago, our genes would have heard and deciphered.
The day would have been planned between the cries and the silence.
We would have moved in tune with the crows’ hoarse advice.

We remember, somewhere, I know we do, how to live
in the same green world, the same blue sky, the same easy
transformation between life, death, grief, and joy.

Can you tell me what they are saying?
I need to know what they are saying.

—Lynn Martin

Lynn Martin is a member of Putney (Vt.) Meeting.
Johnstown lies deep in a valley in western Pennsylvania along the Conemaugh River, a tributary of the Allegheny, on a major east-west passenger rail link. (Nowadays, most people zoom past Johnstown unawares, a few miles away, on the Pennsylvania Turnpike.) Its name carries ominous overtones for many. In my school years, the Johnstown Flood of May 31, 1889, which killed over 2,000 people, was offered as an example of what can happen when the forces of nature conspire with human carelessness. The poorly constructed dam that triggered the catastrophic flood is still standing today with its gaping breach, and it was a destination for one of the field trips at this year's Friends General Conference Gathering, held this past June 28 to July 5. Our group of pilgrims to the site was solemn—not only out of respect for the victims, but in the sure knowledge that exercising due diligence to confront human carelessness or pride is not just a matter for the past.

Attendees of this year's Gathering did not encounter any torrential rains—on the contrary, the weather was ideal. We felt blessed in other ways, too. The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, where we met, is situated high above the city, surrounded by woods, and only a few hundred feet lower than the summit of Allegheny Mountain. The campus felt just the right size for us, it offered excellent facilities, and our hosts were warm and friendly. As a crowning touch, two fawns frequented the view of Quakers in their golf carts.

If I count correctly, this was my 20th Gathering. I barely remember the first one, in Cape May, New Jersey, in the 1950s when I was a child. My next Gathering was the last one held in Ithaca, New York, in 1980; Roma and I came with young children in tow, strongly encouraged by my mother. We were immediate converts. How could we have been so foolish as to miss out on this uplifting experience up to then? Our children have shared our enthusiasm. Given the weak First-day school programs in my two home meetings during my sons' childhood, I doubt that they would still be Quakers if it weren't for the powerful experience of the Gathering year after year. All three sons, now adults, showed up in Johnstown, one coming from California.

Once, while waiting in a lunch line at a previous Gathering, I got to talking with someone about her involvement in a committee that arranged for the T-shirts that are sold each year embossed with a new Gathering logo. Engaged in our conversation, we ate lunch together while she explained the process of...
selecting a manufacturer, choosing the colors, etc. For me this was just one small, behind-the-scenes glimpse of the massive, complex group effort that puts the components in place for each Gathering. Conversations over meals like this one, growing from a few hesitant words in the meal line, exemplify for me the power of the Gathering. More than once, my partner in conversation and I—complete strangers up to then—have connected in an astounding way and revealed our innermost selves to each other by the time we finish dessert and coffee, and years later we still recognize and greet each other as we pass by at Gatherings.

If you were at Johnstown, we at FRIENDS JOURNAL hope these photographs and writings will stimulate your memories. If you weren't able to attend, they hint at the flavor of the Gathering. And if you have yet to attend one, perhaps they will encourage you to try it. The next one is scheduled for July 3–10, 2004, in Amherst, Massachusetts.

—Robert Dockhorn

Photos on pages 12–18 show scenes from the 2003 Friends General Conference Gathering.

A Bolt of Color
by Katrina Mason

This year, a high point of the Friends General Conference Gathering for me was, like so much that happens in this special week, serendipitous. As the evening coordinator for the three- and four-year-olds, I arrived a day early for the Junior Gathering staff workshops and to set up our space for the week. Looking at our assigned room I figured we would need a miracle to turn this tiny, divided lounge into a place that preschoolers would run to with delight. The first part of the miracle happened when the morning coordinator, Sunny Mitchell, just happened to bring with her colorful banners made by students at Newtown (Pa.) Friends School, where she teaches art. They not only brightened the walls but suggested creativity, fun, and action.

Katrina Mason is a member of Bethesda (Md.) Meeting.

The next part of the miracle occurred at lunch on the first Saturday when one of the local Friends making arrangements mentioned that she had in her garage a huge bolt of cloth that she wanted to get rid of. “I’ll take it,” I said, sight unseen, figuring that even if it were heavy and ugly, we could drape it over chairs or cardboard boxes to make tents or spaces to crawl through.

The cloth arrived midweek, just when we could really use a new diversion. It turned out to be silky light and an eye-catching pattern of bright blue, yellow, and red, at least two yards wide and so long that we never did find its end. With great glee, the children and an adult volunteer started unrolling it on the sidewalk in front of our room. Soon they were jumping and running along it and hiding in it. Figuring it would be safer on grass, we moved it—an exuberant cooperative project—to the soft grass behind our room, where, as if on cue, the kids sat on it, pulling the sides up as if they were in a long boat. This prompted the singing of

“Row, Row, Row Your Boat” and “Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore.” Then, by holding the cloth from underneath and walking together, again with amazing, unprompted cooperation, we paraded as a long dragon. Finally we cut a piece of the cloth into “super capes” for each child to take home to remember a spirited evening.

The unexpected, colorful fun must have appealed to adult passersby as well—for the next night we had more volunteer helpers than we could use and were able to share them with other age groups where they were greatly appreciated.
The Fruits of Service at the Gathering: A First-Timer’s Lesson

by Hamsa O’Doherty

The prompting came during a time of worship I had set aside for seeking clarity for a ministry to which I am called. The ministry originated as a concern that Friends might explore with me ways that members of the deaf community might find an inviting spiritual home among us. I have deaf family members, so this was a deeply personal concern to me. The concern had evolved into a leading, and from the leading, a ministry. After initiating some outreach for the ministry, it entered a period of “waiting.” I wondered if I should be doing something about the apparent lack of progress. I felt a need to enter into worship to seek divine guidance on moving the ministry forward. After some time in silent waiting, a single message emerged: “Go to the Gathering.”

There are promptings that emerge with particular strength and clarity. They resonate with a certainty and power that distinguish them from mere notions. This was indeed one of those promptings; it stood firm and persistent. It would lead to a lesson in how being open and submitting to the Spirit might bear fruit. I had never been to a Gathering of Friends General Conference. I knew nothing about the inner workings, so questions remained as to how it would specifically serve the intent of the ministry. I returned to worship several more times, seeking clarification and direction. Gradually, it became clear that, not only was it the right time for the ministry, it was the right time for me.

Hamsa O'Doherty is a member of Lancaster (Pa.) Meeting, where she serves on the Worship and Ministry and the Outreach committees. She is a founder of Deaf Friends Fellowship ( <asl­friends@mailstation.com>). She is a professional sign language interpreter and a Deaf Awareness and Sign Language educator, mentored by members of the deaf community. As used in this article, “deaf community” refers to those for whom American Sign Language is their primary language, and those in close affiliation with them. FRIENDS JOURNAL does not uppercase this phrase in line with its practice of minimizing capitalization.

When the advance program arrived I conducted, as it suggested, an inventory of our needs and gifts. Our needs were complex. I would be going with my three daughters, ages 13, 11, and 6, as a single parent. I would be bringing along with me a demanding autoimmune disorder that causes profound multiple chemical sensitivity, systemic pain, and fatigue. With limited finances, I realized there was no way we would be able to go without significant help from our monthly meeting and Gathering grants. I knew first-time attenders were discouraged from taking on significant commitments, yet I felt most comfortable submitting a request for the type of assistance we needed by offering up the full use of my abilities. I could offer my background and experience locating, scheduling, and coordinating professional sign language interpreters for events, evaluating and matching skills to needs, as well as my own interpreting services.

My registration process took up a great deal of two Gathering Friends’ time. Looking back, my awareness of the movement of the Spirit began to take hold during this time. We played e-mail tag, sending suggestions and negotiations back and forth. I found myself lifted by their patience, kindness, generosity, and gentleness. These Friends thoughtfully and prayerfully weighed the fact that I was a first-time attender coming with children, the demands of my health, my financial needs, and how important it was to me to have an opportunity to serve. They kindly explained their concerns that I maintain some gentleness with myself and generously offered a grant package that would do much to make it possible for us to go, and allow me to share a portion of my gifts. As I pursued clarification and reassurance as needed, I was never responded to with anything less than loving patience. I am certain that without their faithfulness, we would not have been able to go.

