

So, what about Jesus?

James Douglas, Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting

“SO, WHAT ABOUT JESUS?” It keeps coming back to that question, doesn’t it? Of course, the question is asked a million different ways: “Is Jesus God?” “Why was Jesus called the Son of God?” “I can accept Jesus as a great teacher but divine...?” “Jesus was perfect; am I supposed to be perfect too?” These are wonderful, important questions and I am grateful to be in a faith tradition that encourages such questions because they lead to answers.

Unfortunately, many people cannot even bring themselves to ask the question(s) out loud. These are people who do not feel welcomed by the Christianity they have been exposed to. They have been hurt through ignorance or even abused in the name of religion. And “Jesus” is the name that gets tarred with the brush of anger, fear and woundedness. Because I have encountered so many of these people, and because I have felt myself to be among them, I have sometimes described my ministry as being called to “de-toxify” Christianity. De-toxifying is a process of removing the poisons from the living body and a process of reclaiming health. In spiritual terms, it means reclaiming the life of love and God-centered power that Jesus himself lived and exhorted others to. It is an ongoing journey I have had to undertake for myself. It is the essence of what Light I have to share with other seekers.

So, here we find ourselves, like moths fluttering around a flame, all drawn to the Light. But while many know Jesus as their source of warmth and life, just as many are afraid of getting burned. Either way, I am convinced that anyone who is a spiritual seeker and has been exposed to Jesus in any way must come to grips with him and what has been said about him.

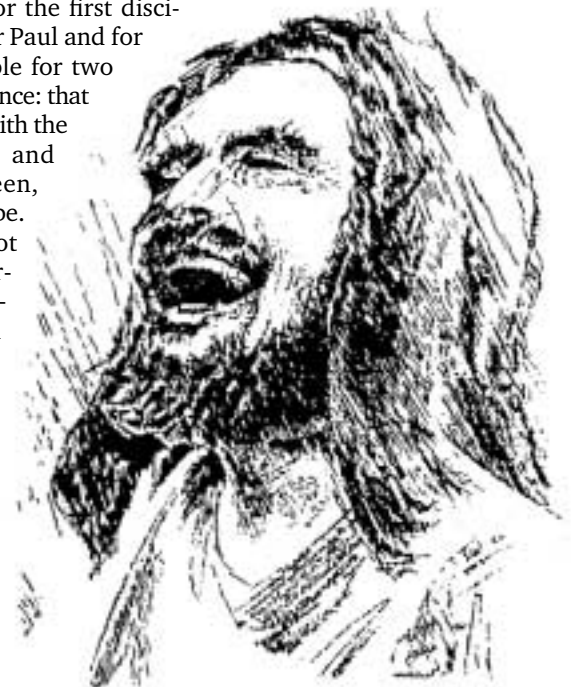
Take the matter of the resurrection for example. It grabbed my attention recently. I think many of us half-think about it in one of two ways. First, we may accept without question what we are told by some Christian “authorities”: Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and after three days was miraculously raised from the dead. Or we can half-think about it this way: “I don’t believe Jesus was divine anyway so I don’t have to think about resurrection.” The Apostle Paul ran into the same half-thinking a few aeons ago. To some people of his day, it made sense to think of Jesus as wholly divine, sort of God in disguise, not “really” human. Others thought Jesus was human like everyone else, maybe better, but certainly not divine and no way was he raised from the dead. To the people of Paul’s day, “human” and “divine” were like oil and water—they could not be mixed.

Paul’s response was an emphatic “NO” to both camps. He insisted Jesus walked the earth, was known by many hundreds of people, lived with them, taught them—he was fully human. And, Jesus was also divine and was resurrected. If he

was not also resurrected, Paul declared, then his message and his promises died with him and “[our] faith is in vain... we are still in our sins... [and] we of all men are most to be pitied” (1 Cor. 15:14,17,19). If there was no resurrection, then Jesus’ promise, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father” (John 14:12) is either a lie or the words of a deluded man.

