

Worcester Friends Meeting

Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)

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October-November 2010

QUERIES

Do you make time for meditation, prayer and worship? Do you read the Bible, the writings of Friends, and other inspirational works, seeking new light? Do you regularly seek God's guidance? Are you open to guidance and support and do you give thanks for them? Do you share your spiritual insights with others and willingly receive from them in turn?

Stony Run, Baltimore Monthly Meeting of Friends

Clerk's Corner

by Clarence Burley

A while back I made a little toy. We were at a table where we had some soft drink in a paper cup with a plastic cover whose place for a straw was the crossing of two slits in the center. I happened to find a wooden toothpick, one of the round rather than flat kind. I stuck the toothpick through the slit in the cover and made a top with a very sharp point and a low center of gravity. When I set it spinning, it stayed upright for an astonishingly long period of time. The horizontal rotational inertia provided great stability to the vertical axis of spin, and low friction did the rest. The horizontal sustained the vertical.

This horizontal /vertical duality put me to thinking of the cross and of the little ejaculation I was long ago given, "Into thy hands." We find in the gospel these words from the cross, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." I have always thought these words were spoken vertically, to God, or some higher power. But maybe not. Maybe they were spoken horizontally, to us, to me. Was this spirit that Jesus acted upon in healing, comforting, teaching love as a guiding principle, committed into our, into my, hands? If we accept this commitment, the horizontality of our outreach and service to others will provide stability and duration to our vertical relationship with the divine.

Quarterly Meeting Report

by Clarence Burley

On October 17, Quarterly Meeting gathered at the Voluntown Peace Farm. Jean Johnson of the host Westerly Meeting and a worker of the Peace Trust directed us to the A. J. Muste Conference Center. The sunny and crisp fall day brought us outside for worship with blankets and quilts. We then caravanned to the far side of their property to the rustic secluded retreat lodge, Ahimsa, a rule of conduct forbidding violence to living beings.

We did in the "Stone Soup" provided by our host and our own brown bags, and settled into Worship with Attention to Business. We heard about the history and good work of the Peace Trust, a report on AFSC's work with immigrants in Rhode Island, and

Providence's minute on voluntary withholding of contributions to FUM.

NEYM asked for suggestions to improve their website. (Friends are encouraged to take a look at www.neym.org, and come up with ideas.)

At the monthly meeting report time, Betty Jones, Betty Poynton and I were pleased to speak on our Quaker Quest, and saddened to learn of Smithfield's financial difficulties which threaten to end their semi-pastoral practice. They ask our prayers.

Betty Poynton, her hybrid, and her GPS got us there and back safely and expeditiously through the colorful countryside.

*There is no way to peace -
peace is the way.
- A.J. Muste*

Since the Quarterly Meeting in October was held at the A. J. Muste Conference Center, I began to think about Muste. Our home library holds pamphlets of speeches given by A.J. Muste, Martin Luther King Jr., and Barbara Deming. I figured (and perhaps erroneously) that if I didn't know very much about Muste, that there are probably others in the meeting in the same boat.

Curiosity is a wonderful motivator. Encouraged by a footnote in Clarence's report, I "Googled" Muste and spent several hours reading about this Quaker who was a pacifist, anti-war activist, and a leader of the labor and civil rights movements.



Events to Mention

The Quaker Worship at Overlook Masonic Home Rd., Charlton, MA on first Wednesday of every month from 3:30 to 4:30 PM is convened by Betty and Brian Poynton.

Worship group at Highland Nursing Home in Fitchburg, MA meets every fourth Monday at 12:30 PM. This worship group is convened by Barbara Sullivan.

Another regular worship occurs weekly when Clarence Burley visits Kathy Hartnet and sits in silent worship at her bedside. He sometimes reads to her. Clarence reports that Kathy seems to be feeling better. Communication remains problematic, but Kathy's eyes light up when she sees Clarence. We must trust in the Lord to give peace and understanding to Kathy, her sisters, and the caring nursing staff at KinderCare in Rochdale.

The article and chart at right, from the October 2005 FRIENDS JOURNAL, is reprinted from the August 1991 issue of FRIENDS JOURNAL. "Speaking into the Silence" originally appeared in Friendly Woman, Vol. 9, No. 8. -Ed.

