

## If I weren't so busy, what would God have me be?

*Charlotte Fardelmann, Dover (NH) Monthly Meeting*

**M**ONTHLY MEETINGS have begun to hold Stillness Retreats at their own meetinghouses in the last few years and are reporting enthusiastic feedback from participants. When NEYM Ministry and Counsel focused its fall retreat this year on the topic of spiritual practice with the query, "If I weren't so busy, what would God have me be?", I realized the importance of silent retreats in my own life. Personal time of prayer and communion with God, what Friends sometimes call "retirement," is essential for hearing what God would have me be.

Silent retreats can be birth powerful, transforming experiences. Fifteen years ago, a silent retreat at Pendle Hill (Quaker study center near Philadelphia) changed my life. Solo and group silent retreats became a regular part of my spiritual practice at that time. In the summer of 1990, when New England Yearly Meeting had the theme, "Be Still and Know that I am God" (Psalm 46), I decided to offer Stillness Retreats at my home in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. For the last ten years my home has been blessed by these occasions, held under the care of NEYM Ministry and Counsel. Over and over again, I've witnessed participants reaching profound levels of rest, spiritual connection, illumination, and gratefulness.

The format is simple. The retreats begin with a conversational pot luck supper on Friday night in which people get to know each other. We enter the silence with a meeting for worship before bedtime. Silence continues until late Saturday afternoon when the participants have a chance to share their experience.

While these retreats are called "Stillness Retreats," it is a stillness of mind rather than of body. People take walks, write in journals, read, pray, paint, and often nap. Simple meals are prepared, eaten, and cleaned up in silence. People do communicate, smile, even laugh; they enjoy companionship and a sense of community. Without talking, we get to know each other in a new way. Most Friends find it deeply relaxing to be in such a loving, worshipful silence together. I think of it as a special day with God... time out of time.

Denise Ginzler and Kate Kerman of Monadnock (NH) Monthly Meeting have organized four Stillness Retreats this year at their meetinghouse. They plan four more next year. The meetinghouse has no beds, so people bring sleeping bags and pads and sleep on the meetinghouse floor. One older woman who feels she needs a bed drives home at night and comes back before breakfast.

Monadnock's Retreats have been seasonal, mid-winter, May, mid-July, and the end of October. Denise says, "When we were planning the first one, some of the members were afraid of spending so much time in silence and wondered if it should not be more structured. After the retreat was over, however, the woman who was most hesitant said she had enjoyed it the way it was."

Denise says, "I find that spending this time at the meetinghouse deepens my worship the following Sunday." She spends a lot of time walking outside. Sometimes she takes a psalm and goes over and over the words. She says, "I appreciate the uninterrupted time for reflection. During this last retreat I went through

my journal of the last six months, noticing the changes in that are happening. It is good to have time to step back and look at my life."

Midcoast (ME) Monthly Meeting has held Stillness Retreats for the last few years. This meeting holds day-long retreats without the overnight. Claire Darrow says, "We like it so much we have three or four Stillness Retreats a year. I find it is a way of catching my breath in a busy life. I also love the element of community, of being silent together." People paint, draw, nap, read, walk, and write poetry, reports Claire.

For the last few years Peggy Dunn has been leading silent retreats at Portland Meetinghouse for Quakers and at Rockcraft Community Center for more ecumenical groups. The structure is similar with one addition. Lately Peggy has begun to include readings from Christian mystics, Thomas Merton, Julian of Norwich, or Isaac Penington. Peggy rings a bell every two hours during the day for a brief reading. Betty Poynton (formerly Betty Furst) of Worcester-Pleasant Street (MA) Monthly Meeting reports, "Our Stillness Weekend was a 'sacred' time for those of us who attended, a time of renewal and deepening our connection between God, nature, and ourselves. This resulted in a fuller sense of community among us. We are hopeful to offer a Stillness Weekend twice a year in the future."

I'm profoundly grateful for these grace-filled times under the care of the Spirit. While I know of some meetings that have held silent retreats, there are probably many others. I'd appreciate hearing from you. If there are meetings wishing to explore this type of "stillness," I'd be glad to help and to send a packet of information. Blessings, Charlotte Fardelmann, 385 Little Harbor Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801 • 603-436-7652 • [charlottetef@cybertours.com](mailto:charlottetef@cybertours.com).