The Jesus I know is neither liar nor lunatic. So I question. What might a “de-toxed” resurrection look like? It is said that Jesus returned from death to break forever the power of sin and death. Death is pretty straightforward, and I understand sin to mean separation from God. Is it possible that Jesus, as a man fully illuminated by the Light within, returned from death to break forever the illusion that we are ever separate from God? Jesus knew this Truth for himself: “Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me” (John 14:11). But no matter how often he preached that what was true for him was also true for everyone, no one got it. Even his closest followers did not “truly” get it. I doubt many of us fully “get it” today, even though we are much more comfortable with the idea and language of “oneness with God.” Jesus knows how hard it is to really “get” that truth to the depths of our souls, so he arranges the perfect demonstration: his resurrection! And the point is written in neon lights for the first disciples and later for Paul and for millions of people for two thousand years since: that we too are one with the Father/Mother, and always have been, and always will be. And nothing, not death and certainly not anything we could ever do, can separate us from God’s love and everlasting Light.

Well, that is what happens for me when I check into the Jesus Clinic for detox. I can’t wait for rehab!



The possibility of Jesus

Betsy Zimmerman, Providence (RI) Monthly Meeting

THINKING ABOUT JESUS BEGINS AS A PROCESS of sorting out personae. Who are they? Who is the true person inside all the imagery, writing, and talk? There is the Jesus of the Trinity, the Son of God, the martyr, the Christ. There is also the teacher, and the innovator of a new kind of social thinking—Who is the Jesus I choose to embrace? How comfortable am I with the Divine Christ? Jesus as teacher, innovator, and social activist is the person I am most interested in. This is the man who offered a new kind of communal social thinking.

Some of the important lessons this Jesus has left us are: sharing the loaves and fishes so that all can be fed; turning the other cheek; helping the stranger rather than passing him by. He teaches that

turning toward each other in small and large ways creates possibilities for learning to live together for everyone and for all time. We need to see the world globally and to see ourselves as part of the environment rather than in control of it.

As never before, we must create possibilities and communicate carefully with each other. Western culture has given us Jesus as a model of this kind of humanity. This model has occurred in other cultures as well.

In the Near East and in Asia there have been leaders who have moved society to new levels of growth and understanding. Buddha and Gandhi are the first who come to mind. Their lessons continue to be taught over time. They have been innovators and teachers. They have taught by example more than word. The words have often come after them and have been written by others. Buddha, Jesus, and Gandhi all have seen beyond their personal time and condition and tried to give people examples of ways to live that are possible for greater humanity among us all. They have said: yes, it is possible; yes, one can do this. They have spoken and acted in positive ways rather than choosing negative alternatives. They have worked to make connections and to forge bonds and communication rather than create barriers. Let us use all these possibilities to make connections in today's world.

Artwork: Fritz Eichenberg



“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden...”

Sara Hubner, Dover (NH) Monthly Meeting

RECENTLY I WAS ASKED, “If you could meet anyone, alive or dead, real or fictional, who would it be?” I answered, Jesus. To sit and talk with Jesus might be a lot easier than trying to figure out who he was and what he was about from biblical and apocryphal texts.

There is a fair amount in the New Testament that I am not comfortable with or that I simply don't “get.” And the thing is, I don't get to keep what I like, what I understand, what feels comfortable, and throw away the rest by telling myself it doesn't make sense or “Jesus probably didn't say that.” In fact, some of the bits that are the most difficult for me to accept are also the most intriguing. They are the words that pull on me and ask me to try a new way of thinking or to stop thinking and try feeling.

For example, even though it is called the “Quaker Gospel,” I am the least comfortable with the Gospel of John. I don't like to think that Jesus said, “no man cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6). If he did say it, I like to think it means something other than what it seems to say. Did the Prince of Peace drive the money changers out of the temple with a scourge? Did Jesus really wait two days

to go to Lazarus, to prove that he could raise the dead?

And yet, the opening verses of John are like a song. I don't understand exactly what they mean, and yet they are meaningful. They can bring me to tears.