SPEAKING INTO THE SILENCE

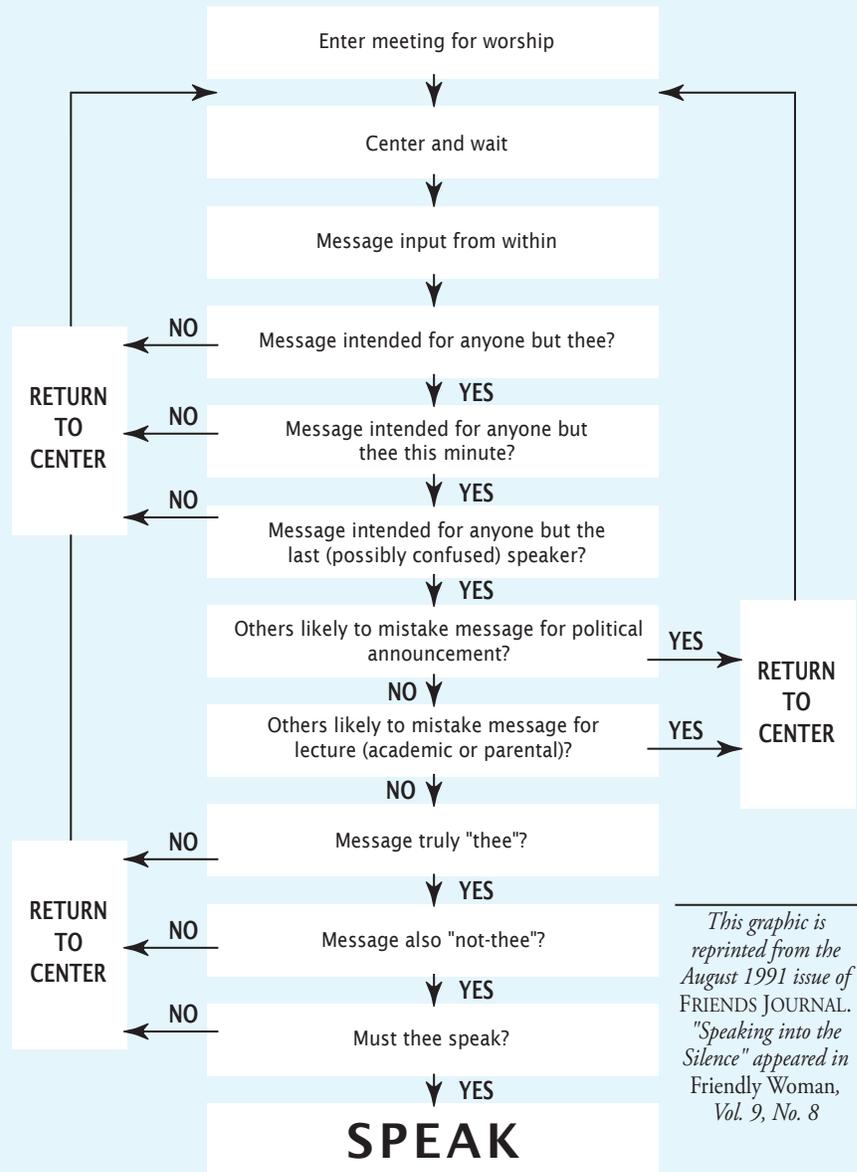
by Sydney Chambers and Carolynne Myall

Dear Helpful Hannah,

I have been attending Quaker meeting for worship for the last year, ever since I left home to attend college. But I still don't understand how to know when to speak in meeting. What should I do?
- Uncertainly Silent

Dear Silent,

Over the years, Friends have developed guidelines for "bringing a message" which thee may find in Faith and Practice, etc., etc. But Quaker classics present these guidelines in a format that may be difficult for the visual young people of the Computer Age. I hope this flowchart will help.
- Helpful Hannah



This graphic is reprinted from the August 1991 issue of FRIENDS JOURNAL. "Speaking into the Silence" appeared in Friendly Woman, Vol. 9, No. 8

Connie Riley sends us a message from the Book-Makers and Dreamers Club of the **Big Book; Pages for Peace Project**. A group of middle school students from Groton-Dunstable Middle School has been working for 6 years to compile a manuscript of letters, signatures, poems, artwork, and responses to their questions about peace. They plan the biggest peace book of the world to be in the Guinness Book of Records. They have signatures from people like the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa. They would like to

hear from people of all walks of life, telling what we can do to create peace. For more information, please contact them at:

Pages for Peace Foundation

Betsy Sawyer, President
P.O. Box 16, Groton, MA 01450
978-424-5066
bsawyer60@aol.com
visit website at <http://www.pagesforpeace.org>

BE AT PEACE

by Connie Riley

So many things call to us.
Chatter, noise, blaring radio and TV.
The hustle, bustle all around.

Calling, calling.
Listen to the Voice above.
Look to the Light within.
Follow the way of Love.

Praying, praying,
words of praise
lighting up the world.