As I prepared to attend the Gathering, I shared two concerns with the committee formed to support me in my work. First, I was worried that others’ concerns for my well-being might inhibit my opportunity to inject life into the ministry. My offer to serve had been accepted, but only in part. Friends were cautioning me, as a first-time attender, to go easy on myself. I had heard of the infamous “overload” that some first-timers encounter, and I realized I needed to consider this. Second, I was not sure I had all the advance information that might support delivering interpretation at the level of excellence I hoped to achieve. I was scheduled to interpret three evening sessions, including a concert by a duo whose music I had not heard before. My uneasiness was especially true of the concert, since I knew that poorly timed interpreting could affect the enjoyment of the songs. Meeting with my committee helped me...
to center myself so that I could refocus on the original intent, remain open to the Spirit, and serve faithfully. While some concerns about the unknowns remained, I had a sense of purpose, and had to trust that way would open.

My first interpreting assignment was Sunday night's plenary, an address by Duduzile (Dudu) Mtshazo, a Friend from South Africa. When I met with her, the Friends who would sit in support of her on the stage as she spoke, and the sound crew, an intricate ministry of tender hospitality and care surrounded her. I was drawn into this spirit and was supported by it as well. Concerns continued to whisper at my nerves, but as I spent more time in the presence of the ministry I was witnessing, they subsided.

As Dudu was introduced and I began to interpret, I sensed holiness and the presence of the Spirit among us. An unusually high level of confidence and peace came over me. As Dudu spoke, the spirit in her words entered my body and directed my hands. Divine light was almost visible to me, supporting her as she spoke of deep pain and the healing movement of the Spirit in her life. Her body appeared to become smaller under the weight and power of her words. The volume of her voice diminished, and her accent thickened. It seemed that Dudu, in a sense, was no longer there. It became difficult, at times, to understand her. I began to struggle to interpret. The small, still voice whispered, "Just let me do it." The Spirit in Dudu's message continued to use my arms and hands, moving them where they needed to be in order to bring the spoken word into the language of sign. Typically, two interpreters would cover an event such as this, in order to prevent loss of attentiveness or "interpreter fatigue." Yet I felt absolutely no difficulty, just a pure energy not my own.
Friends concluded the event as they settled into worship. As I shook Dudu's hand and those of the Friends who had sat behind her, our eyes met. It was evident that they, too, had undergone a powerful and transforming experience. The Spirit had used and supported us all.

Friends from the audience approached me, thanking me for my service. Though some were unfamiliar with sign language, they were deeply moved by seeing the message as well as hearing it. Initially, I was taken aback by the attention. Still trying to process this awesome experience, I knew only to say, "It was the Spirit, not me." The secular had become sacred. I could only hope they understood that I treasured their expressing their experience to me.

As I prepared to interpret Monday night's plenary I noticed the presenters, Vanessa Juley and Christopher Hammond, also planned to have Friends sit in prayerful support of them. I began to realize that asking Friends to hold me in the Light might help me remain a faithful servant to such powerful messages. I took a few moments alone to center, pray, and submit my hands to the Spirit. Vanessa and Christopher spoke movingly of their personal and transforming experience, and again a sense of holiness and peace covered us. The interpreting moved effortlessly, and I felt more like an observer than one per-
Peaceful Pedal Cab
by Kim Carlyle

Friends General Conference provided the opportunity for an unconventional form of peace witness at the Gathering this year by allowing me to bring a pedal cab (bicycle rickshaw) to assist with the daily transport of Friends about the campus at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

We often don’t think of our transportation choices and energy use as being related to our Peace Testimony, but there are strong links. The most obvious is our country’s profligate use of oil, which has led our government to engage in armed hostilities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Colombia, just to name a few instances. Less apparent are the seeds of war that are being sown as fossil fuel use changes the global climate.

The unprecedented warming of the planet, as a result of human activities, will likely cause the oceans to rise to levels that will cause massive shifts in populations. It will also redistribute rainfall and disrupt food production and water supplies. We are already witnessing the spread of tropical diseases to areas where they were previously unknown. We can expect that these climate-connected events will upset social order, stress governments, and provide the occasion of war.

Friends should be aware that, as we work for peace, integrity requires us carefully to consider our individual choices about energy use in the home and as we travel. This pedal cab peace witness was an effort to raise such awareness.

It took almost a year of friendly persuasion to convince the Gathering planners that a pedal cab was a safe alternative to the fossil-fueled golf carts. I certainly understood their reluctance. This was a new, untested, unusual proposal—some might have thought, a hare-brained scheme. And
for an entire week, it is quite justified in being cautious. Anything new must be considered carefully. But in the end, the Spirit allowed for a trial balloon— one pedal cab, one driver.

Over the course of the year leading up to this year's Gathering, I had tested my leading for this witness with Friends close to me, with my monthly meeting, with the Ecological Concerns Network of my yearly meeting (SAYMA), and finally, with the executive committee of Friends Committee on Unity with Nature. The standard response was, “We heartily approve.”

I had also done the necessary research about the vehicle and found a company in Columbus, Ohio, that would rent a pedal cab—a two-passenger canopied carriage.
by Elizabeth Boardman

Body and Soul being as thoroughly linked as they are, one may ponder on the constraints that straight­backed benches, pews, or chairs might put on the spiritual life of Quakers.

Sitting straight in a hard chair is a productive position for thinking clear, intellectual thoughts, so who can be surprised if our Sunday morning meditations tend to be cerebral?

The physical postures of prayer at once express and evoke the emotions of one who prays. When we want to access new realms of prayer and spiritual growth, moving the body and its limbs into a new configuration can be the first step toward moving the soul. To expand our spiritual life, we straight-backed Friends might try out other positions for personal prayer at various times during all of the ever­sacred days of the week.

Sitting cross-legged on the floor or on a cushion, as many Buddhists do, can, if we are limber and practiced enough, still the mind as effectively as the straight­backed chair. But again, when the body is upright and the back tight, the rational mind may readily prevail over other prayerful instincts.

Kneeling with head bent over clasped hands, Catholics have long taught us, is a bodily posture that expresses and evokes supplication, a mode rather under­developed among Friends. Ave, Maria! Hear a supplicant child! Imagine or even try it: down on knees, head lowered, eyes closed, hands clasped, words pleading, strength, pride, and ego melting. Do we Friends know how to do this human prayer? Are we aware of how it expands the heart?

For the expression of heartfelt obeisance, perhaps the Muslims are our best models. Would you be embarrassed to kneel with your forehead on the ground and your rump in the air? If so, is it because you value your own dignity more than your intense and humble fealty to God? How many in your meeting would be willing one day to move aside the chairs and benches, to kneel shoulder to shoulder, forehead to the ground, silently entreating A salaam alainu (God give us peace)? Until we pray for peace with body and soul, how will it ever come?

Watch a mother doubled over in anguish, clutching at her womb and crying out, Oh, God, save my baby! to know how to pray for the world's children. It is not possible to make this prayer sitting up in a straight­backed chair.

Did you ever want to lie spread­eagle on your back on the floor in a gesture of absolute surrender? Take my life and let it be! Consecrated, Lord, to Thee. Maybe not so good to do in the middle of meeting for worship, but it would be fine at home.

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Where is the joy in worship when we do not dance or sing "a joyful noise unto the Lord"? Conversing with God as you drive alone can reveal to you your own intentions. Chanting a Buddhist mantra as you walk can gather your focus. May I be peaceful, free, and light in body and spirit. Be sure to find opportunities to pray in these ways during the week's long, lovely days.

And then practice praying as you hope you will be able to do when you are dying. Lying flat and long on your bed, eyes closed, hands crossed over your chest, breathing slowed to almost nothing. You request nothing, cling to nothing, remember nothing, are nothing. Into your hands I commend my spirit. In good times, this prayer brings deep serenity. When the best time comes, it will bring you back to God.

Elizabeth Boardman, clerk of San Francisco (Calif.) Meeting, is a peace activist who recently visited Iraq. A grandminder, she develops and runs healthcare programs for frail elders. 
John Dickinson (1732–1808): Quaker Statesman?

by Alice M. Hoffman


—Penna. Historical and Museum Commission, 2001

These words appear on a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker next to Merion Meeting in Merion Station, Pennsylvania.

At the ceremony commemorating John Dickinson when the marker was placed, with local politicians in attendance, the speaker, Edward Fersht, originally from Great Britain, remarked that he was favorably impressed that the state would so honor a man who refused to sign our most “sacred” document: the Declaration of Independence.

There are a number of elements in the marker that cause both puzzlement and curiosity. Why should a man who argued against British policy in the period leading up to the Revolution refuse to sign the Declaration of Independence? If it was because he was raised as a Quaker and favored conciliation rather than war, and the Declaration was after all a declaration of war, why would he volunteer to join the militia? Several members of Merion Meeting began to feel the need to investigate further the thought and writings of John Dickinson. His apparent inconsistency intrigued us and seemed similar to our own meeting’s contemporary struggles about how we should respond to calls to wage war. Moreover, since he rejected the Declaration, how is it that citizens of both Delaware and Pennsylvania selected him to represent them at the Constitutional Convention?