The Gospel of Thomas is full of Jesus' sayings that are like puzzles:

This heaven will pass away and the [heaven] above it will pass away. And the dead are not alive, and the living will not die. In the days when you consumed what was dead, you made it alive. When you are in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one, you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?” (*Saying 11*) If they ask you: “What is the sign of your Father among you?” [then] say to them: “It is movement and repose.” (*Saying 50*)

And yet I can't toss these words aside. Just because I don't understand them doesn't mean they make no sense! Maybe Jesus has been misquoted. Maybe I am too ignorant of Jesus' times to understand his metaphors.

I can read other's interpretations, John Dominic Crossan or Marcus

Borg or Elton Trueblood. But scholars are not enough, perhaps because there is a difference between the knowledge of the intellect and the knowledge of the heart. To understand what the words literally mean is not necessarily to understand how Jesus' teachings apply to my life. Maybe I just haven't sat with Jesus' words long enough.

For years the parable of the Prodigal Son meant nothing to me. I identified with the good son, the one who stayed home and did what his father wanted. Then suddenly, the *n*th time I had heard the parable, I understood: no matter how far we stray, no matter how long we are away, God the Father will rejoice at our return. I had to be willing to sit with that story long enough, hear it repeated enough times, to understand what Jesus is saying to me. What would I have lost if I had stopped listening?

One thing that is clear to me, that what I understand, even through the sayings of Jesus that make no sense to me—or especially through those sayings, is that Jesus preaches to us about a kingdom that is not of this world. The Kingdom of God is the world turned



upside down, the lion lying down with the lamb, the last coming first, the meek inheriting the earth. What seems important to humans is not important to God.

It is also clear to me that, embracing Jesus, I have to embrace paradox. "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25). Jesus is paradox. He said both "my peace I give you" and "I came not to send peace, but a sword." He was fully human. And also fully divine. He made the lame walk and he whipped the merchants from the temple. He ascended into Heaven, and he walks beside me. Jesus said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:27-30) I don't understand this: How could a yoke be easy, or a burden light? It doesn't make sense. And yet, I believe it, with all my soul.

The power within the whole of the created order

Gail Thomas, Cambridge (MA) Monthly Meeting

I AM ASKED TO WRITE ABOUT JESUS AT A TIME IN MY LIFE when my half-formed thoughts about Jesus are being constantly challenged by exciting, new ways to re-image him. Today I read the following: "We must find the courage to abandon Greek metaphysics and imperial power and instead embrace the power within the whole of the created order. The Christ who is beneath our feet, before our eyes, in our hearts, and throbbing between us is able, and willing, to burst out. Seize your moment—enflesh the Christ you profess to believe in." (Lisa Isherwood, *Liberating Christ*). Words like these leave me breathless. They present a demand, "What canst thou say?" And a question, "Who do you say that I am?" For those of us who find ourselves on the Jesus path to God, that is the question.

What can I say about Jesus? I can say with George Fox that, "there is one, even Christ Jesus, who can speak to my condition." I can do this because I translate this Jesus immediately into the Inner Teacher, and I know experientially that I have an inner teacher. As I get older I get better at listening to this inner voice and hearing it expressed by and through others. More and more I center my life in prayer and my actions in leadings of the Spirit. I also have rediscovered the authority of Jesus in the New Testament. Though written through the lens of faith, that is by people who believed Jesus was the Son

of God, and not accurate history, nevertheless, the words and actions of this Jesus reveal God to me and call me to examine my own life. Clearly there is something compelling about this historical Jesus that causes people then as now to respond to him and to try to express the power of his presence with language, however inadequate words are.

We need to be careful, however, of making an idol of Jesus, worshipping a received concept rather than re-imaging Jesus for ourselves. I heard that in Cuba when a person applies for membership, he or she must wait a year while the community watches to see how this person lives his or her faith. I ask myself, can people see Jesus in me? We also need to be careful not to

"The Christ who is beneath our feet, before our eyes, in our hearts, and throbbing between us is able, and willing, to burst out."

claim that only through Jesus can God be fully revealed. I am convinced that Jesus never made such a claim and that this claim is a root of much of the evil of the past two thousand years done in God's name. Whatever any one of us feels about Jesus, we must hold our insights humbly. To use the language of another path: "However men try to reach me, I return their love with my love; whatever path they may travel, it leads to me in the end." (*Bhagavad Gita*, translated by Stephen Mitchell). The mystery is always greater than our ability to understand. So I'm in a perpetual "dance" with Jesus, and I've decided it is never ending and that is all right.