*Photo: Stillness Retreat at Charlotte Fardelmann's home, September 1999. Back row L to R: Jay Goldspinner, Denise Ginzler, Betsy Wormser, Jane Van Landingham, Joyce Sutherland, Middle row: Beverly Clark, Alexis Teitz, Anne Baird, Front row: Madge McQueen, Charlotte Fardelmann*

## The testimony and spirituality of simplicity

Michael True, Worcester-Pleasant Street (MA) Monthly Meeting

He came in that low, mean and ordinary appearance as to outward show and accommodations ... And when he compares the kingdom of heaven, he very instructively inculcates to us that the beginnings of it are small—"a little leaven," "a grain of mustard seed," "the least of all seeds." —Job Scott (c. 1765)

**A**S A RELATIVELY NEW FRIEND, I was hesitant to serve as co-convenor of our meeting's Ministry and Counsel's study group on simplicity. I felt that my knowledge of Quaker history and tradition was too limited to get in the swim just yet. In taking the plunge, therefore, I relied on the wise counsel of the clerk, Candida Palmer. "As a transparency to God and the Holy Spirit," she said by way of introduction, "simplicity is a link to all other Quaker testimonies. As a belief acted in life, it brings diverse aspects of ourselves into unity."

As others have discovered, many ideas and insights cluster around the testimony of simplicity, a truth confirmed for me by further reflection and reading. At the heart of the testimony is a powerfully democratic impulse, one that values every person, every act of creation, every living thing. Quaker insight and practice are rooted in the principle that each person has access to the infinite by birthright, rather than by baptism or belief or religious affiliation. Everywhere and anywhere, God speaks to us because we are human beings.

The fact that Friends see no necessity for "interventions" is related to that. Each person has "that of God" in him/herself. So there is no need for elaborate rituals or artifacts or ordained clergy. God is accessible to all, if we give Creator Spirit a chance: if we listen or meditate or sit in silence and wait. We may think we are "in search of God," when we are actually "in response to God."

### God is ordinary

Simply and directly, God is available—ordinary and always everywhere. That seems to be the sense of Pierre Ceresole's reflection, when he wrote: "It is, in fact, ordinary life as it is called (and the more ordinary the more harmonious it is) which is our essential and constant communion with God." In rebelling against the ostentation and pretensions of 17th century English society, Quakers embraced "the ordinary" in a fundamental sense, thereby reclaiming as sacred much of the world that, in our pretentiousness, we often ignore. "One is apt to forget all about life, seeing it humped and bossed and garnished," Virginia Woolf wrote in *The Death of the Moth*. In a similar vein, John LaFarge, S. J., son of a famous American painter, entitled his autobiography, about ministry and public service: *The Manner is Ordinary*.

In contrast to some Christian denominations, Quakerism values every day—all of life—as sacramental. It needn't be "heightened" by elaborate ceremony. Sometimes, people dismiss or misunderstand this principle as a denial of the beauty of

music and art. Such misunderstandings, rooted perhaps in early Quakerism, misrepresent the basic reason for simplicity. It is not a policy against, but a principle for. It is a way of holding up ordinary experience and acknowledging the sacredness of "minor" things. Such simplicity characterizes early American architecture, with little decoration or artifice, and "ordinary" language and speech, without jargon or flowery excess.

So God may be most available, as Ceresole suggests, in what are sometimes regarded as mundane tasks: cleaning the house, caring for children, mowing the lawn, or making love. All work, one might say, is an entree to God, because all life is sacramental, and every day is holy, as Allen Ginsberg says in *Footnote to Howl*.

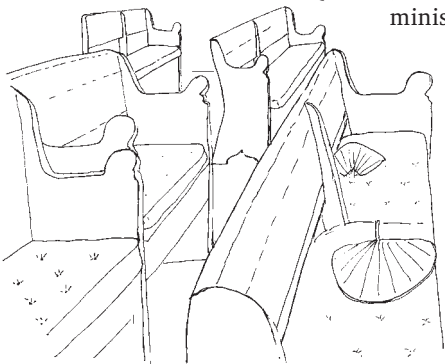
### The challenge

Simplicity, seldom easily achieved by Quakers in 17th century England, is more difficult to attend to, let alone achieve, in 20th century America. For most of us, it's a gradual process, as we recognize the need to strip away what we once regarded as essential. "Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!" Thoreau says in *Walden*: "I say let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen... Simplify, Simplify."

Embracing voluntary simplicity is a balancing act, not an assault on the status quo—a matter of discernment and of making choices. In the United States, where we are perpetually "bombarded" by advertisements about buying what we neither need nor want, it is hard to learn that our capacity to give away possessions is what makes us rich. The less we have, the richer we are, in many ways. The more we own, the more things we are possessed by.

Simplicity also means taking time for authentic leisure, rather than trying to cram in one more activity and thus remaining less "present" to ordinary pleasures and other people. It dramatizes the difference between what actually enriches us and what merely entices us. Even if we fail to live the ideal, attending to the testimony acquaints us with other spiritual truths, including the fact that the earth is part of us; that we are, as Barbara Deming said, "all part of one another." Like most other values, simplicity is best conveyed by example. It can't be legislated.