A number of historians have asserted that John Dickinson was not a Quaker. For instance, David L. Jacobson, in John Dickinson and the Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1764–1776, writes, “His religious life was lived outside the discipline of the Society of Friends. The break between Samuel Dickinson [his father] and the Quakers meant that his son was not to be a member of the meeting.”

A member of our meeting who faithfully maintains our archives has kept a book of articles on John Dickinson, clipped from various sources, and there it is recorded that he and his wife lie in the burial ground of Wilmington (Del.) Meeting. It is not uncommon for non-Friends to be buried in a Quaker burial ground, but the combination of his failure to sign the Declaration of Independence, his gift to Merion Meeting, and his burial at Wilmington led us to wonder about the assertions that he was not a Quaker. I wondered, if he was not read out of meeting, had he perhaps been read out of his proper place in history? So I set about to do a little historical sleuthing at The Quaker Collection at Haverford College and Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College. After all, it was the least we could do to acknowledge his generous gift to Merion Meeting of two acres of ground deeded in 1801 and 1804. I was, however, concerned that a romantic desire to see John Dickinson not only as a major contributor to our form of government but also as a Quaker might cloud my vision. I asked the archivists at Swarthmore and Haverford to help me unearth information on all sides of this issue.

John Dickinson was born in Talbot County, Maryland, in 1732. His was among the leading Quaker families of Maryland’s Eastern Shore. His mother, Mary Cadwalader Dickinson, came from the original Welsh tract settlers in Pennsylvania who founded Merion Meeting in 1682, and it was undoubtedly in honor of his mother’s family that John Dickinson gave his gift of land to the meeting. His mother was a faithful member of Third Haven Meeting in Easton for as long as the family lived in Maryland.

In 1740 John’s father, Samuel, became disaffected from Third Haven Meeting owing to disapproval of the marriage out of meeting of John’s half-sister. As a consequence Samuel moved his family to Kent County, Delaware, where he built a beautiful home on Jones Neck. This was to be the principal home for John Dickinson for the rest of his life. The house is still maintained as a historic landmark. The docent of the house will tell you that John Dickinson was not a Quaker.

John Dickinson was educated at home under the care of his mother and a private tutor. Mary Dickinson, it should be noted, was careful to transfer her membership from Third Haven to Duck Creek Meeting in Delaware after they moved. John was sent to Philadelphia to begin his

November 2003 Friends Journal
John Dickinson, and it formed the basis for much of the ensuing discussions. He urged, however, that the cause of liberty should not be "sullied by turbulence and tumult." He authored the so-called Olive Branch Petition to the King as a last ditch effort to avoid revolution. There is no evidence that George III even received the petition, so this effort proved fruitless.

In July 1770, John Dickinson married Mary Norris, the daughter of the Quaker Speaker of the Assembly, John Norris. They had married in a civil ceremony because John informed her that he had no intention of going before the meeting. It is not known why he rebelled over the authority of the meeting. With considerable reluctance, Mary consented to the civil ceremony performed before a justice of the peace. However, in December of that year she presented a sincere apology for her conduct to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, and she was excused. Never again did she depart from devout adherence to the Religious Society of Friends.

John Adams, who sought independence, feared that John Dickinson's influence might cause the Pennsylvania delegation to vote against the Declaration. Hoping to persuade him to support revolution, he went to dine at Fairhill, the Norris estate where the Dicksons lived when they resided in Philadelphia. He believed that John Dickinson's position on independence came from "being bedeviled by the pacifist views of his wife and mother." Actually the older woman in the household was not Mary Dickinson's mother but her aunt. Later, according to David McCullough in *John Adams*, the guest remarked that "if he had such a wife and mother he would have shot himself." Perhaps Abigail Adams did not express herself in company as forthrightly as the Quaker women in the Dickinson household.

John Dickinson absented himself from the Congress for the vote for independence. An interesting commentary is pro-

Page 20: Portrait of John Dickinson by Charles Willson Peale, 1780
Above: "The Declaration of Independence," painted by John Trumbull between 1789 and 1794

Continued on page 42

**Life in the Meeting**

**Rites of Passage into Adulthood**

by A. Malcolm Campbell

This year, our small meeting (about 25 attenders of all ages per week) began a new practice—celebrating the coming of age for one of our young members. Beth is 16 years old and the meeting wanted to do something to acknowledge her growth into adulthood and the changes she is experiencing. With this report we are sharing our experience with other meetings, especially small ones, so they can consider if they, too, would like to develop a coming-of-age process.

Davidson (N.C.) Meeting has been gathering for about 14 years. In 2001, we became an independent monthly meeting after being under the nurturing care of Charlotte Meeting for many years. With our newfound independence, we have been examining our procedures—or lack thereof—and determining what we should do as we grow individually and collectively. For several years, we have been aware that our small size restricts our ability to have youth activities with enough people for a critical mass. The meeting has about ten young people ranging in ages from 1 to 16 years. Our query: What should we do as a meeting to provide rites of passage for our young members as they approach adulthood?

We contacted a few Quakers and collected ideas in order to find out what other small meetings have done. One meeting created an elaborate ceremony with candles. Another meeting organized several adults to join their teens for walks and conversations around a lake to discuss topics that felt appropriate. We decided to ask Beth what she felt would be the best option, and she chose to incorporate whatever we developed into a regular meeting for worship. She did not want to make a big deal of her coming of age, nor be the center of attention. As a group, we decided to select a date and have everyone in the meeting bring a reading, a piece of wisdom, or share some personal story that seemed especially suited for Beth.

In addition to the need for a rites-of-passage process for our oldest teen, the meeting felt our one-First-day-school-fits-all approach had outlived its utility. It was becoming increasingly difficult to create First-day school lessons that were meaningful to children ranging from a junior in high school to a kindergartner. So, the First-day school committee devised a new plan for the coming year. For the first week of each month, the two high school students would go with one adult to discuss topics that were more mature. The second week of each month, the two high school students would stay in meeting with the adults. On the third week, all children would work on a year-long service project making gift cards for sale to benefit the Heifer Project, which helps people obtain a sustainable source of food and income (see www.heiferproject.org). For the remaining weeks, all children would meet for a common lesson.

The new curriculum began in September and ran through May. The two high schoolers appreciated being treated differently. They read a book called *Children in War* by Alan and Susan Raymond and later watched the video documentary of the same title that spawned the book (see www.childreninwar.com). We walked to the cemetery and talked about the price of war in human terms. We discussed the perception they and their friends from school had about the pending/ongoing war in Iraq. The last part of the curriculum was centered on a book written by a college junior during his National Outdoor Leadership School semester in Kenya (*In Mind/In Country* by Worth Allen). This diary recounts several stories about personal choices and responsibility, making the most of your time, and coming of age.

Next year we will have three high school students, and the overall curriculum will continue.

**The Celebration**

On December 6, 2002, we gathered as usual for meeting for worship. Fifteen minutes after meeting began, the younger children left for First-day school as they always do. Over the next 45 minutes, nearly every member stood and spoke to Beth. Her father spoke midway through meeting. Five minutes before we adjourned, her mother shared her thoughts and feelings. A few people passed written messages to Beth for her to read later. This hour of worship, centered on Beth, was like no other meeting before or since. Frequently our meeting will remain silent for the entire hour, but on Beth’s week nearly everyone spoke to Beth. It was a moving ceremony.

**Reactions**

Everyone knew about this celebration months in advance. Initially, Beth was not...
wild about the idea, but she was not dreading it either—until that morning. Beth told her mother she’d like to skip meeting. For the first 15 minutes, you could read the apprehension in her body language. However, once it began in earnest, a change came over her. Several attendees expressed their satisfaction with our celebration for Beth. Now we are anticipating our next coming-of-age celebration for Dean when he turns 16. After that, we have another member who is turning 15, and as he approaches 16 we will talk with him to devise a welcoming celebration that is suited for him.

There are many issues small meetings must address. We have many more challenges to come, no doubt, but it seems we have developed a very good method for welcoming teens into adulthood. The original goal was to acknowledge the changing roles of our young adults within the meeting and in their everyday lives. We have developed a process that helps us nurture our children as they mature. In return, each adult was able to grow, too, and see Beth in a new light—as the newest adult member in our meeting.

Welcome Ministry?
by June Cassidy

When our daughter, Caitlin, was about three, we went to meeting. About ten minutes into the hour, she whispered to me, “When is someone going to speak?” I whispered back, “I don’t know. We just have to wait and see.” Shortly after that, a “weighty Friend” stood up and began speaking. After a few moments, Caitlin asked, “When is she going to stop?”