Guide me, guide me
To be on the path.
Hold us up.

I see us merging.
I envision a world of peace.
A quiet Voice whispers,
"Be still."



*kids building the
biggest book in
the world...
and it's about
PEACE*

Did You Know?

Katharine Barnard spent a week in Honduras with a medical and dental team from Cape Care. Most of the team members are from Massachusetts. Katherine has been part of this team since 2001. Friends look forward to learning more about her experience.

Paul Gallagher went to the Dominican Republic for a week in October with a Rotarian medical team. Seven medical doctors and nurses and three Rotarians were invited to teach classes in emergency advanced cardio-life support in the cities of LaVega and LaRomana. Each class consisted of 25 local physicians. This is part of a continuing Rotarian program that Paul has been very involved in.

Adele Erskine has started working as an EMT with Vital Emergency Services. Certainly those people who find themselves being a passenger in their ambulance will be comforted by Adele's kind manner and sweet smile.

Amelia Erskine is in her sophomore year at Worcester Academy, and enjoying the school. She continues studying harp at Thayer Academy in Lancaster. Friends hope to listen to her play one of these days!

Nathaniel Erskine is returning from Singapore where he worked with Galaxy Smith Kline Research Center. His mother, Caroline, reports that he will be interviewing colleges to select a school for his graduate education.

Katie Green has been presenting her new program, *Meet Mary Rowlandson*, in several towns, and at the Quabog Plantation's 350th Anniversary Celebration on the Common in West Brookfield. Mary Rowlandson (1637-1711) was the wife of a Puritan minister. She and her children were held captive by the Indians during King Philip's war in 1676. More information at <http://www.katiegreenstories.com>.

Betty and Brian Poynton are out of town, visiting their children. Betty's daughter, Krista, lives in Baltimore, and Brian's son Steve lives in Mooresville, North Carolina with his daughter Carolina Grace.

Ginny Powell's husband **Charles Powell-Brasier** passed away on October 20th after an extended illness. Charles was a Vietnam vet. Clarence Burley and Katie Green were at the well attended calling hours in Holden to offer condolences from Worcester Friends Meeting.

Betty Jones's brother **Frank Kenwood Jones** (b. March, 1914) also passed away on October 20th. His ashes were buried at Podunk Cemetery in East Brookfield. The ashes of Frank's wife, Beverly Marie Jones (December, 1920 - July, 2006) were buried at the same time. A memorial service for Betty's brother will be held on Sunday, November 7 at 3 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church in Worcester (Lincoln Square).

If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in. - Rachel Carson (1907-1964)

The Friends Cemetery



picture credit: Daniel V. Boudillion

The Friends Cemetery, located in Leicester, Massachusetts, is under the care of Worcester Friends Meeting. Though the years, our cemetery has attracted persons who have been looking for mischief and/or adventure, especially during late October. This year, the Cemetery Committee reports that there have been no requests from “ghost hunters” to be in our cemetery. We are hopeful that the clearly stated cemetery policy on our website has taken care of this problem.

On another Friends Cemetery note, we received this letter:

Saturday, October 23, 2010 7:55 AM

Dear Members of the Worcester Friends Meeting,

Sitting in my office on a beautiful Fall day and desirous of leaving the glare of my computer screen, yesterday I decided to explore a bit. Some years ago, while doing some research on my family history, I had come across a reference to the “Spider Gates” cemetery in Leicester, MA. I was reminded of it again this summer in some correspondence with another family member.

While I went to the cemetery out of historical and genealogical interest, I found myself quite emotional in the presence of our family members’ resting spots, some of who were born 350 years ago. There are no fewer than 7 generations of Earles buried there, including the parents and grandparents of my children’s namesakes.

It is a beautiful spot, lovingly tended and a focal point for my family’s past. My deep and heartfelt thanks to all of you for the obvious care and stewardship you have given the final resting spot of my ancestors.

Yours very truly,

Ralph Earle III, Concord, MA

I had a nice telephone conversation with Ralph Earle after seeing his email. He added that his ancestor, Thomas Earle left Leicester in the early 19th century to start a abolitionist newspaper in Pennsylvania. He ran for Vice President of the United State in 1840. Ralph said that the dry stone wall around the cemetery is the best maintained and beautifully crafted one he has seen. -Ed.

Woolman Hill

Woolman Hill, a Quaker retreat and conference center situated on 110 ridge-top acres of meadows and woodlands in western Massachusetts, is dedicated to fostering, developing and strengthening the testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends. On the web at <http://www.woolmanhill.org>

Upcoming Retreats at Woolman Hill:

Winter Stillness: Listening in the Silence
December 30, 2010 - January 2, 2011



As the New Year opens, this retreat will offer opportunity to listen in worshipping silence. We will have opportunities together and on our own to explore listening through silence, through prayer, reading, movement, and art.