Jesus: tough yet tender

William Kriebel, Cambridge (MA) Monthly Meeting

I AM A FRIEND WHO GREW UP AS A QUAKER in a traditionally conservative yearly meeting believing that the witness and teachings of the historical Jesus were essential insights into God. They were to be taken into account in our testing of what is right and good. Jesus as teacher can be universally understood. Theology cannot. Jesus the man clearly had a close relationship with God but was not God. He would have been amazed at the claim.

I believe the early church needed the Christ story to show that it was different from Judaism, which could quote scripture to claim to know what God wanted. We do not need to show this. I feel that Jesus' basic teachings, as rightly understood, stand powerfully on their own without further authority derived from proclaiming him as divine.

Early Friends used scriptural language, and so Christ was their presence in the midst (as was the Inward Teacher, the Light). I am aware that many modern Friends say these metaphors "really" refer to Christ and that any other path to God is very suspect. My experience is that God is not off somewhere needing Jesus as "his" sole authorized access. I can't believe that the billions of people on this blue planet need to first become Christian in order to know the will of God.

I believe we Friends need to strengthen our spiritual life by keeping Jesus in mind—this is our heritage—but we look to God as guide, as Jesus himself did. The scriptures do speak to us today, and we get a (somewhat varied, even contradictory) picture of

Jesus from them, but I feel that what I experience as the Spirit is more real than a multifaceted Jesus whom I try to imagine.

There is Christ and there is Jesus. Paul, who preached Christ, almost never refers to the historical Jesus. If the pre-resurrection Jesus became irrelevant to Christianity, then why were the canon gospels preserved throughout Christianity to tell his story? Of course, even they draw on the Old Testament to make the case among Jews (at first the main constituency of the church) for Jesus as the preordained messiah.

Was Jesus a humble carpenter? A few miles from Nazareth was a cosmopolitan city which had been destroyed by the Romans, not long before Jesus was born, in terrible retribution for harboring revolt. This clearly had to be known to Jesus, who rejected the path of violent resistance to Rome (a path which fitted the Jews' messianic expectations, a Messiah with which Jesus did not want to be identified). After some years, the Jews cautiously began to rebuild the city, with no reaction from Rome.

Jesus's father was a *tehton*, a worker in wood, including building the wooden parts of houses. Joseph could actually have been a local contractor enjoying much business in the rebuilding of this city. Jesus was a rabbi ("Rabbi, tell us..."), presumably with access to the temple and Jewish thought in this nearby sophisticated city up to the age of 30 when he began his walking ministry.

I know an elderly Friend of Jewish background who has no problem with accepting

Jesus. She says, "He is my rabbi." This must be what he was to his followers until they began to have hopeful messianic ideas.

Jesus sent out an enlarged group of disciples by twos to preach—his faith was in a beloved community, not by-the-book individual holiness. The message they were to take was not that God was planning to sacrifice his only begotten son, etc., which later became the central message of Christianity, but that the Kingdom of God was even now in their midst. Jesus at least in one passage rejects the idea that he is Master ("You are my friends, for the servants know not what the master doeth"). He says, "Why do you call me good? Only God is good," and tells them to "glorify" God, not him. Despite John the storyteller, I feel we are to look where Jesus is pointing. He points to God—not to Jesus.

Was Jesus concerned for society? Yes. Must some of those today who witness to wrongs deliberately invite arrest and persecution? The gospel accounts are those of Jesus carefully avoiding arrest during three years of ministry. Since Judas was condemned for revealing where Jesus was, Jesus must not have been planning to be arrested then and there, either. Just a thought.

To me, Jesus was not gentle, meek, and mild as in the hymn; I see him as powerfully, even sharply, holding to the truth about God, which included compassion for all—"tough yet tender," as a Friend once said to me about an attitude he wanted to see in others (and himself).