June (Robinson) Cassidy currently attends Wellesley (Mass.) Meeting

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The spiders have moved in from the garden, the chipmunks have built a nest of fur and seeds in the woodpile, and the kitchen overflows with tomatoes and apples just waiting to be turned into salsa and sauces and stored for the winter. For just about every species, the shorter days and lower temperatures of autumn signal the onset of a season of withdrawal. Particularly up here in the mountains of Vermont where snow piles up around the windows, the temperature plunges past zero, and the woodstove glows through the night, about this time of year we tend to gather things together — wood, matches, candles, oil lamps, canned goods — and prepare to withdraw from the world for days and weeks at a time. Winter storms sweep down the mountain from Canada and swirl through our pines, the jays appear at our feeder, and we know it’s time to downshift into life’s slow lane.

These days delight my soul. The stack of books beside my chair is high, the cup of tea beside them is hot, and Rufus, my West Highland white terrier, is asleep on my feet. I hope you, too, find time to withdraw from the outside world, to center yourself, and perhaps find a better balance in our chaotic world. The following books may help.

— Ellen Michaud

Ellen Michaud is the Journal’s book review editor and a member of South Starkethor (VT.) Meeting.

Uneasy Empire


For all its compactness, this slender volume offers both a sweeping analysis of the new global order and a wealth of particulars that make it enormously useful for anyone attempting to see past today’s headlines to the underlying structure of global monopoly capitalism. For Quakers of widely ranging backgrounds and familiarity with globalization, its appearance is timely and relevant.

The idea for the book grew out of the September 11 attacks, according to author Greg Guma. The opening pages have a hurried urgency that at first put me off. But what emerges is a coherent analysis of the role of the Bretton Woods institutions—the World Bank, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and various regional trade treaties—in creating an autocratic world government that is dangerously undermining both local governance and the United Nations.

“Designed by multinationals and the industrialized nations,” he writes, “this emerging global state is extending the reign of the market, while simultaneously creating new Berlin Walls to seal off the have-nots.” Privatization and monopolization of everything from prisons and water supplies to seeds and plants are part of the drift toward a global corporate system that answers to no citizenship—a “global government that claims it does not exist.”

Greg Guma minces no words. He calls IMF and World Bank “loan sharks for crony capitalism.” He points out that “more than two-thirds of the Bank’s loans during the 1990s were for oil and gas development or water privatization. At the same time, rather than alleviating debt, the IMF provided a safety net for banks and big business, while demanding government austerity and the auctioning off of public enterprises. The results have included increased poverty, unemployment, inflation, and environmental disruption.”

Greg Guma is a Vermont-based social activist who for years edited Toward Freedom, under whose imprimatur the book was published. His analysis owes a debt to Noam Chomsky and other thinkers, and he credits “nonviolent hero Dave Dellinger” as a friend and role model. He draws from wide sources and writes in a sassy prose that makes for good reading. The book would be a good choice for a study group.

For me, the most compelling chapter is the one entitled “The Battle for El Dorado”—a breathtaking eight-page summation of the machinations of U.S. oil interests in Azerbaijan and the Persian Gulf that led to the first attack on Iraq, then the attack on the Taliban and this year’s invasion of Iraq.

For Friends who may not have followed all the ins and outs of the globalization economy but who have been dismayed to see World Federalism derailed, the United Nations virtually written off by the U.S. government, the “peace dividend” traded for a new arms race—this book will be an eye-opener. It may be disturbing, but also inspiring, because it offers a conceptual framework for understanding recent events and thus fosters a more coherent response individually and collectively, for bringing Quaker values to bear in a discordant world.

As a Quaker writer who has invoked John Woolman in attempting to come to terms with today’s global injustices, I am grateful for Greg Guma’s directness. “Loan sharks for crony capitalism” runs courser to the wisdom of The Wall Street Journal, but conveys a truth I need to have reiterated. The present system...
promotes injustice.

Another gift of the book is, I think, Greg Guma's pointing toward the UN, at a time when it is difficult to believe in that institution. The UN must be reformed, revitalized, kept out of corporate hands, kept honest. Or something must be found in its stead.

Another is a reminder: Greg Guma cites a 1946 Roper poll that asked us in the U.S., "If every other country in the world would elect representatives to a world congress and let all problems between countries be decided by this congress, with a strict provision that all countries have to abide by the decisions whether they like them or not, would you be willing to have the United States go along on this?" An impressive 62.8 percent answered yes. "It is certainly a grim testament to the power of nationalist propaganda and Cold War paranoia that such an emerging consensus, expressed just as the UN was launched, could have been so effectively undermined and reversed over the years."

Grim, but hopeful as well.

If Greg Guma is right, then the empire is uneasy, as the title suggests. The Bush administration's flouting of the UN, its rush into Iraq, the attack on civil liberties at home, are simply recent examples of the desperation felt by rulers nervous about "globalization from below"—a movement ranging from street demonstrations in France and Germany to national elections in countries like Brazil, suggesting that "people around the world have not given their consent to the new rules being imposed."

I wish I believed the empire to be uneasy, and not simply smug. I want to believe in its vulnerability. In any case, I believe in the struggle. Greg Guma holds out hope:

"Fascism—friendly or otherwise—has not won yet, and the best way to prevent its further ascendance is to hold fast to realism, skepticism, a healthy imagination, and bold aspirations, supported by conscious actions, for the creation of a free and open world. There is no need to settle for 'official' definitions of freedom, diversity, and democratic rights. Free time is not freedom, more products is not diversity, and voting is just one democratic right."

This is a book that deserves a second, somewhat expanded edition. An index would be a valuable addition, as well. Perhaps some mainstream publisher will pick it up and initiate those changes. In the meantime, Uneasy Empire has an honored place on my own bookshelf, along with John Woolman's A Plea for the Poor.

—David Morse

David Morse is the author of Testimony: John Woolman on Today's Global Economy, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #356.

Friends Journal November 2003
Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption


How refreshing it is to read a collection of essays that is both excellent—despite its off-putting scholarly title and subtitle—and carries a consistent theme. The two editors, experts in both history and varieties of ordinary life in the past, not only doled out assignments but also met with contributors as a body to assure that they were all working by the same standards and toward the same end. For example, to someone’s credit all the writers who use the term adopted “Inward Light” rather than the more common and overly used “Inner Light.”

They seek to determine how some Quakers actually lived in the past: “What’s Real?”—as editor Emma Lapsansky, quoting another contributor, sums the book up in the first sentence of text. They concentrate on the period before 1900 but occasionally allow themselves to approach the present. J. William Frost kicks off the discussion with a brilliant and needed reminder of the evolution from 17th- to 19th-century proscriptive “plainness” to the currently favored “simplicity.”

The authors then explore Quakers as consumers and producers, and the less satisfying “Quakers and Modernity.” (Even here, however, there’s an examination of Quaker women’s dress from 1790 to 1900 by Mary Anne Caton that comes close to redeeming this section.) Some of the material may already be familiar to some, as, for example, Carolyn Weekley’s essay on primitive artist Edward Hicks, for she has already produced a book on that subject. Despite both formal and informal disciplinary approaches, there was much complexity and leeway when it came to Quaker “styles,” suggesting that from an early day there was more individualism than commonly thought among Friends. Thus, well-to-do Friends escaped censure when they had their “modest” portraits painted, while others made do with silhouettes.

One major criticism of the work, admitted by a number of contributors, is that it concentrates almost wholly on Friends who were from the upper class. Partially, this emphasis flows from the nature of the sources, because the material goods—the houses, furniture, and clothes—that survived were usually owned by members of this group and were more easily accessible. But it flows, too, from the fact that the authors make no obvious effort to go beyond these more readily available sources. There is almost no attention to Quakers outside the Delaware Valley, especially rural people in places like New York, North Carolina, or the Midwest.

Scholars of Quakerism as well as those who read their works need to demand that as we look at the past we recognize that Quaker history is broader than the extremely limited sample presented to us in this volume. No matter how creatively done, “what’s real” as explored here gives us a distorted picture and a limited truth. In short, this is an excellent beginning, but one that needs building on and is more broadly based.

—Larry Ingle

Historian Larry Ingle is a member of Chattanooga (Tenn.) Meeting.

Historical Dictionary of the Friends (Quakers)


This book will be eagerly received by Friends as a useful one-stop source for ready information about the Quaker movement in all its complexity. While other valuable ready references exist, for example the biographical
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appendix to Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost's *The Quakers*, or Lyn Cope-Robinson's *The Little Quaker Sociology Book*, none attempts to cover the same range of topics.