Appreciating these insights is, of course, the easy part, as one by one they take us into the heart of Quaker testimony and spirituality. The hard part is practicing them. In this effort, the most helpful account I know appeared in *Right Sharing News* (First Quarter, 1997), the newsletter of the Friends World Committee for Consultation's Right Sharing of World Resources program. After suggesting six levels of disengaging ourselves from excessive consumerism—or, in their words, opting for downward mobility, the anonymous authors concluded by suggesting that we acknowledge our shortcomings and encourage one another "to keep trying to live a life of integrity in harmony with the Quaker values we profess." It's a modest, but purposeful beginning.



Art: William Kriebel

## Friends Peace Team African Initiative

*Ray Boucher, Hartford (CT) Monthly Meeting*

**O**N MAY 14, my wife brought home a brochure from a Peace and Social Concerns Meeting which explained the background of The Friends Peace Team's African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) and gave a description of their first project called the "Kamenge Reconciliation and Reconstruction Project." The brochure also invited people to apply to become part of a seven member International team that would join with seven local Quakers in the capital city of Bujumbura in Burundi Africa in a month long undertaking to rebuild a Pastor and guest house in a section of the city called Kamenge. The deadline for application was May 15. I managed to complete the process by e-mail in a day, the benefit of which is that I didn't have long to think about it. I was the first and only participant from New England to join the AGLI peace building efforts in East Central Africa. The team, with the help of student volunteers and some paid experienced builders, labored daily to build the residence house by hand, brick by brick.

We successfully completed the building on time. The reconciliation part of the project consisted of living and working together and joining other local Friends peace workers in facilitating Conflict Resolution workshops, primarily up country in a province called Kibimba. The Quakers had just recovered from the Government the remains of a school and hospital that was started by Quakers but had been taken over for use as an Army camp and a refugee camp. We also helped in the restoration work so that the school and church could be re-opened. We were part of the first worship service to be held there in six years. The entire project was one of financial and spiritual support in an area devastated by ongoing conflict, extreme poverty and disease. I carry with me much sadness along with the joy of the experience. Violence has worsened since we left at the end of August and 300,000 people have been forcibly displaced into camps. I will be sharing this African experience at different New England Meetings in the upcoming months.

AGLI has sponsored a second project commencing February 1 in Uganda. The project involves sending a team of four experienced Internationals to work with four Ugandans in facilitating Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) workshops in the prisons, communities, and with ex-combatants. I am fortunate to be a member of this team as well. I will revisit Burundi the week prior to arriving in Uganda to assess the situation there, bring some needed items, and to reconnect with our Friends there. Longer term, AGLI has approved a proposal to send two persons for two years to Burundi to work with Burundians to establish a trauma healing center which will be thereafter maintained by local trained volunteer staff.

Please support us in keeping peace hopes alive with your prayers and, if possible, with a contribution. Please make checks payable to the Hartford Monthly Meeting, earmarked "Africa," and send to Ray Boucher, 944 Main St., Newington, CT 06111, 860/667-3323, [boucher944@aol.com](mailto:boucher944@aol.com).

## A letter on restorative justice to the Governor of Rhode Island

*Bruce Kay, Clerk, on behalf of Smithfield (RI) Monthly Meeting*

**T**HIS LETTER, approved by our membership [Smithfield (RI) Monthly Meeting], is directed to your current effort to recruit a new Director of Corrections.

Our Quaker Meeting, which has been a part of Rhode Island since the Meeting's organization in 1719, has long been concerned with the quality of the criminal justice system. Rhode Island, like most other states, has a system that relies much too heavily on prisons as a catch-all solution for addressing the problem of criminal behavior. Heavy expenditures on prisons have sapped so many resources that there is little funding left for community-based supervision and support. Furthermore, the system is focused so heavily on punishment of the offender that it often fails to address the needs of the victim.

We believe our justice system should be restorative in nature, not retributive. It should recognize that crime is primarily a harm to

someone, and that justice should focus primarily on repairing the harm. Accountability needs to be defined as fulfilling obligations more than taking punishment, for only the former is productive. Both victims and offenders should have key roles in the carrying out of justice. And the offender should be provided every opportunity to redeem him/herself in the eyes of the community. Prisons should primarily serve as institutions of restraint where deemed necessary; hence only those who are considered a continued threat to public safety, and who cannot be restrained within the confines of the community, should be imprisoned.

We believe this to be not soft on crime, but smart on crime. We believe that a restorative system would provide more chance for the victim to be made whole, for the offender to become a productive member of society, and for the community to be made right.

The shift to a restorative system of justice is occurring in a number of states: of

particular note are programs in Minnesota, Indiana, Wisconsin and Vermont. On the national level, the U.S. Department of Justice is seriously studying restorative justice; and the National Institute of Corrections has a training course in restorative justice. Hence, our desire is not to make a radical shift to unknown territory, but to join a growing movement.