Kristna Evans is Clerk of NEYM Ministry and Counsel. She will be coming to Woolman Hill from a semester residence at Pendle Hill in Philadelphia.

Exploring Spirit Accountability
January 21 - 23

Sponsored by Woolman Hill, NEYM Ministry and Counsel, Quaker Studies.

This is a weekend of learning and exploration through lecture, small group and individual exercises and worship. This workshop will be held concurrently with the hybrid workshop participants in “*Practicing Spiritual Accountability*”.



Marge Abbott has been released by her meeting in Portland, Oregon for a ministry of writing and speaking about Friends. Her most recent book is *To Be Broken and Tender: A Quaker Theology for Today*.

Noah Baker Merrill travels in the ministry under the care of an oversight committee appointed by Putney (VT) Meeting. He serves on New England Yearly Meeting’s Committee on Ministry and Counsel.

Practicing Spiritual Accountability, a three month online course from late January until April, begins at the workshop on January 21st described above.



Viv Hawkins will facilitate study, discussion, and experiential learning. She is a member of Evergreen Worship Group and Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting which supports her with a minute of religious service, endorsed by Philadelphia Quarterly and Yearly.

Jim Lyons, a member of Mt Toby (MA) Meeting, has participated in multiple oversight of ministry committees and has served on New

England Yearly Meeting’s Ministry and Counsel Committee.

If you have any questions about course content, please contact Viv at friendviv@yahoo.com or 215-247-1477.



Worcester Friends held three Quaker Quest events this fall. A core group worked for many months to assure that our Quaker Quest (QQ) would be successful. We began thinking of having a QQ at our meeting when two members attended a workshop at NEYM sessions in 2008. The following March, many attended a day-long training with Jane Berger from Chappaqua, New York and Susan Loucks of Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, Boston.

Much of the ground work for preparing for QQ was done when members met for a year with Crystal Jorgenson to vision an addition to our meeting house. We grappled with topics such as visibility, welcoming new people, talking about being a Friend, and outreach. (Our addition is postponed, due to economic trends.)

During the year of 2009, the QQ committee researched and created an extensive media list. One of the main problems the committee faced was finding a time of year and a date when we could hold the weekly QQ open meetings. When we were almost ready to begin our media blitz, we learned that Friends General Conference offers additional training for QQ. We were fortunate that Philadelphia based Friend Elaine Crauderueff would in Boston visiting her son, and she graciously led us through a second training. This training was enormously helpful for the Friends who would be presenting at QQ. Everyone who participated in the training felt enriched and nourished by more fully experiencing our Quaker community. The meeting was pleased to receive much needed financial assistance from FGC's QQ program. Our advertising expenses for publicizing QQ were significant.

Each QQ meeting was well attended, with at least 25 people present, one third of whom were either people who were seeking a spiritual home or people who had not been at Meeting for a long time. During the weeks following QQ, we were happy to see the new faces from QQ and also a few new attenders.

The topics and presenters were as follows:

September 19: *Quakers and Simplicity*, hosted by Clarence Burley with three presenters: Fred Mikkelsen, Ellen Perry, and Phil Stone.

September 26: *Quakers and Peacemaking*, hosted by Josie Brown, and presented by Matthew Shorten, Michael True, and Whitney Mikkelsen.

October 3: *Faith and Action*, hosted by Betty Poynton, with presenters Josie Brown, Clarence Burly, and Barbara Sullivan,

Some of the presenters allowed portions of their talk to be reprinted here in the newsletter. I am sure that Friends who were present will appreciate the repetition, and those readers who were not able to attend QQ will be stimulated to reflect and (even) to articulate their own experiences on each topic.

* * *

Simplicity by Philip M. Stone

I first thought that Simplicity meant less stuff. I later realized that Simplicity was key to worship. I attended the Worcester Friends Meeting for years, studied Tibetan Buddhism, which also involves sitting in silence, and then came back to Quakerism and became a member of Worcester Friends Meeting. I prefer the unmediated form of worship, the absence of teachers or pastors, the group worship.

"In worship a person who is pre-occupied with materialist desires is ill prepared to sit in silence with other worshippers and listen for the still, small voice of God." Smith, *A Quaker Book of Wisdom*

Simplicity takes many forms. I've been a grassroots-based organizer since I was 14 years old, when I went up to strangers in Riverside Park and asked them to sign petitions against the Vietnam War. I've reduced my active involvement in many peace and social justice organizations. I now focus on one issue, housing, through Worcester Common Ground, where I served as President during its transition from a land trust to a Community Development Corporation; I've been a Director for 17 years.