This *Historical Dictionary* includes entries on Quaker personalities, on Christian theological terms that Friends sometimes give a twist to (e.g., atonement or sacraments), on Quaker distinctives (clearness, queries and advices), and on Quaker places and movements (East Africa, Wilburites, Wilmington College). The roughly 300 pages of dictionary is preceded by a brief history of Quakerism and followed by several useful appendices that provide ready reference about origins of yearly meetings, current membership statistics, family trees of North American and East African yearly meetings, and an extensive set of bibliographies.

There is much useful about this book, and we can be grateful to the editors and the many contributors of individual articles for their work. It is particularly good to see the numerous entries related to Quakerism in Africa and Latin America, and on this point the *Dictionary* is unique. We in the English-first world are only slowly recognizing the extent to which the face of Quakerism has changed. From this book you can glean the bare numbers—of the roughly 338,000 Friends in the world, 224,000 are from Africa, Latin America, or Asia; the North American census is around 92,000—and some of the important names from the Quakerism of the South. It is unfortunate that this whole-world perspective was not thoroughly applied to the historical introduction, whose final section "The Separate Branches of Modern Quakerism" has a very North American focus.

A work such as this is important for two reasons. First, it helps because as a movement we have a tendency to lose coherence, both with other living Friends, and with Quakerism of the past. Where once upon a time itinerating ministers helped maintain a sense of unity across the Quaker world, we now mostly must rely on the printed word (or its recent offspring, the web page) to help us know each other and our predecessors, and see the work of the Spirit—and the world—as it shows up among us hither and yon.

It is also good that this book takes its place in a long series of similar references by this publisher about other social movements, since its non-Quaker origin may be a way for non-Friends to find out about us. The two purposes (Quaker self-education and information for the non-Quaker) can feed each other, as deeper knowledge among Friends can equip them to welcome and indeed even seek inquirers who may be drawn in our direction.

However, I must confess that there were several important points on which I could wish the *Dictionary* to be revised, all of which...
might be addressed by a revised set of criteria for what to include, and how to treat the entries. The following selected points I trust will not be seen as a list of quibbles, nor as an exhaustive list of corrigenda, but as representative of places needing some attention in future editions.

What is included. There is a danger of getting caught in a game of Quaker trivia here, and I do not argue for deletions; yet some of the choices of what to exclude do not make sense to me. Why have an entry for the Familists, but not the Levellers or Diggers? When Charles Fager and George Crosfield are included, why not Samuel Bownas, whose ministry was an important feature of the first half of the 1700s, and whose journal and book on the ministry continue to serve Friends? If John Comly (prominent leader of the Hicksites), why not Jonathan Evans, John Comly’s “orthodox” opposite number, who was instrumental in preventing a second separation in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting? Why why Patricia Loring and Lewis Benson, but not Hugh Barbour or Geoffrey Nuttall, both key figures in the reinterpretation of Quaker history which began in the 1940s? What does the introduction mean by saying that “the Gurneyite Ohio Yearly Meeting never joined FUM”? Why no mention of the ethical philosopher Jonathan Dymond, influential ministers such as Deborah Darby or William Savery, or the educational reformer James Lancaster? The Knolites and Maulites, fine; but why not Rice Jones and the Proud Quakers, representing perhaps the first separation in our history?

Consistency of treatment. It is hard to write well under the conditions of compression that such a work requires, and harder still to achieve consistency across multiple authors. Here the editors faced challenges, which perhaps time or other constraints did not allow them fully to meet. Space does not allow here a discussion of the history presented for example in the Introduction, but as a more focused point, one might take the biographical entries. These, it is to be hoped, will convey both bare facts about the subjects and some sense of their impact both in their own times and in historical perspective. The Dictionary can only be described as uneven here.

To take one small facet among several: many but not all of the entries seem to start off with keywords which serve to help the reader quickly identify the subject’s work and areas of influence. In another edition, consistent use of a core set of keywords by all contributors would help the reader make sense of the panoply of names, and make clearer the ways that Friends had their impact in their times. While Isaac Penington and many others are labeled as “ministers,” Rufus Jones is not, yet surely his sense of calling to the ministry, and
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This is an expensive book, so given both its virtues and its flaws, whom shall I urge to buy it? Anyone will enjoy browsing through the many names and ideas herein, for sure. Meeting libraries that have a good basic Quaker collection will do well to have this available. If you or your meeting are on a tight budget, though, and do not yet have some of the perennial classics of Quaker history, one might hesitate. For about the same amount, a meeting or individual might buy William Braithwaite’s The Beginnings of Quakerism to 1660 and The Second Period of Quakerism, extensive itinerating among almost all the meetings in North America was a major factor in opening doors for his writings and projects. William Taber and Lloyd Lee Wilson are noted as “recorded ministers” (among other things), but the two John Rowntrees, whose concern for, and practice of, Friends ministry was a key focus of their concern, are not so labeled, nor is the concern mentioned. Some Friends are mentioned as philanthropists or benefactors, but we don’t get a hint about what they did to merit the label. The erratic deployment of these keywords is symptomatic: much more could be done to briefly convey the personalities and impact of many Friends represented here.

Treatment of entries. How do you decide what gets put in, and where it goes? For example, while “Apology” heads a short entry on Robert Barclay’s famous theological work, the book itself is really discussed under the entry for Robert Barclay. While “Ireland” gets an entry, and some mention is made of relief work in Ireland during the Potato Famine, no mention is made (that I could find) of Irish Friends’ powerful witness against war in the 1790s, their important role in the growth of the discipline, or the controversies surrounding Abraham Shackleton’s “modernist” views, which were an important feature in the struggle with (or for) the Enlightenment which is represented in the Dictionary by an entry on Hannah Barnard. Why is “breaking meeting” found in an entry on “broken”?

Other entries, while not skimpy, fail to convey important aspects of their subject. For example, the entry on “civil government” outlines some ways in which Friends have interacted with governments, but does not explore or even refer to important theological complexities in this connection. To say that our relationship with governments has been “always based on [our] belief in that of God in every one” articulates the way Friends have tried to talk with government officials (as well as everyone else, one hopes), but quite avoids the big questions of the relationship (often necessarily conflictual) between the church and the world—and the nature of each, from a Quaker point of view.
Hearing with the Heart: A Gentle Guide to Discerning God’s Will for Your Life


I admit I’ve always needed help in the area of discernment—especially in figuring out how to make sure I was following God’s will, not just my own wishes. These are two things that I often confuse for each other, and books I’ve read often weren’t very helpful—until this one.

Debra Farrington’s book is what it claims to be—a “gentle guide.” She begins with helping readers hear their hearts, and then leads them through “Tools for Discernment,” covering topics such as the prayerful heart, the attentive heart, listening with heart, and discerning companions. The author, a writer and popular retreat leader, weaves wonderful quotations throughout her work, offers probing questions, and gives us helpful resources for further discernment work.

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Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths


As Israelis and Palestinians continue to splatter one another’s blood against the concrete deserts of their cities, amateur historian Bruce Feiler—a regular contributor to National Public Radio and Gourmet Magazine, and author of Walking the Bible—went looking for some common ground on which Muslim, Christian, and Jew could stand in peace.

Driven by the author’s searching intellect and curious mind, Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths, is a fast-paced adventure tale of his intense search through the Holy Land for evidence of the common root of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Focused on the historical figure of Abraham, whose offspring started off on the divergent paths that have led to these three faiths, Bruce Feiler asked: Who, exactly, is Abraham? Did he really exist? How did he live?

The answers seem written in sand, and the sand constantly shifts. By the time he concluded his search, Bruce Feiler had found 240 different versions of who Abraham was.

"It was like participating in a giant, three-dimensional scavenger hunt, where every clue in Judaism led to some desert hideaway in Christianity, led to some palm tree in Islam, under which was some spring—yes—that suddenly cleared up some tangle described on the front page of that morning’s newspaper," he writes. "But, ‘The reason this pursuit proved so exciting is that to examine those hundreds of Abrahams—to understand how he evolved over time—is to understand what each religion values.’"

Bruce Feiler, who is Jewish, began his search out of simple curiosity. "I had been coming to Jerusalem often in recent years," he explains. "My visits were part of a larger experience of trying to understand the roots of my identity by reentering the landscape of the Bible . . . . My experience in the region persuaded me that it’s possible—maybe even necessary—to gain insight into a contemporary situation by turning away from the present and looking back to its historical sources. Especially in matters of faith, even the most modern act is informed by centuries of intermingled belief, blood, and misunderstanding."

Ultimately, he continues, "I had come because I needed to understand the depth of mistrust among the monotheistic religions, and I needed to understand how it was connected to the basic building blocks of my own identity—geography, family, faith. I had come because I felt hatred myself, and because I needed to know if the roots of that feeling also held possibilities for accord."