You have recently announced a nationwide search for a new Director of Corrections. In this process, you have an opportunity to move the State further to a restorative paradigm of justice. We urge you to hire a Director of Corrections who is willing to play a key role in reform; who is able to educate legislators and judges on the benefits of a restorative system of justice; who is willing to take appropriate risks in the creation of a truly balanced correctional system; and who will form a partnership with the community.

# 20th FWCC Triennial in New England



**WHAT'S FWCC?** Friends World Committee for Consultation, founded in 1937, is a network that brings together Quakers from all over the world, from Alaska to South Africa, New Zealand to Moscow, from all kinds of Friends' meetings and churches. FWCC does not make rules for the various Yearly Meetings and smaller Friends' groups, or try to achieve unity in theology or form of worship. It brings Friends together to share, worship together, and learn from each other's faith journeys. FWCC's World Office is in London. The Section of the Americas office is in Philadelphia, with one staff person based in Mexico.

**What's the Triennial?** The Triennial is like FWCC's Yearly Meeting session, but it meets only every three years. It meets in various places around the world—in New Mexico in 1994, and Birmingham, England in 1997. The Triennial sessions include business meetings, plenary speeches, worship (programmed and unprogrammed), small worship-sharing groups, and interest groups.

The 20th Triennial will be held 7/22-30/2000 at Geneva Point Center on Lake Winnepesaukee in central New Hampshire. This is probably the only time in any of our lifetimes that this event will be in New England. The theme of the Triennial is "Friends: a people called to listen, gathered to seek, sent forth to serve."

**Who attends the Triennial?** About 275 people, primarily representatives appointed by Yearly Meetings all over the world. New England will have four representatives. FWCC tries hard to maintain a balance of different areas of the world, although it does not have sufficient funds to bring the full complement of delegates from poorer countries. It provides interpretation for Spanish, French, and other languages as needed. There are some "observer" spaces for people from the various Quaker organizations, and a few for other interested Friends. Unlike Friends General Conference Gatherings and the Friends United Meeting Triennials, however, the FWCC Triennial is not an open gathering for anyone who wishes to attend.

**How are New England Friends serving the Triennial?** A Local Arrangements Committee is planning hospitality and transportation for the visiting Friends during their stay in New England, and working with Geneva Point Center on the many details of the conference. Committees are planning a "Quaker Heritage Tour" of southeastern Massachusetts, a White Mountains hike, and a Woolman Hill conference on sustainable development before the Triennial.

Six Young Adult Friends will be chosen later this year to serve as stewards at the meeting, assisting with microphones, room arrangements, and other tasks.

**How can I participate in the Triennial?** There are several ways you and your meeting can participate in the Triennial:

- The two Sunday morning worship programs will be open to visitors, as will the keynote speech and two other plenary presentations.

- On Tuesday afternoon, 7/25, New England Friends have about an hour to show and tell attendees all about New England Yearly Meeting. Visitors will be able to stay for supper, the evening business session, and a contra dance. If you have ideas for what should be in this program, or want to help with it, please contact Jonathan Vogel-Borne at the Yearly Meeting office.

- On Wednesday afternoon, 7/26, Triennial attendees will be leaving Geneva Point for a variety of excursions to local sites. We will need drivers and leaders particularly for hikes and walks. If you are able to help on this day, please contact April Claggett, 603/563-9974, RR2 134L, Peterborough, NH 03458.

- Contribute to the FWCC Travel and Accommodations Fund to support the costs of representatives coming from poorer countries.

- Use the study booklet prepared for the Triennial, perhaps in an adult study group or mid-week worship group. Copies will be available shortly from the FWCC committee, and may be freely copied.

- Individuals/ families offer homestay hospitality for visiting Friends the week before or after the FWCC Triennial. (July 15-22) and (7/30-8/5).

- Meetings arrange an informal midweek meeting with visiting Friends before or after the FWCC triennial. (7/15-22) and (7/30-8/5). (A list of guidelines for hosts will be sent to individuals or meetings which volunteer for hosting.)

- Help greet Friends at airports and guide them to the buses/vans to be taken to Geneva Point, NH.

**Questions? Offers?** Please get in touch with either of us. Betsy Cazden, Clerk, FWCC Local Arrangements Committee 603/668-3251 • [BCazden@aol.com](mailto:BCazden@aol.com), Marian Baker, hospitality coordinator, 603/478-5650 • [mbaker@monad.net](mailto:mbaker@monad.net).

## Around the Yearly Meeting

*Compiled from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by the Editors, William Kriebel and Jonathan Vogel-Borne*

- **Wellesley (MA) Monthly Meeting (MIM)** mourns the loss of their member, Sylvia Perry, former Presiding Clerk of New England Yearly Meeting, who died on 1/3/2000. Friends and family from all around the Yearly Meeting and beyond gathered for her memorial meeting, 1/6/2000.