Around the Yearly Meeting

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

• **Burlington (VT) Monthly Meeting (MM)** mourns the loss of their member, Thomas Bassett, a long time Friend, Vermont historian, musician, and active in quarterly and yearly meeting. Tom died on 1/24/2001. Friends and family gathered for his memorial meeting, 2/3/2001.

• **Acadia (ME) MM** is considering a plan to present a monetary Peace Award to a graduating high school student who exemplifies leadership and responsibility in conflict resolution among her or his peers, caring for all and promoting community. The Student Leadership Council would make the

choice. Also, the meeting was the setting for a 10/20/00 article in *The Wall Street Journal*, "The Listening Silence," by Roxana Robinson, an author, who grew up among Quakers and describes with a sure touch what it was like to settle again into a long-ago familiar atmosphere, and what the worship was like.

• **New London (CT) M M** seeks loan possibilities to move along on meeting house renovation plans. They write: "We're tiny, but we're here!"

• **Northampton (MA) MM** distributed a questionnaire to all individuals in the meeting to create a profile of concerns. It asked what their major concerns were, whether the meeting and others in the meeting share them, how they feel supported and by whom, and willingness to lead or help lead a discussion on any concern.

• **Limerock (CT) Worship Group**, a new group in northwest Connecticut, gathers for worship in the manner of Conservative Friends at 4pm on First Day afternoons, at the Trinity Episcopal Church, Route 112, Limerock (near Lakeville), CT. Contact Larry Black, 860/435-6430.

• **Providence (RI) MM** now holds meeting for worship at 10am. Each week, worship is followed by singing, or meeting for business, worship sharing, or other activities.

• **Keene (NH) Worship Group**, in a session with Kate Kerman, Clerk of Northwest Quarter, considered where they are at present in moving toward being a preparatory or monthly meeting. In a follow-up consideration, "We said we hope some day to be

more than a worship group, that we are a work in progress and still building, that it works better for us now to continue to act as a community of the whole, rotating clerking and tasks among us rather than having clerks and committees."

• **Falmouth (ME) Quarterly Meeting**, on 1/27/01, recorded Janice Gibson and Michael Wozich, co-pastors of **Windham (ME) MM** as having gifts in the ministry.

• **Mt. Toby (MA) MM** reported that Claudia Lefko, with a vision of child-to-child art exchange, and Kathleen Winkworth accompanying her for support, visited Iraq in 12/2000 in a Lifting the Sanctions delegation. The diverse group was headed by Ramsay Clerk. They were encouraged about the possibility of an art exchange, and found themselves visiting not schools, as they had planned, but drawn to the Almansour Children's hospital where they individually presented art supplies and hundreds of drawings made by U.S. school children.

• **Middlebury (VT) MM** minuted approval of the idea of developing a National Peace and Service Academy and a "Fifth Force" of the National Service System. A four-year National Peace and Service Academy would be located in Vermont, serving

the entire U.S., involving high school youth, similar to the National Guard but dedicated to peace and community building. They plan to take the idea to Northwest Quarterly Meeting.

• **South Starksboro (VT) MM** holds intergenerational discussion groups "for remarkable in-depth sharing of how we live as members of various communities—e.g., spiritual, work, etc." Topics have included: The purpose of "trials and tribulations" in our lives, and Spiritual dry periods—the absence of Presence.

• **Sandwich (MA) MM's** Committee for the Concerns of Native Peoples held a meeting on 2/24, open to all Cape Cod Quakers, to help people address fear and hostility in the Town of Mashpee regarding the Mashpee Wampanoags' request for Federal recognition.



East Sandwich (MA) Meetinghouse

In other Quaker news

Financial Controller hired

At its 2/24/2001 meeting, upon recommendation from the Finance Committee, NEYM Permanent Board hired Richard Church, a retired Certified Public Accountant and a member of Acadia (ME) MM, as a part-time Financial Controller. Richard will work with the Finance Committee to examine the Yearly Meeting's financial processes in order to simplify procedures and help us to find an appropriate balance between a volunteer treasurer and a paid bookkeeper.