Bruce Feiler found that they did. Of the hundreds of Muslim, Christian, and Jew-
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In Brief

The Authority of Our Meetings Is the Power of God

By Paul A. Lacey. Pendle Hill Pamphlet #365, 2003. 40 pages. $4/paperback. What is the basis of the Quaker way? On what do we base our testimonies, our conduct of business, our

ish clerics, scholars, community leaders and cab drivers he spoke with, all but a few shared the same willingness—the same need, he asserts—to meld their competing images of Abraham into a workable dialogue. Even the radical imam who gave the closing sermon of Ramadan at El-Aksa while Bruce Feiler listened outside seems to concur. When he asked the imam if Abraham was a distant historical figure who divided the world into three competing faiths or a contemporary figure who could unite them all, the imam replied, "If Muslims, Jews, and Christians follow what is mentioned in the Koran, then Abraham can be a uniting figure. . . . Even if Jews and Christians just follow what's mentioned about Abraham in the Bible, then we can reach unity."

When a startled Bruce Feiler pointed out that the two groups followed different texts, the imam responded, "But the principle is the same. . . . You have a true heart, you have to believe there is one God. Maybe we have different approaches, but the destination is the same.

"If all people—not just Muslims, Christians, Jews—follow the correct path of Abraham, I'm sure life would be better. But we are not doing that. The situation we are facing is that people are living their daily lives far away from the truly faithful, and from Abraham. If we look beyond the details, which we may disagree about, and follow the principles of Abraham—truth, morality, and coexistence—then most of our problems will disappear."

Stunned by what he is hearing, and by similar comments made by Jews and Christians throughout the area, Bruce Feiler realizes that Abraham is not only a common ground between people, but a bridge between humanity and the Divine.

Although Abraham is marred by an overwhelming number of assumptions and a tendency to skip lightly over the religious dogma of other faiths, the fact that a bright young man from Georgia would work so hard, think so much, and care so intensely about finding common ground suggests that it may in fact exist—and that the sons and daughters of Abraham may yet find it and reach the Promised Land.

—Ellen Michaud
vocal ministry, our ethical decisions, our spiritual practices, our behavior toward one another—in short, our lives and identities as Friends? Who decides what makes a Quaker, and how would the responses of present-day Friends to these questions differ from the responses of 17th-, 18th-, 19th-, and early 20th-century Friends?

Paul Lacey offers us a historical outline and analysis of Friends' perspectives on the "authority" behind our actions. "Quakerism has always struggled to find the right balance between affirming the autonomy of the individual following his or her own conscience, and affirming the authority of the group to determine what a true leading of the Spirit is," he writes. That said, he adds, "Quakers still know how to divide better than they know how to multiply."

—Kirsten Backstrom

Kirsten Backstrom is a writer, hospice volunteer, and member of Multnomah Meeting in Portland, Ore.

In the Presence of Fear: Three Essays for a Changed World

By Wendell Berry. Orion Society, 2001. 44 pages. $8/paperback. The first essay, "Thoughts in the Presence of Fear," is a series of 27 numbered statements, beginning with the opinion that we shall recall 9/11/2001 as a day on which "unquestioning technological and economic optimism . . . ended" and concludes with what Quakers would call "advices," such as: "The key to peaceableness is continuous practice. . . . We should promote . . . the ideal of local self-sufficiency, . . . protect every intact ecosystem and watershed, . . . and begin restoration of those that have been damaged." We also need to educate our children to put first things first and to develop a peaceable economy. The second essay, "The Idea of a Local Economy" is overly brief. The third essay, "In Distrust of Movements," presents issues that could be pondered and discussed by Friends of all ages. For instance, Wendell Berry claims that movement efforts are often "insincere; they propose that the trouble is caused by other people; they would like to change policy but not behavior." For Wendell Berry, "Good economic behavior is more possible for us than it is for the great corporations. . . . We must try in every way we can to make good economic sense in our own lives, in our households, and in our communities." Readers who do not know Wendell Berry might better sample essays in The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry (Shoemaker & Hoard, 2003), a collection that locates him in his particular landscape,
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and explicates his ideas about agrarian economics and agrarian religion.
—Sharon Hoover

Sharon Hoover is a member of Alfred (N.Y.) Meeting.

Undaunted Spirits: True Stories of Quaker Service
Compiled by Jack Sutters. Edited by Melissa Elliott. American Friends Service Committee, 2002. 84 pages. $15/paperback. AFSC archivist Jack Sutters has pulled together newspaper clippings, photos, and short narratives to create a series of vignettes of AFSC activities which, over the past 85 years, have changed the world and inspired five generations of volunteers and staff.

—Ellen Michaud

Silent Witness: Quaker Meetinghouses in the Delaware Valley, 1695 to the Present

As elderly meetinghouses continue to lose their mortar, and wood that is now centuries old insists on falling into decay, the question of whether a meeting and its affiliated bodies—yearly meetings and friendly foundations, for example—should spend their dollars on preserving a meetinghouse or on social concerns has weighed heavily on the hearts of many. Is the meetinghouse a "silent witness" to the Light, as the title of this book suggests? Or is it simply a temporary shelter that, having served its purpose, can be replaced by simpler, less expensive dwellings that require fewer resources in time and money? Whatever the answer to these troubling questions, Silent Witness, both a report on work undertaken by the National Parks Service and a catalogue of an exhibit originally staged in Philadelphia, will no doubt contribute to the debate. The book is an elegant collection of extraordinary black and white photos, floor plans and short histories of 27 meetinghouses within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, with a brief overview of Delaware Valley Friends' history by Swarthmore historian Christopher Densmore. An overview of the survey itself is also included, although why these particular meetinghouses were chosen from the 150 originally examined in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey by the National Park Service is not made clear.

—Ellen Michaud

November 2003 FRIENDS JOURNAL
God listens. But will God act? The Bible has no certain answer to that question. It can't. It can't, first of all, because we're talking about two parties, God and the lamentor, each of whom, in its own way, is a mystery that defies prediction. It can't also because prayer is a dialogue, and no one can say where a true dialogue will lead. It can't, finally, because God is both faithful and free. If God always answered, how could God remain free; if God never answered, how could God remain faithful? This is a mystery we must live with, just as we live with the mystery at the core of every relationship.

Sometimes God does not act. In the Book of Jeremiah, the people lament but God is unmoved, recognizing that their motive is not trust but a self-serving sense of entitlement that renders hollow even their prayer of repentance (14:1-10). Psalm 88, a textbook example of genuine lament, ends in darkness, not deliverance. And as perhaps the most poignant example, the entire Book of Lamentations shows no indication that God has heard or done anything.

But those are exceptions. The Bible's consistent witness, in the over 50 psalms of lament, is that God hears and acts. Each of these psalms has two elements: plea, and praise. At some point, the one who is pleading suddenly starts praising God for answering the plea. The text does not tell us the nature of this transformation, that is, what happens at this liminal moment when celebration replaces sorrow. But whatever it is, it happens with such regularity that—allowing for the mystery of faithfulness and freedom—we cannot deny a strong element of certainty.

In the biblical lament, the speaker is convinced that God will act. Where does this conviction come from? It comes from a source that Friends hold most precious: experience. The Bible expresses the gathered experiences of the faithful—experiences like being freed from slavery in Egypt and being fed each day in the wilderness. The Israelites preserved these experiences not as museum pieces but as working models that guided and gave meaning to their current experiences—even to the point where the present was recast in the form of the past, or the past was altered to...
illuminating the present.

Each of these experiences evidenced God's active presence. As the experiences multiplied over generations, patterns began emerging. Eventually the Israelites discerned the characteristics of God's acts, which they expressed in a core conviction—just as Friends express the core conviction of "that of God in everyone."

The Israelites described God's enduring characteristics as "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abiding in steadfast love and faithfulness." These convictions echo throughout the Old Testament. They are the leitmotif of Israel's faith, the certainty against which all circumstances are measured.

You may find such an expression quakingly positive and optimistic—especially if you've suffered a barrage of Old Testament fire-and-brimstone stories, tales of a vengeful God and a violent Israel. The stories are there, but they do not represent the consistent biblical witness. Yes, the Israelites sometimes experienced a God who did not protect them from the consequences of their actions. But the God they experienced on a regular basis was "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abiding in steadfast love and faithfulness." It was the God of abundance who, from the very beginning, invited the earth to bring forth every type of food, invited the earblings to increase and multiply, and assured that there was enough for all.

So the experience underlying the confidence that gave rise to the lament is an experience of goodness. Except the Israelites didn't know "goodness"—it was much too abstract a term for them or their language. They knew "good," the concrete, palpable good—the same as God called things "good" throughout the days of creation, and "very good" at the end of the sixth. The experience of God's good things provides the confidence that makes the lament possible.