- **South Berkshire (MA) MM** announced the formation of a worship group under its care in Lenox, MA. It is held Sundays at 10:30 a.m. in the chapel of the Lenox Church on the Hill, on Main St., (Rt. 7A) in Lenox Center. Contact Don and Helen Snyder, 413/637-7143.

- **Cobscook (ME) MM** is considering an outreach to the Downeast Correctional Facility to help provide books and games for children and families visiting inmates. Three Friends from the Meeting met recently with Prison officials who are enthusiastic about the proposal.

• **Hartford (CT) Monthly Meeting (MM)**, following summer vandalism, formed an ad hoc committee on restorative justice. Two neighborhood boys, ages 13 and 9, involved in the vandalism, who were later arrested, have been engaged with members of the Meeting in a restorative justice process. The boys have come to work days, potlucks, and have been paying some monetary restitution as well. An invitation was extended to their families to attend meeting for worship. The meeting also plans further outreach to the neighborhood, including participation in their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on 10/29/2000.

Hartford re-instituted family worship for three First Days during the coming year, for the entire hour. Parents are given suggestions for small items children may hold to help them be still and quiet and there is nursery care for small children if needed.

• **Westerly (RI) MM** considered a minute from the Drug Concerns Working Group of Central Philadelphia MM. It calls for diversion of the vast sums going to the military to treatment, research, and education. Some Friends work to change government policy; others work on ways to reach out to addicts.

• **Plainfield (VT) MM** has a winter series on Personal Journeys. Friends are asked to share life stories, including childhood spiritual experiences, key life experiences, important teachers, sources of inspiration, and acting on life lessons and beliefs.

• **Portland (ME) MM** adult class has been listening to the taped Bible Half Hour lectures given at the 1996 NEYM Sessions by Lisa Lofland Gould, Quaker biologist and author. "Every second and fourth Sunday for thirty minutes we are absorbed by her exquisitely interwoven knowledge of the Bible and facts about Earth's ecology, which we follow with our own reactions and discussion."

Portland also has an active child and youth religious education program, including baking cookies for UNICEF, attending a Jewish service, interviewing older Friends, a splash party, volunteering at a soup kitchen, and creating a separate younger-middle-school class.

• **Wilderness (VT) MM** adopted a minute on the need for a U.S. Truth Commission to report on the Federal government's interventions, covert activities, and participation in human rights abuses in other nations. Anti-communism was given as the

reason, but these have continued in the decade since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Northwest Quarterly Meeting referred the minute to monthly meetings for discussion.

• **Beacon Hill (MA) MM's** newsletter reports that the meeting has had small spiritual support groups for the past eight years "to seek the Light with more personal exchange than is possible in First Day meeting for Worship." The meeting held a Collected Visions session on spiritual support groups. One Friend described them as "greenhouses within our Meeting." Other descriptions were "places for trusting God through trusting each other;" "having fun in the spirit;" "preparation for Meeting;" "support in a dry time;" "experimentation and testing;" "questions, doubt, uncertainty;" and "practice in listening to how God speaks to you and others." For some, the intimate friendships formed have been most meaningful. Groups start by exchanging spiritual autobiographies, sharing spiritual disciplines. Most groups are "listening within for possible changes." Newcomers express hope to be part of such a group. There are three persons acting as "liaisons to spiritual support groups" for the meeting.

• **Oxford Hills (ME) MM** purchased 200 Quaker History calendars with the Meeting's name, time and place of worship printed on the bottom. As an outreach, these calendars will be distributed in the community as well as given to members and attenders of the Meeting. The meeting has also developed a library/peace resource center for use by the wider community and is planning a concert on peace and justice issues with singer/storyteller, Ben Tousley, on 4/30/2000.

• **Concord (NH) MM** is dividing the responsibilities of its Ministry and Counsel with the formation of a new committee "to help address our needs in adult spiritual education and fellowship with a primary focus on midweek adult education programs, retreat programs for adults and fourth Sunday education programs, but not to exclude more informal gatherings...."

• Friends Camp, South China, ME, had 11 girls from the Friends School in Tokyo last summer as campers, who reported enthusiastically about their experiences. The school would like to see more 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>-graders again next summer at the camp, which is willing to take up to 15. Louise Hatanaka, Principal, wrote: "I cannot tell you how happy I am for our students to be at a Quaker

camp. It is very lonely out here. We are the only Friends school in Japan—in the far East, for that matter, unless you count Hobart in Australia. We need all the Quaker bolstering we can get!" [See the *Friends Camp Brochure* enclosed with this issue.]

• **Northampton (MA) MM** is exploring the possibility of leasing or buying space for a meeting place in the former Elks Club building in downtown Northampton, which is within walking distance of Smith College, where the Meeting currently meets. The building is being renovated to house private and commercial space, including the Interfaith Cot Shelter. Friends have met with the developer and the Meeting is considering its options.