Student Loans available

The Student Loan Committee offers loans to members or children of members of New England Yearly Meeting in order to pay for part of the expense of college. Students can

borrow \$2000 a year up to \$5000 total. Contact Allan Kehrman, Clerk, 66 Verndale Road, Newton, MA 02461 • Puckn@aol.com.

FGC and "Nurturing Quakerism"

New England Friends have responded generously to Friends General Conference's (FGC) first-ever capital campaign, "Nurturing Quakerism." NEYM FGC representatives are active in all aspects of FGC's work from publications to religious education and finance; their work brings them to monthly meetings around the country. As committee clerk Becky Phipps said of these visits, "We have the opportunity to worship with these Friends, listen deeply to their concerns, and respond out of our own leadings and gifts of ministry as we connect with the wider

Quaker community." Your representatives are grateful that New England Friends are supporting this work of renewal and commitment to the future of Quakerism. To learn more or to contribute, contact Michael Wajda, FGC Development Manager, 215/561-1700 • michaelw@fgcquaker.org.

Friend(s) in Residence opening

Friends Meeting at Cambridge seeks an individual or couple to be Friend(s) in Residence, to begin summer 2001. Applicants should be experienced Friends; stipend, benefits, apartment suitable for a couple. Please send resume and letter to Friend in Residence Search Committee, Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge, MA 02138-4816 • fmcsearch@aol.com.

In other Quaker news (continued)

Slideshow on racism available

American Dilemma: Reflections on Racism is a set of slides and text that can be used by your community to foster dialog and action about ending racism. The project is a work-in-progress. The originators of this program, the Friends for Racial Justice committee of Cambridge (MA) MM, have used it several times—for a Sunday morning adult education forum and at workshops held during NEYM. When ordering *American Dilemma*, you will be sent a set of slides in a Kodak Carousel tray, ready for projecting and one copy of the text that you can copy as many times as you need. Contact Skip Schiel, 9 Sacramento St., Cambridge, MA 02138 • 617/441-7756 • schiel@ccae.org.

Friends pastor sought

Smith Neck Friends Meeting, Dartmouth, MA is seeking a full or part-time pastor. The applicant should understand and be willing to preach Quaker testimonies. Gifts for working with the youth and community are important. Musical talent would be a plus. Smith Neck Meeting has a 300 year history in the Quaker tradition. Parsonage is provided. Contact Anne Lopoulos, 407 Bakerville Rd., Dartmouth, MA 02748 • www.snfm.org

Forum on the prophetic voice

Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA, will host a forum on *The Prophetic Voice: Reclaiming the Quaker Social Testimony* 5/4-6/2001. Activists, religious leaders, seekers are invited to explore how our deepest convictions can be witnessed to. See www.pendlehill.org or call 800/742-3150.

FWCC Northeast Gathering

The Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Northeast Section of the Americas holds its 2001 Spring Gathering 6/1 – 3/2001 at SUNY New Paltz, NY. The gathering theme is *The Spirit and the Arts: The Importance of the Process of Creativity in our Lives*. No Prior Arts Experience Necessary. All ages are invited. Contact Robert Baldrige, 212/388-7999 • robertartist@hotmail.com.

FGC 2001 Gathering

The Friends General Conference (FGC) 2001 Gathering will be held at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 6/30 – 7/7/2001. The theme is *Stillness: Surrounding, Sustaining, Strengthening*. The experience of divine stillness is

seen as central to the core of all activities this year. See www.fgcquaker.org/gathering for details. Scholarships and work grants are available. FGC, 1216 Arch St. 2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107 • 215/561-1700.

Friends women & men triennials

The United Society of Friends Women and Quaker Men International will hold their joint triennials 7/5-8/2001 at the Holiday Inn Eastgate in Cincinnati, OH. Friends missionaries from throughout the world will be leaders and speakers. Registration deadline is 5/14/2001. Contact Ruby Porter, 937/382-7071, 825 Williams Drive, Wilmington, OH 45177 • jaellis@erinet.com.