I've become actively involved in the larger Quaker community in New England, where I've met many strong, spiritually centered, intelligent people who have demonstrated faithful action.

"It is about giving yourself the freedom to pursue the impulse to do good in the world." - Robert Lawrence Smith, *A Quaker Book of Wisdom*, 1998

"A life becomes simplified when dominated by faithfulness to a few concerns. ... Too many of us have too many irons in the fire." - NEYM Faith & Practice

Early Quakers wore un-dyed clothing because slave labor was used to produce the dye indigo. I don't wear or purchase jewelry because mining exploits people, despoils the environment, and leads to war and conflict. Blood diamonds from West Africa are a recent example, but let's not forget the gold mines of apartheid South Africa, or the mining camps in Siberia.

"Friends adherence to a life of simplicity is also rooted in economics, and the right sharing of the world's resources." - NEYM Faith & Practice

I firmly believe that less is more, and have tried to create a simpler, less physically cluttered environment at home and at work. My primary hobby is gardening, and creating habitats for butterflies, hummingbirds, fish and frogs.

"Simple tastes in possessions and entertainment can do away with rivalry, and the false sense of superiority created by undue luxury. A simple lifestyle promotes fullness of life." - NEYM Faith & Practice

* * *

Whitney Mikkelsen sent notes that she put together for her talk about early personal experiences with peace making.

I grew up in a household where a lot of music was played. We had countless vinyl records that were kept in the living room. One of my favorite things to do when I was alone was to look through all the records. My mother had Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Arlo Guthry, Ronnie Gilbert. She had a lot of music with "conscience", as they say. One of my very favorites was Holly Near. Oh, I would listen to her for hours. All the while driving my two brothers crazy, I'm sure. I remember one of Holly Near's songs. The lyrics went:

*It could have been me, but instead it was you.
It might be me dear brothers and sisters before we are though.
And if you can die for freedom, freedom, freedom -
If you can die for freedom, I can too.*

These lyrics were written to commemorate the anniversary of the killings at Kent State, which happened when I was three years old, and living in Ohio. That song was one of many that went straight to my 6 year old little heart and stayed there forever.

Another memory that came to me as I was reflecting on my peacemaking history was of taking a trip, by myself, during a school break to Washington, D.C. to work in a Catholic Worker House. I was about 14 or 15 years old at the time, and hadn't spent much time away from my family in Holden, Massachusetts. My mother put me on a train, and Claire Schaffer-Duffy picked me up in D.C. For about 5 days, I lived in a homeless shelter. This was, as you can imagine, an eye opening experience for a 14 year old. During that week in the evening, we would prepare food that we would take out to a street corner. I can remember Claire telling me about how people slept on the grates on the sidewalks to keep warm at night. I was horrified as I saw people huddled up, lying on the steamy grates. That trip made me look at "violence" through a different lens. For the first time I saw housing as a right ... the denial of which was an act of violence.

* * *

Mike True spoke on Quakers and Peacemaking.

Each of us, it seems, comes to the peace testimony in our own way... At this point in an on-going quest, I have come to understand peacemaking as

a form of healing, which was central to the life of Jesus and Buddha and other great prophets, and those whose lives have been influenced by them. So although there are some resemblances between my first involvement in nonviolent social change and now, I understand the significance of peacemaking somewhat differently than I did fifty years ago. In both cases, it had something to do with my religious commitment, first as a Catholic and now as a Catholic Quaker.

My first conscious act of peacemaking may have been my signing a petition to end nuclear testing about 1956. And since I'm a slow learner, my peace education has been a gradual one over the past half-century, influenced by my association with American Friends Service Committee since 1969, and presenting myself for membership in Worcester Friends Meeting in 1995. Since then, my understanding, if not my commitment, has been deepened by (a) learning more about the historical Jesus, as opposed to the biblical Christ; (b) living abroad, particularly in India, off and on since 1979, and (c) finally, coming to a kind of integration of this experience and knowledge within the past year.

My first direct involvement in nonviolence dates from my joining a picket line outside a theater in Durham, North Carolina, in 1960, during graduate study at Duke University, where African Americans were forced to sit in what they called "the crows nest," that is the balcony. Sustaining their peacemaking effort in a potentially violent context, these young people were truly "faith in action," but that fact didn't become clear to me until later, leading to my further involvement in and commitment to peace and justice issues.