• **Putney (VT) MM** has issued a booklet on becoming a member, and a member's responsibilities. The first steps in application follow *Faith and Practice*. Clearness committees plan to have two meetings with the applicant, and report to Ministry and Counsel. The pamphlet mentions expecting a thorough understanding of the meeting and its practices, faithful attendance, expectations about worship and personal relationships, financial contributions, and willingness to be guided by the Advices and Queries, and by testimonies so far as one is spiritually led.

Prospective members are asked to explore the significance of such topics as the role of *Faith and Practice* and the Advices and Queries in particular, how the business meeting functions, the role Quaker history plays today, and the relevance of the historic testimonies. Specific questions about beliefs, doctrines, and testimonies are welcomed. There is a page on the meeting's responsibility to the member such as opportunity for worship and spiritual growth, support and direction, fellowship and socialization, service opportunities, Quaker education, contact with the wider Quaker world, oversight of weddings and memorial meetings. There is a brief reading list.



Putney (VT) Meetinghouse

## In other Quaker news

### Long Range Planning invites comment

The NEYM Long Range Planning Committee is asking widely representative New England Quaker groups and individuals to offer thoughts on what they would want the Yearly Meeting be like (as an organization, not only the Sessions) in 20 years. What can we do for the spiritual health and development of Friends in Yearly Meeting, particularly looking at youth work, intervisitation, structure, and leadership development? Send responses to John Fuller, Clerk of the committee, 110 Alban Street, Dorchester, MA 02124 • [quakerlad@aol.com](mailto:quakerlad@aol.com).

### NEYM part-time assistance needed

Part-time job that requires some computer skills and that you be able to come into the Worcester Office. Flexible hours—perfect for students and/or mothers. Contact the NEYM Office.

### Staff for summer YM Sessions needed

Several opportunities to serve the Yearly Meeting at the annual Sessions are available, including the Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Coordinator, Audio/Visual Coordinator, Registrar-In-Training, and Office Assistant. All of these positions include room and board at YM Sessions, while, in addition, the JYM Coordinator receives a small stipend. Contact the NEYM Office.

### Survey on special needs

A working party on accessibility concerns of persons and families with special needs has been formed by NEYM Ministry and Counsel. In order to know more closely what these concerns are, and the extent to which lack of accommodations are a barrier to participation in Yearly Meeting activities, a brief survey will be mailed in the near future to monthly meeting and worship group clerks. We hope that this means of distribution will reach those persons who wish to let us know what Yearly Meeting needs to be working on in this area in order to effectively lower the barriers. If you are a clerk, please watch for this mailing, which will also include additional information on a proposed spiritual nurture program. Contact Peggy Dunn, 207/879-1371 • [pwdunn1@msn.com](mailto:pwdunn1@msn.com)

### 2nd Emerging Ministries Conference

*Emerging Ministries: Opening God's Gifts* is the title of the conference co-sponsored by

NEYM Ministry and Counsel and Woolman Hill, which will take place 4/14-16/2000 at Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA. "Recognizing that God is calling us in the world can fill us with joy and terror as we affirm the gift we have been given and as we doubt it and ourselves. Do we dare to step forward? Do we open the gift so that we can give it? This retreat will nurture persons who are at various stages of recognizing and responding to a call to particular ministry. All gifts of ministry are welcome: quiet support, presence and prayer as well as vocal, social action, healing or outreach ministries. Each attendee is asked to provide a short biographical paragraph describing his/her ministry which can be mailed ahead of time to other attendees, and a letter of support from the home meeting's Ministry and Counsel committee." Contact, Woolman Hill, 413/774-3431 or Susan Lloyd McGarry, 781/648-5257 • [slmcgarry@aol.com](mailto:slmcgarry@aol.com).

### Cuban sojourner in New England?

Since 1992 we've had many wonderful visits from Cuban Friends, praying, eating, and worshipping together. Puente de Amigos is now exploring the idea of having a Cuban visitor sojourn with Friends in New England for three to six months. We are exploring the idea and would like feedback from Friends in all corners of our "Holy Mountain." Cubans have many gifts in sharing the good news and working with the young. Does your meeting have a need for a Youth Worker? Can you imagine hosting a Cuban in your meeting? Can you offer English (TEFL) classes, maybe a local seminary for them to further their Christian studies, and a long-term responsibility, such as teaching, organic gardening, and service with immigrants. Contact Minga Claggett-Borne at 617/354-3808 or [mingaborne@aol.com](mailto:mingaborne@aol.com).