If we are to have confidence that our laments can engage God in resolving the inequalities of the world, do we not need the same experience of God's goodness, reflected concretely in the things around us? And how is that possible in a world racked with pollution, armed conflict, hunger, disease, poverty, exploitation, lying, and greed?

Look around you—yes, literally look around you. Do you not see the goodness? Look at what is good in the world: people caring for each other and for the Earth, the incredible rightness of a twirling seed that grows into a tree, of a baby's ear, of microcosmic molecules mirroring the movement of the universe (and the other way around). Look at people sitting vigil next to hospital beds, or speaking softly in the face of rage, or lending a hand when disaster strikes.

The biblical message is that none of this is random, none of it preordained. It is the visible reflection of a good and caring God who acts in and through creation, evidence that shalom is alive and well. Such are the experiences that convinced the people of the Bible that their God had a hand in their lives. Why should it be any different for us?

As Friends, we have a unique skill for discovering the goodness in the world. That skill is attentiveness. What is our worship if not attentive listening and looking? We are the body of people to whom our sisters and brothers in faith can turn when they need a reminder of what attentiveness really is. We have been charged with the unique responsibility of being the ultimate practitioners of attentiveness—that is the gift we bring to the larger faith community, and to the world itself.

Let us hold fast to that gift in two ways. First, let us direct our attentiveness to the goodness in the world, a goodness that proclaims the care and concern of the God who is its source, who delights in it, who wants nothing more than to discover new opportunities to pronounce this world good: Good here, good there, and oh look at that, how very good. We may not hear the words of divine delight, but we sense them in the silence of our own attentiveness to what is good.

Second, let us also devote unflinching attentiveness to the suffering in the world. The better we can appreciate the complexities of that suffering and how it invades people's lives, the better will we give words to its concrete and cruel particulars. We need to speak as though we have taken it upon ourselves, we need to speak from the experience of attentiveness.

As this gift of attentiveness opens us to
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the grinding pain and the glorious goodness in the world, we will recognize the obvious: that these two must be brought together. We need to bring before the God of abundance those who are the victims of scarcity, and speak for them with such fervor and conviction that God will be released to step in and restore "the life and power that [takes] away the occasion of all wars."

The biblical witness shows us a God who is defined by shalom and who will change and find new ways and overlook all manner of offenses to bless us with shalom. But the biblical witness also shows us a multitude of situations where shalom is missing and can only be restored when the honest and intense divine/human dialogue of the lament unleashes the power of the God who is the ultimate change-agent.

We can never stop in our own efforts to bring shalom to the world. Let us focus our Quakerly attentiveness on the suffering that is AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, on the despair in the eyes of those the world tosses aside, on that 80 percent who must scramble for their meager 20 percent. Let us focus—as National Geographic did in its September 2003 issue—on the 27 million people, mostly women and children, who even now are being bought and sold, then held captive as sex slaves, or as laborers caught in perpetual debt, or ten-year-olds working 14 hours every day. (For additional pictures and text, go to <www.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0309>. For further information and resources, contact Free the Slaves: Ending Slavery in the World Today, (866) 324-3733, <www.freetheslaves.org>.)

Certainly our awareness of these brutal conditions will move us—must move us—to take action through all the means available: protest, petition, rejection, refusal. It must also move us to lament. For God is not just a coach on the sidelines, shouting support and encouragement. God is also a key player, eager to enter the fray but holding back until we acknowledge the need and offer the invitation.

Let us, then, in partnership with God, help restore shalom to the world by taking on the practice of lament. If we do, we should not be surprised when God whispers back, "I thought you'd never ask."
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John Dickinson continued from page 21

We can admire the courage John Dickinson displayed in his refusal to sign the Declaration. Actually he refused to attend the Congress sessions on that day in order to avoid splitting the vote of the Pennsylvania delegation. He stated that he felt that his action would forever ruin his political career, and indeed he did suffer heavy criticism for it. Perhaps that is why when the British actually attacked American shores, firing on American towns and burning homes including John Dickinson’s own estate on Jones Neck, he enlisted in the militia and subsequently returned to rebuild his home in Delaware.

He was elected to the national Congress, which formulated the Articles of Confederation, and two years later he was elected Governor of Delaware. Finally he was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1788. In that year the state of Virginia proposed a convention, which met in Annapolis to create a stronger national government, and which subsequently met in Philadelphia. John Dickinson was chosen as the presiding officer at the initial meeting in Annapolis.

A close examination of his papers, letters, and the various documents which he submitted to the various founding conventions will reveal the great influence that he had on the outcomes. He was the author of the happy phrase that Thomas Jefferson adopted in the Declaration, “the pursuit of happiness,” which he believed that government should facilitate. According to Jane Calvert, a Quaker historian who has studied his writings, John Dickinson brought to the deliberations of the founding of this nation a philosophy much influenced by the ideas of William Penn and other Quaker thinkers.

Howard Brinton in Friends for 350 Years stated, “There can be no doubt that the Constitution of the United States, written in Philadelphia owed much to Penn’s ‘Holy Experiment.’ Penn’s theories, because they had been carried in practice and not just written about in books, had a powerful influence.” That Quaker influence was transmitted in large measure by John Dickinson. According to the Dictionary of American Biography he said at the Convention, “Experience must be our only guide. Reason may mislead us.”

When John Dickinson retired from public life he lived in Wilmington,
Delaware, where he attended the meeting there with his wife and daughter, both of whom were members of that meeting. His interests were focused on charitable contributions to Westtown School, to prison reform, and to other interests of Friends. This gave hope to many Friends that he might more directly associate himself. But he studiously avoided attendance at monthly meetings for business. In 1807 he wrote, "I am on all proper occasions an advocate for the lawfulness of defensive war. This principle alone has prevented me from union with Friends," according to Milton E. Flower, in John Dickinson: Conservative Revolutionary. At this period in his life, he dated all his letters after the manner of Friends, adopted simplicity of dress, freed his slaves, and advocated that others should do the same.

John Dickinson's struggle to come to terms with the Peace Testimony is similar to the struggle today of many Friends. When he considered the possible dangers of a war between Great Britain and France, he said, in An Address on the Past, Present and Eventual Relations of the United States to France, "The rage for obtaining wealth by pillage is never sated. It grows, by being constantly fed, to a height altogether monstrous. Every conquest adds not only a new strength, but a new appetite to the devouring power. The area is arrived when no nation can be safe that stands by itself." He went on to take up William Penn's advocacy of a union of nations "cemented by noble sentiments and generous resolutions."

Reading his words and utilizing them to walk with him is instructive for us still. We owe him much. I found, in studying his life, reproof for my tendency toward the pessimistic attitude that the Quaker ideals are held only by a minority and that they have never been adopted in any positive or consistent manner. John Dickinson teaches us that this is far from accurate. Therefore we are called to persistence in struggling to adhere to our testimonies and to do so not by retreat but by action in the world. They will bear fruit if we but walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in every person. We are not responsible for the outcomes; they are in God's hands. But we are called to the most prayerful adherence to our testimonies that we can muster.
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News

The United States Department of Justice, Tax Division, is suing Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for refusing to forward wages of an employee to the Internal Revenue Service. The employee, Priscilla Adams, resists paying taxes for war and the military on the basis of religious conscience. The lawsuit, filed in July 2003, is a move to attain funds from PYM as recompense for taxes owed by Priscilla Adams, plus a 50-percent penalty for not garnishing her wages as instructed by the IRS in 2001. If the IRS succeeds, PYM would owe approximately $60,000.

On September 18, PYM’s Interim Meeting decided to respond to the lawsuit and defend its position in court. PYM stated that to garnish Priscilla Adams’s wages would infringe upon her religious beliefs, and PYM should not “be required to act as a collection agent for the government when doing so will require it to violate key tenets of the Quaker faith.”

Thomas Jeavons, PYM general secretary, commented in the Philadelphia Inquirer, “About 50 percent of our taxes pay for weapons and warfare . . . We have long sought the creation of a Peace Tax Fund, a government fund for nonmilitary use, where taxes of [those

Bulletin Board

Upcoming Events


• January 16–25, 2004—21st Friends World Committee for Consultation Triennial, “Being Faithful Witnesses,” in Auckland, New Zealand

Opportunities/Resources

• Friends Association for Higher Education invites submissions for the 2004 Annual Gathering, to be held June 24–27, on the theme “Act Truth.” Friends are invited to consider how truth informs the way that we live in our educational communities. An additional area of special emphasis will be the ways that Friends are called to peace, reconciliation, and service in Africa. Submissions are due February 2, 2004; send them to Barbara Ditson, English Department, UWSP, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or by e-mail to <bditson@uwsp.edu>. Visit <www .earlham.edu/~fahe/anouncements.htm>.