Bolivia Quaker study tour

The Quaker Study Tour, a program sponsored by the Quaker Bolivia Link, will visit with Friends in Bolivia 10/26 – 11/10/2001. Cost for the round trip Miami-Bolivia-Miami, including all hotels and transportation in Bolivia, but no meals is \$1,850. Funds are available to support the travel of young Friends who are under 30 and relatively fluent in Spanish. A deposit of \$100 will reserve a place, half the balance due in 5/1/2001, the other half 9/1/2001. Contact: Newton Garver, Garver1928@aol.com.

FWCC position to be open

The Associate Secretary job at the World Office of Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) in London will be open in 2002, service to start 6/1/02. Applications will close 10/31/01. Friends are asked to encourage suitably experienced Friends to apply. Contact Elizabeth Duke, FWCC, 4 Byng Place, London WC1E 7LE, United Kingdom • elizabethd@fwcc.quaker.org.

New FUM General Secretary & Director of North American Ministries

Retha McCutcheon was named General Secretary of Friends United Meeting (FUM), to fill the unexpired term of Johan Maurer. She has headed FUM's World Missions, which she will also oversee. Her knowledge of Friends in Kenya is seen as a great advantage in planning for FUM's next Triennial in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2002. The FUM General Board has also hired Ben Richmond as the Director of North American Ministries to coordinate work with yearly meetings in the United States and Canada.

Quaker Eco-Witness

A new national project of Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN), Quaker Eco-Witness (QEW), is working cooperatively with Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to inform Friends on current policy issues from an ecological and faith perspective. Contact Quaker Eco-Witness, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401 • qew@springmail.com.

ESR offers off-campus courses

ESR Access is a new program of the Earlham School of Religion (ESR) with four extension sites where Master of Divinity/Master of Ministry degree courses will be given at the same time in California, Iowa, North Carolina and in New England at Hartford (CT) MM. ESR Access offers a program of study that combines on-line internet course work with short-term intensive study on the ESR campus. Contact Gail Bingham, 800/432-1377 • binghga@earlham.edu

Survey of nontheistic Quakers

Interested Friends are asked to participate in a survey of members and attenders who consider themselves only minimally, if at all, dependent on belief in the supernatural for their religious authority. The survey should take no more than an hour's time, and aims to understand such people's religious lives and their relationship to their Meetings, and Quakerism in general. David Rush, of Cambridge (MA) MM has been awarded the Eva Koch Fellowship by Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre (UK) to pursue this project. Contact David Rush, 68 Foster Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 • 617/547-8467 • rushd@mediaone.net.

A call for Quaker women activists

Linda Willard, author of *Who? What? When? Where? Quaker Trivia*, is interested in writing a new book about Quaker women and their efforts for peace and justice. Just as Elizabeth Fry, Lucretia Mott, and other Quaker women were very active in their day, Linda would like to discover the stories of today's Quaker women who are also working to improve the situations of others. If you would like to share your story, or share the story of someone you know, contact Linda Willard, 2520 Willard Road, High Point, NC 27265 • lwillard@netmcr.com.

Moses Brown School: Fulfilling its commitment as a Friends School

Betsy Zimmerman, Providence (RI) Monthly Meeting & Moses Brown School Quaker Coordinator

AS IT ENTERS ITS THIRD CENTURY, Moses Brown School exists to inspire students to reach their fullest intellectual and spiritual potential. We engage students in a rich academic curriculum, a broad offering of arts and athletics, and a daily life strongly rooted in the Quaker values of cooperation and community service.

We affirm the Quaker belief that there is a divine presence in each person which influences our decision making, leads us to the truths we seek, and commands our highest respect.

We consider the virtues of simplicity, integrity, group wisdom, and respect for differences paramount to helping students of all faiths and backgrounds discover their mission in the world.

—Mission Statement of Moses Brown School

UNDER THE DIRECTION of the school administration and with the support of the Religious Life Committee of the Board of Overseers, Moses Brown School has continued to strengthen its work as a Friends school. The Head of School, Joanne Hoffman, created the position of Quaker Coordinator two years ago to assist all members of the school community (administrators, faculty, students and their families) in embracing Friends educational philosophy through the daily learning experiences at the school.