Since becoming a member of Quaker Meeting, I have found that the basic theology of the statement, "There is that of God in ever person," is what peacemaking and nonviolence and healing are all about. Gradually, I came to understand that that meant doing no harm to people, which of course meant not killing anyone. In addition, my reading and experience since becoming a Quaker has led me to understand its other implications, which has been a basis for much happiness, as my religious quest continues.

The teachings of Jesus... are inordinately simple, however radical in their moral implications and however much I fail to abide by them day by day. They are, basically that "everyone has a place at the table" and that itinerate healers, including those who care for children, do the great work of the world: feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, and living the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. My primary challenge, as a Quaker, is to try to live these values and, perhaps, to nurture them in others.

Mike's entire written piece on Peacemaking and Nonviolence is available at <http://www.worcesterfriendsmeeting.org/miketru.htm>

* * *

Clarence Burley's talk on Faith in Action included the following:

Faith and action play into one another. Faith prompts action; then that action inspires faith. At least that's the way it worked out with me. My introduction to the Quaker way came as a result of two actions, my own action in volunteering at the John Greenleaf Whittier birthplace in Haverhill and Whittier's action in living and writing a life of Quaker faith.

The Whittier Society has a fundraiser that they call Snowbound Weekend. My job was to read some Whittier poems to folks waiting to see the performance. The Quaker way, as lived and taught by Whittier in his poems of Quaker spirituality, his own "faith in action," affected my faith.

Action followed this new faith. I had known about CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and its service to children in the state system for years, but I had not been moved. And then at worship one Sunday, I was reflecting on the prayer that ends with the words, "Thou shall renew the face of the earth." I knew that I couldn't renew the face of the earth, but I could help to bring a smile to the face of a child. So I committed. My first case resulted in the adoption, by his grandparents, of a two year old boy whose father was

serving a long prison term and whose mother showed little interest in him. I had just started a second case when a severe illness prevented me from continuing as a CASA volunteer.

With the help of a clearness committee I sought membership in this Meeting. I had been attending for about two years and it just seemed right to make a formal commitment. Soon I was flattered to be on Ministry and a Counsel, and later I became Clerk of our meeting. I'll happily be a minister. There are things that I have the energy to do: visit a hospitalized friend once a week for worship and read to her for a while; join the Lincoln Square weekly vigil for peace; attend the outside worship groups; be a presence at the inter-faith goings on. I'll try to do them in the way Whittier describes in his poem First-Day Thoughts:

*"...as the path of duty is made plain,
May grace be given that I may walk therein,
...Cheerful, in the light around me thrown,
Walking as one to pleasant service led;
Doing God's will as if it were my own,
Yet trusting not in mine, but in His strength alone."*

* * *

Barbara Sullivan shares a quote from her talk on Faith and Action:

"True religion does not draw men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavors to mend it." William Penn, No Cross, No Crown, 1668.

* * *

Readers are encouraged to send any thoughts or quotes that are meaningful to them on the topic of Simplicity, Peacemaking, or Faith in Action to the newsletter at info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org. Please consider sharing your writing about Quakers and/or your own spiritual path with others.



A Friend is someone you can count on. Friends create and build community. For me, community is an essential part of spirituality. Our spiritual community - the Religious Society of Friends - is what helps to keep me grounded, focused, centered, present - or in Quaker-ese, "walking in the Light".

Our meeting is not the only Quaker meeting that struggles with making commitments and carrying out the tasks we volunteer to do. Other than our capable childcare workers and our conscientious groundskeeper, we do not have paid staff.

Perhaps because we are a "volunteer" organization, running our meeting in a smooth manner can be difficult. Sometimes I find myself wishing that we had paid staff to take care of the routine stuff and to make sure that each member has the attention and care that a religious organization should provide. Gasp! This wish translates as ministry! And negates the philosophy that we are all responsible for and accountable to our meeting.

On the other hand, because we Quakers are called upon by God, our ministry to each other takes on even more meaning and depth. The "payment" we receive for our work is spiritual. When we serve each other, we see that of God in each other, and experience that of God in ourselves. In short, we live our faith.

SO... with fear and intrepidation, but after much thought and prayer, I have decided to take part in a "hybrid program" called Practicing Spiritual Accountability. Even the title intimidates me! It seems to be a significant commitment, and I am worried that I might not be able to dedicate the required time it may require. But - it also feels like this course provides a way to wrap myself in Quaker faith and action and find more support to keep on doing what I'm doing - and, hopefully, doing it with more grace.