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of the Guilford College Peace Collection to study an aspect of southern Quaker history. Application deadline: February 1, 2004. Contact Gwen Erickson at <editor@ncshs.org>; (361) 316-2264. Visit <ncshs.org>.

• Friends are invited to join in supporting restoration of Ramallah Friends Meetinghouse and its use as a Quaker peace center on the West Bank, establishing a Quaker presence and witness while providing a community resource. An international committee of Friends was formed to work with the meeting to raise funds and support the process. For more information, contact Thom Jeavons, General Secretary, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1515 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102; (215) 241-7210.

• The Peace Scholar Fellowship program of the United States Institute of Peace is open to doctoral students, regardless of citizenship, enrolled in a U.S. university and working on a dissertation related to the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. Priority will be given to projects that contribute knowledge relevant to the formulation of policy on international peace and conflict issues. Application deadline: January 9, 2004. For further details visit <www.usip.org/fellows/scholars.html>.

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Milestones

Marriages/Unions
Delatorre-Williamson—Heather McAlpin Williamson and Libardo Antonio Delatorre, on August 30, 2003, under the care of Providence (R.I.) Meeting, where Heather is a member.

Deaths
Bolin—Stanley F. Bolin, 76, on January 23, 2003, in Columbia, Md. He was born in Detroit, Mich., on March 25, 1926. He earned a doctorate in Industrial Psychology from Case Western Reserve University. As a veteran of World War II, Stan’s own experiences with trauma and his interactions with traumatized soldiers gave him a particular interest in healing and a special perspective. A lifelong seeker of truth, Stan had practiced Catholicism and Unitarianism, and he supported the Buddhist traditions of his wife, Geyoung. Three years ago he found a home at Langley Hill (Va.) Meeting, where he became a member and embraced Quakerism with enthusiasm. Unable to drive long distances, by carpooling he managed to attend three sessions of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, two Friends General Conference Gatherings, and two annual meetings of the Friends and Religion Conference. Stan held himself to high standards, yet never imposed them on others. His messages in meeting for worship revealed a focused devotion to peace and to God. Stan’s lifelong journey was challenging. As a recovering alcoholic who remained sober for the last 36 years of his life, he continued to participate in Alcoholics Anonymous as a sponsor to hundreds of people, concentrating on recovery and spirituality, counseling both in person and online. He particularly enjoyed working with young people and the gay and lesbian community. Stan was predeceased by his son from a previous marriage, Eric Bolin. He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Geyoung Bolin; their children, Jane and Jay Bolin; and his children from previous marriages, Mark, Dan, and Hilde Bolin.

Lindauer—Walter Maurice (Walt) Lindauer, 85, on March 27, 2003, in Santa Rosa, Calif. He was born in San Francisco on August 9, 1917, to Samuel Lindauer and Ethel Eager. When Walter was two years old his mother died during a flu epidemic. He was raised in the Church of Christ, Scientist. When his father suffered a series of strokes, Walter lived with his paternal grandmother until about age 14, when Samuel was well enough to assume responsibility for his son’s care. After high school Walter, age 16, enrolled at University of California Berkeley with a Levi Strauss scholarship. During his senior year he took a job with Ford Motor Company at the World’s Fair on Treasure Island in San Francisco. There he became friends with several artists who helped him develop his talent for painting. With their encouragement, he applied for and received a Work Projects Administration apprenticeship to work on murals, and painting became an important and lifelong means of expression for him. An artist from Hawaii, Ruben Tam, won a competition at the World’s Fair and lent his winnings so Walt could go to Hawaii, which was to be Walt’s first stop on the way to East Asia, where he hoped to study eastern religions. In November 1941 a fellow artist, Paul Hyun, invited Walt to join his family for Thanks-
of Friends General Conference at Cape May, N.J., where over 400 high school students were housed at a seaside hotel. Each morning before breakfast, over 150 young people would join him for birdwatching hikes. In 1967 Nate moved to Detroit and joined the faculty of the two-year-old Friends School. He established the Science Department and Lab and served as Director of Building and Grounds. He transferred his membership from Buckingham to Detroit Meeting. In 1973 he became one of the founders of the Center for Urban Education, a nonprofit educational project. He established Urban Seminars to teach city and suburban college and high school students about the problems and opportunities inherent in living in a large metropolitan area. He also taught in the Teacher Workshop Program, with major emphasis on photography and on helping teachers develop darkrooms in their coat closets, rather than wait until the schools had available funds for such facilities. He was a master teacher, innovative and caring. In 1975 the State Department of Social Services asked the Center for Urban Education to help develop an education program to train people who owned and worked in adult foster care homes for individuals suffering from mental illnesses. For nearly 30 years, Nate taught a great many classes in the Adult Foster Care Education Program and developed a number of course materials. He was an avid reader, a great teacher, and a caring mentor. His first marriage ended in divorce. In 1983, Nate married Patricia A. Kempa Miller under the care of Detroit Meeting. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Morgan; his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren and by many friends.

Salstrom—David Salstrom, 86, on October 13, 2003, in Minneapolis, Minn. He was born in Wilmont (St. Paul), Minn., on July 10, 1916. A conscientious objector during World War II, he spent several years in Civilian Public Service, then joined a group of idealists to form CelO (N.C.) Meeting and lived for many years in Yancey County, N.C. At 40 he began to prepare himself for a professorship in education, graduating from Berea College, then earning his master’s and PhD from Duke University, all with the highest of honors. He went on to become an assistant professor at Baldwin-Wallace College and Lock Haven State University. He returned to the CelO community for a life of active retirement, working with the Prison Ministry, the Boy Scouts, and as a nature counselor at Camp CelO. His enthusiasm for nature was contagious, as was his endless search for truth and knowledge. He spent his last years with his son, John Salstrom, in Minneapolis. David’s spiritual insights and guidance were an important part of making CelO Meeting what it is today. He was predeceased by his wives, Margaret Hood Salstrom and Frances Lindsay Salstrom. He is survived by his sons, Robert and John Salstrom; four grandchildren, Kimberly Salstrom, Kirsten Copland, Heather Lura, and Hillary Salstrom; and three great-grandsons, Cameron Copland, Jacob Copland, and John Lura.

Logan—Katherine (Kate) Hess Logan, 46, on March 4, 2003, in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was born on April 25, 1957, in Ft. Worth, Tex., to Horatio and Barbara Wood. A lifelong Friend, she grew up in Cincinnati, where she attended Community Friends Meeting. Kate was a gifted linguist who studied French and Spanish in high school, spending her senior year in Rennes, France. Majoring in French and Russian at a junior college in Minnesota and Italian, she graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1979. Though family and friends thought she should become a diplomat, she chose to use her language skills in the retail business, telling her father, “Dad, I love to shop.” She worked in Philadelphia and around New York, eventually managing several Wallachs department stores. She used her language skills to help the store’s immigrant tailors to understand what their jobs required, and when the French Ambassador’s wife visited Wallachs, Kate translated for her. In 1984 she married Michael John Logan, a Classics professor. The couple later divorced. Being a mother to her two young daughters was Kate’s last and most precious career. For six years she struggled against breast cancer in the hope that she could stay long enough to see her daughter turn fourteen months before her death, walking with the aid of a cane and pushing her portable oxygen tank along beside her, she gave them a joint birthday party at a local bowling alley. Through tears, her family and friends remember her indomitable spirit. Kate had genuine concern for people of every walk of life. She is survived by her daughters, Olivia Hess Logan and Rachel Downey Logan; her parents, Horatio and Barbara Wood; her brother, Nicholas Bacon Wood; her sister-in-law, Hillary Middelkauff Wood; her nephews, Henry Ragan Wood and Charles Anderson Wood; and her aunts, Lovell Wood Royston and Ellery Yale Wood.

Morgan—Nathaniel (Nate) Morgan, 79, on January 9, 2003, in Detroit, Mich. He was born in Manayunk City, Pa., on August 7, 1923. He was an Eagle Scout in his youth. He earned a master’s degree in Education from Temple University. Nate married in 1954 and lived in rural Bucks County, Pa., where he became a member of Buckingham Meeting. He worked for pollsters Gallup and Robinson. Nate held a great interest in and concern for young people, and he used his summer vacations to serve on the High School Section staff.
The Tendering Presence
Essays on John Woolman
Edited by Mike Heller
John Woolman (1720–1772) called the Religious Society of Friends to stand in a corporate testimony against slavery and economic injustice. Insightful essays by 19 scholars reveal Woolman’s spirituality, his social and historical context, and his influence on contemporary issues of oppression, social change and education.

Light to Live By
An Exploration in Quaker Spirituality
Rex Ambler
Ambler tells of his development and use of a personal practice of meditation which he discovered in early Friends.

Especially for young adults
Let Your Life Speak
Listening for the Voice of Vocation
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