### Woolman Hill seeks Director

Woolman Hill, the Quaker Conference and Retreat Center located on 100+ acres of farmland and woods in Deerfield, MA is looking for an Executive Director. Woolman Hill's mission is to foster Quaker testimonies, including simplicity, peace, integrity, and stewardship. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall planning and administration of the conference center and is a resident position that includes salary, benefits, and housing. Start as soon as possible.

Contact: Woolman Hill Personnel Committee, c/o David Rakyta, P.O. Box 5454, Hanover, NH 03755.

### Westport seeks Friends in Residence

Westport Monthly Meeting (MA) seeks Friend(s) in Residence. Duties include: Provide a friendly point of contact; answer meeting phone; coordinate calendar for two buildings; respond to inquiries; clean and maintain buildings and grounds. Becoming part of our faith community is expected. A separate accessible family house is provided on property. Position available 4/1. Interviews begin immediately. A detailed job description is available. Contact Kevin Lee, 48 Carlton St., Dartmouth, MA 02748 • 508/994-1638 • [weeles@gateway.net](mailto:weeles@gateway.net).

### Friends in Residence sought

Individual or couple sought to be Friend in Residence at Friends Meeting at Cambridge, to begin Summer of 2000. Applicant should be an experienced Friend. Stipend, benefits, apartment suitable for a couple. Applications accepted until position filled; processing begins 3/1. Please send resume and letter of interest or requests for information to: Friend in Residence Search Committee, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge, MA 02138-4816 • [FMCsearch@aol.com](mailto:FMCsearch@aol.com).

### Meeting Secretary position open

Friends Meeting at Cambridge has an opening for Meeting Secretary "who enjoys welcoming people, juggling multiple tasks, and working cooperatively with other staff members in supporting the outreach and the myriad other activities of the meeting. Computer proficiency and some accounting skills are required." Contact the Secretary Search Committee, Shelia Johnston at 617/547-7490 or [janejackson8@hotmail.com](mailto:janejackson8@hotmail.com).

### Quaker teachers and spirituality

Earlham College, the Friends Association in Higher Education, and the Friends Council on Education are sponsoring a conference, *Spirituality in Action: Quakers in Education in The New Millennium*, 6/22-25 on the Earlham campus. Parker Palmer is the featured speaker. Teachers in public or non-Quaker schools are especially invited, and the conference hopes to address their hopes and concerns. Contact Earlham College, Richmond, IN 47374.

**Quaker Studies Program**

The Winter/Spring offerings of the Beacon Hill Friends House /Salem Quarterly Meeting program are: *Reflections on the Spirit: Paul, Fox, and Later Friends*, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/27, 3/5/2000, 7-9pm, Friends Meeting at Cambridge, tuition \$35 (scholarships available); *Learning the Practice of Forgiveness*, with Kathryn Buttrick, 3/18/2000, 9:30am-3:30pm, Wellesley Meeting, tuition \$20; *Discovering the Voices of Children in Our Meetings*, Lynda Johnson, 4/8/2000, 9-12 Cambridge Friends School, tuition \$15. Contact Becky Phipps, PO Box 386, Wenham MA 01984 • 978/468-7045 • [baphipps@aol.com](mailto:baphipps@aol.com).

**FGC's 2000 Gathering of Friends**

The FGC Gathering, one program of Friends General Conference, will be held 7/1-8 at the University of Rochester, NY. The theme is *Deep Roots; New Growth*. "Deep Roots is our unshakable groundedness in the Spirit;

New Growth symbolizes our response and aliveness in Quakerism and the fruits of the Spirit." This Gathering will celebrate FGC's past 100 years, and will look into the future. The advance program is mailed to all persons on yearly meeting mailing lists. Contact FGC, 215/561-1700 • [www.quaker.org/fgc/gathering](http://www.quaker.org/fgc/gathering).

**Sibyl Belmont scholarship established**

Sibyl Totah Belmont was a member of Friends Meeting at Cambridge who died in 1991. She was a musician, performing and teaching piano. She was also active in promoting dialog between Palestinians and Jews, working with the American Friends Service Committee and on her own. Sibyl's father was principal of the Ramallah Friends School, and she grew up in Ramallah until she came to the Lincoln School in Providence. Now a scholarship fund in her memory has been established at the National Conservatory of Music in Ramallah. This school has

an ongoing relationship with the "Playing for Peace" program of the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music, which each summer brings Arab and Jewish students from the Middle East to make music together in New Hampshire. This combination of music and dialog seems the perfect way to remember a very dedicated Quaker musician and peace maker. For more information about the scholarship fund, you can contact Harriet Feinberg at [harfein@aol.com](mailto:harfein@aol.com).

**Pendle Hill peace conference**

Pendle Hill is sponsoring a peace conference at the Burlington (NJ) Conference Center, 3/16-19, with presenters from many aspects of peace work including: Elise Boulding on *Peace Culture*, Sandra Bloom on *Toward the Evolution of Sane Societies*, and Douglas Hostetter, Tuyet Hong La and Earl and Pat Martin on *Vietnam*. Contact Lois Frey at Pendle Hill, 800/742-3150 x140 • [forum@pendlehill.org](mailto:forum@pendlehill.org).