From the promotional literature for this course:

The vitality of our meetings and of Quaker practice depends on how we help one another to be faithful as we support each other and the ministries and calls to service in our midst. Spiritual Accountability includes practicing a corporate process to ground a leading or ministry. Rightly ordered, practicing spiritual accountability has potential to enliven the meeting community, and help all involved be accountable in faith and in our work.

This course is for you if you are currently engaged with or beginning to use a spiritual care/ anchor/ accountability process, whether you are engaged in religious service or one of the people who is participating in its support. We encourage you to sign up with at least one other Friend from your group or committee to offer mutual support, especially in the field work aspect of the program.

Perhaps you may be called to enroll in this program with me. It is called Ministry of the Whole: Practicing Spiritual Accountability. The facilitators are Marge Baker (Portland Oregon), Noah Barker-Merrill (Putney Vermont), Viv Hawkins (Philadelphia), and Jim Lyons (Mt. Toby Meeting). If you are curious, please talk with me, visit <http://www.woolmanhill.org>, and read about this exciting program and its wonderful facilitators. The program begins in January at Woolman Hill and continues, on line, until April!

Braiding

By Sandra Kocher

We sit cleaning shallots
from the fall harvest,
brown tissue paper skins
float like soft leaves
to the floor.
Taking dry shallot stems
and length of sisal in hand
we balance shallots on our knees,
tie hemp and stems together.
Slowly we begin -
one strand to the left
one strand to the right
every third strand add a new bulb
repeating and repeating
until
with full loop of sisal
we finish off the braid
that now waits to hang
in warm kitchen.

I wonder
how many before us
have braided their harvest -
onions, garlic, shallots
How many have braided
thick rolls of warm yeast dough
into sculptured loaves?
How many women
have taken hair in hand -
their own, their daughters -
a twist to the left, one
to the right, keep the strands tight
working the magic three
over and under
over and under.

Originally published in GREENPRINTS,
Autumn 1996

Autumn's orange moon

by Sandra Kocher

big round orange moon
hanging up there
over that house
where yellow-leafed maples keep watch
i'd like to grab you
hard
embrace you
until moonshadows
transfuse orange joy
into my arms



Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

September 12, 2010

Present: Betty Poynton, Brian Poynton, Betty Jones, Mark Sullivan, Michael True, Katie Green, Barbara Sullivan, Phil Stone, Clarence Burley, Clerk.

01-09-12-2010 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading from Teilhard de Chardin.

02-09-12-2010 Ministry & Counsel did not meet in August. In July the committee decided to start giving a booklet on the Celebrating the Quaker Way to new members. There are two applications for membership.

03-09-12-2010 Trustees report that painting has started on the meeting house. The recorders work is near completion. The trustees are revisiting plans to renovate the meeting house; three years ago \$100,000 was pledged, to date there is about \$4000 in earmarked funds. The trustees are looking into the financial plan. They will also look into the feasibility of installing an elevator (\$75,000-\$100,000), and get estimates to look into making a larger parking area in the backyard.

04-09-12-2010 The treasurer reports that per a request from trustees, a new line item marked bequests was added to the report. New expenses included advertising for Quaker Quest and some additional electrical work.

05-09-12-2010 Quaker Quest starts next Sunday, 2-4 pm at the meeting house. Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm there will be a trial for presenters and hosts. All are invited to both the Wednesday evening (with potluck) and the Sunday presentations.

06-09-12-2010 Building & Grounds reports that painting of the meeting house is progressing well. Regarding the bushes around the meetinghouse, Karen met with Reiner. Recommendations were to remove the roots of the invasive 'burning bushes' already cut. Reiner and the painter will discuss how to improve access to the house for the painters.

07-09-12-2010 A pipe in the basement is leaking; a plumber came and reports it is necessary to replace parts of 3 pipes and part of the wall. This work and replacing the toilet would cost \$1100; just fixing it without replacing the toilet would cost \$950. It was noted that the basement is quite humid again as the dehumidifier isn't draining adequately. Friends wish to proceed with repairs, replacing the toilet, and also asking the plumber to address the issue of a permanent solution to draining the dehumidifier.

08-09-12-2010 During the above discussion, it was noted that several committees-building & grounds, library- do not have more than 1-2 members, with the result that much work on the upkeep of the meeting house is not adequately addressed. Nominating committee mentioned the difficulty it has in getting Friends to work on committees in general. Friends are reminded that supporting the meeting through service is part of being a part of Friends meeting.

09-09-12-2010 Market Day will be Saturday, Sept 25. There is no rain date. Friends are asked to sign up to work that day, as well as to bake, bring plants, etc. There will be no white elephant table.

10-09-12-2010 There is a talk at the Worcester Public Library by James Douglas on October 5, at 7 pm titled, 'JFK, Obama, and the Unspeakable: A Parable of Turning'.