In addition to providing an exemplary academic program, Moses Brown School is equally committed to the development of the spiritual life of students and faculty. Weekly meeting for worship is central to this experience. Students have an opportunity to develop a deeper awareness of their own spiritual being and learn to be comfortable with periods of silence in classroom meetings and discussions as well as community gatherings. Students regularly speak of the importance of the practice of silent worship and reflection in their educational experience at the school.

There are active service learning programs in all three divisions of the school. Lower school students work with area organizations to provide food and clothing to families in need near the school. Middle and Upper school students are required to work on site at Amos House, Southside Community Land Trust, Camp Street Ministries, Mt. Hope Learning Center, Habitat for Humanity, and in nearby Providence Public Schools in various needed capacities. Outreach efforts also have included projects like assembling and sending relief kits to Kosovo refugee camps, rebuilding churches in the South, and fund raising for victims of disasters. Through service learning, students demonstrate social responsibility while they learn of its importance.

A special orientation about Friends history and educational philosophy is held at the beginning of every school year for new families and faculty.

If you would like to know more about the Moses Brown School, contact Betsy Zimmerman, the Quaker Coordinator, at bzimmerman@mosesbrown.org, Claude Anderson, the Director of Admissions, at canderson@mosesbrown.org, visit the school's web site at www.mosesbrown.org, or write to Moses Brown School, 250 Lloyd Ave., Providence, RI 02906 • 401/831-7350.



Photo: David O'Conner



Photo: David O'Conner

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



**New
Treasurer**

Please send **ALL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS** to the Yearly Meeting **DIRECTLY** to the Treasurer, Ken Hoffman,
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THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

April 2001

- 6–8 JYM 6th Graders – Storrs, CT
- 7 Salem QM Ministry & Counsel – Wellesley, MA
- 21 Committee Day – West Falmouth, MA
- 22 RI-Smithfield QM – Westerly, RI
- 22 Salem QM – Framingham, MA
- 27–29 Young Friends Retreat – Hartford, CT
- 28 *Practice of Clerking* Workshop – Burlington, VT
- 28 Falmouth QM – Durham, ME
- 28 Sandwich QM – West Falmouth, MA
- 29 Dover QM – Gonic, NH

May 2001

- 4–6 Emerging Ministries Conference – Woolman Hill, MA
- 5 Vassalboro QM – Cobscook, ME
- 6 CT Valley QM – Mt Toby, MA
- 6 United Society of Friends Women – Durham, ME
- 11–13 Elementary Retreat – Woolman Hill, MA
- 11–13 Young Friends Senior Retreat – Location, TBA
- 12 Permanent Board – Location, TBA
- 18–20 Jr. High Retreat – Friends China Camp, ME
- 19 Ministry & Counsel – Portland, ME

June 2001

- 1–3 FWCC NE Regional Gathering *The Spirit and the Arts* – SUNY New Paltz, NY, [see p. 6]

- 2–3 Northwest QM – at Farm & Wilderness
- 9 Committee Day – Portland, ME
- 15–18 Friends United Mtg General Board – Powell House, NY
- 30–7/7 FGC Gathering, *Stillness: Surrounding, Sustaining, Strengthening*– Blacksburg, VA

July 2001

- 5–8 USFWI & Quaker Men Int'l. – Cincinnati, OH [see p. 6]
- 15 RI-Smithfield QM – Worcester, MA
- 28 Falmouth QM – Location, TBA
- 28 Sandwich QM – Allen's Neck, MA
- 29 Dover QM – Pittsfield, NH

August 2001

- 4–9 YM Sessions – Bryant College, Smithfield, RI
- Theme:** *Coming 'round right: Our witness to these times*
- Keynote:** Stan Thornburg, Northwest YM
- Bible Half Hour:** Marian Baker, Weare (NH) MM

September 2001

- 7–9 Vassalboro QM – Friends China Camp
- 8–9 Northwest QM – at Farm & Wilderness, VT
- 15 Ministry & Counsel – Location, TBA
- 22 Sessions Committee – Location, TBA
- 29 Committee Day – Location TBA
- 30 Dover QM – Concord, NH