**Seeking deeper spiritual experience?**

**A Spiritual Formation Program in New England Yearly Meeting**

**T**HE SPIRITUAL NURTURE INTEREST GROUP of NEYM Ministry and Counsel invites you to participate in a brief survey regarding your interest in a spiritual formation program similar to the ones used in Baltimore and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. These programs take nine months to complete and involve meetings both at the local and yearly meeting levels. There are readings relating to prayer, scripture, spiritual experience, community, and the Society of Friends. Small local groups meet regularly so participants can support each other on the journey and share the joys and trials of the daily spiritual discipline undertaken during the nine-month cycle. The program begins and ends with a weekend retreat at which participants from all over the Yearly Meeting come together.

Your meeting will receive a mailing including a brochure with details about the program and a more in-depth questionnaire. We encourage you to read those materials carefully and return the questionnaire when it becomes available. In the meantime, please spend a few minutes to complete this brief preliminary survey. Be sure to include your name and address (and Meeting!) so we can follow up with you if you are interested.



<p>I would like to see such a program happen in NEYM <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>I would like to see such a program in my Quarter/Region <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>I would participate in such a program <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>I am not interested now, but might in the future <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>I am not interested in such a program <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ email: _____</p> <p>Meeting: _____ Quarter: _____</p>
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**Please return this survey to: Marion Athearn, 5105 North Main St., Fall River, MA 02720 • Phone: 508/673-7159 • Fax: 508/676-3936**

# THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

## YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

### February 2000

- 4-6 Jr. High Retreat – West Falmouth, MA
- 5 Vassalboro QM – Farmington, ME
- 6 CT Valley QM – Hartford, CT
- 11-13 Friends United Mtg General Board – Richmond, IN
- 18-20 Young Friends Retreat – Hartford, CT
- 21 FWCC 20th Triennial Local Arrangements Committee –  
*Location TBA*
- 26 Permanent Board – Worcester, MA

### March 2000

- 1 *New England Friend deadline*
- 4 Northwest QM – Middlebury/Bennington
- 10-12 Young Friends Retreat – Mt Toby, Greenfield, MA
- 11 Ministry & Counsel – Monadnock, NH
- 16-19 FWCC/Americas Annual Mtg – Zion, IL
- 25 Sessions – *Location TBA*
- 26 Beacon Hill Friends House Weed Lecture – Boston, MA
- 31-4/2 Jr. High Retreat – Wellesley, MA
- 31-4/2 Women's Retreat – Geneva Point, NH

### April 2000

- 1-2 Young Friends Officers Retreat – *Location TBA*
- 7-9 JYM 6<sup>th</sup> Graders Retreat – Worcester, MA
- 8 Committee Day – Concord, NH
- 14-16 Emerging Ministries – Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA
- 14-16 Young Friends Retreat – Cambridge, MA

- 16 RI-Smithfield QM – Worcester, MA
- 22 Falmouth QM – Durham, ME
- 22 Sandwich QM – Cape Cod, MA
- 29 United Society of Friends Women – Wellesley, MA
- 30 Salem QM – North Shore, MA
- 30 Dover QM – Concord, NH

### May 2000

- 1 *New England Friend deadline*
- 6 Vassalboro QM – Belfast, ME
- 7 CT Valley QM – Mt Toby, MA
- 12 Coordinating & Advisory – *Location TBA*
- 12-14 Elementary Retreat – Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA
- 12-14 Young Friends Senior Class Retreat – Quaker House,  
West Falmouth, MA
- 13 Permanent Board – New Bedford, MA
- 19-21 Jr. High Retreat – Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA
- 20 Ministry & Counsel – Hartford, CT

### 1999 Minute Book changes

*Portland Co-clerks have changed, the new clerks are: Rita Clifford and Sara Jane Elliot, 7 Mill Pond Drive, Windham, ME 04062, 207/892-6136; Co-clerks of Peace & Social Concerns Committee are: Sibylle Barlow & John Blanchard; Bill Ruggiero's e-mail: [frodo@loa.com](mailto:frodo@loa.com); Tom Basset's e-mail: [atbassett@aol.com](mailto:atbassett@aol.com); Martha Mangelsdorf's e-mail: [memangel@earthlink.net](mailto:memangel@earthlink.net).*

Address Service Requested

The New England Friend  
901 Pleasant Street  
Worcester, MA 01602-1908



Please send ALL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS to the Yearly Meeting DIRECTLY to the Treasurer, Diana White, P.O. Box 856, Farmington, ME 04938  
Please let the NEYM Office know of any address changes or Monthly Meeting membership changes

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