The Center for Non-Violent Solutions has a bibliography available on militarism and the cost of war.

11-09-12-2010 First Day School has started a new curriculum, 'Pennies for Peace', which will be led by Betty Poynton.

12-09-12-2010 Opportunity having been given for questions and concerns, meeting ended with a period of silence, purposing to meet again tenth month, ten, or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,

Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

October 10, 2010

Present: Karen Sargent, Katie Green, Betty Jones, Mark Sullivan, Phil Stone, Barbara Sullivan, Brian Poynton, Betty Poynton, Clarence Burley, clerk.

10-10-2010-01 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading from the 2006 NEYM Sessions Keynote address by Lloyd Lee Wilson.

10-10-2010-02 Ministry and Counsel presented a memorial minute for Grace Blaber. Grace's minute was read and some additions were suggested regarding her later years. The revised minute will be presented next month.

Chapter one of the Faith and Practice Revision was reviewed by the committee and is available to Friends on the NEYM website, neym.org. There is a group of 7 peace walkers from the St. Francis community in New London, CT who will be passing through Worcester and have asked for hospitality from the meeting October 22-23. Mary Chenaille has asked for help providing meals, the walkers would sleep in the meeting house those nights.

10-10-2010-03 The treasurer's report showed that the Fall Market Day earned \$909.00.

Building expenses included repairing the handicap ramp, and some miscellaneous work. Friends asked that the expenses/income for Quaker Quest be listed separately so it is clear for FGC.

10-10-2010-04 Trustees note that the recorders have entered names onto two lists-historical and current members. Letters will be sent asking those listed to confirm their status, and give us an update on themselves.

NEYM asked, and was allowed, to store Young Friends retreat materials in plastic tubs in the basement.

10-10-2010-05 Building & Grounds has investigated replacement shutters, as the existing shutters fell apart when removed to paint the house. Paul Gallagher has ordered these and they will be put up by the painters.

Reiner has removed the brush pile in the back yard.

The chair lift will be removed as it has caused a dangerous situation in that the child gate cannot be closed at the top of the stairs. NEYM was consulted and asked that the meeting proceed with this as the lift is no longer needed by them.

10-10-2010-06 Peace & Social Concerns did not meet last month.

10-10-2010-07 First Day School reports they are working on 'Pennies for Peace' to raise money for schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This will end at the end of November.

10-10-2010-08 Quaker Quest presented three programs ending last week. There were 20-30 persons at each session, 5-8 new seekers. It was noted that the process, and hearing the sharing from Friends, was well worth the cost and time. Friends noted that most of the expense was related to advertising and it was suggested that we should be advertising that much on a regular basis.

10-10-2010-09 Ministry and Counsel notes that Brian Dreyton was scheduled to come next week to speak, however, it is also Quarterly Meeting, so Brian Poynton e-mailed him to reschedule.

10-10-2010-10 Worcester Interfaith had a meeting last month attended by Karen Sargent and Clarence Burley. The projects they are involved with were discussed, and how faith groups can participate/support the work. They are working on literacy issues with teens at several downtown churches and also those who are in programs for teens who are court-referred or have mental health issues. Friends ask that information on the programs and who to contact to participate be put in the newsletter.

10-10-2010-11 Opportunity having been given for questions or concerns, meeting ended with a period of silence purposing to meet again eleventh month, fourteenth, or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,

Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Scheduled Meetings

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business meets on each 2nd Sunday at 9 AM

Clerk: Clarence Burley

Recording Clerk: Barbara Sullivan

Recorder: Phil Stone

Treasurer: Mark Sullivan

Trustees meet 1st Sunday Clerks Ellen Perry and Karen Sargent

No summer committee meetings unless called.

Worcester Friends Meeting is known as “the Meeting for eating.” Set up for pot luck is voluntary. If you are unable to set-up on your scheduled day, make arrangements or tell one of the committee members. Thank you.

11/7/10	Swain	Virginia		
11/14/10	Wilson	James		jamwilson@clarku.edu
11/21/10	True	Michael	508-757-8228	mtrue@eve.assumption.edu
11/28/10	Bennett	Mary	508-885-0717	marybennett@earthlink.net
12/5/10	Barnard	Daron		daronbarnard@yahoo.com
12/12/10	Barnard	Katherine		kc_barnard@yahoo.com
12/19/10	Brown	Josie		josiebrown@gmail.com
12/26/10	Burley	Clarence	508-867-5814	clarenceburley@charter.net

Editor of newsletter: Katie Green. Deadline for next issue: January 1, 2011.