

The practice of recording gifts in the ministry

A report from a subcommittee of Vassalboro (ME) Quarterly Meeting Ministry and Counsel

OUR SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEWED FRIENDS WRITINGS on the subject, contacted other quarterly meetings and Friends who have been recorded as having gifts in the ministry for their input, and met twice for lengthy discussion of the topic. The committee felt that the process for recording and rescinding the recording of an individual as outlined in *Faith and Practice* (pp. 246-7) is clearly enough stated that we do not need to suggest any additions. While we are not bound by it, we should bear in mind that we are accountable to New England Yearly Meeting if we should choose to differ from it. We feel it important to bear in mind that the guidelines in *Faith and Practice* are merely a skeletal structure for us to flesh out, and that the topic, especially as it relates to nurturing the spiritual lives of members and leadership within the Religious Society of Friends, is worthy of the consideration of each meeting.

Friends observed that there has been a reticence to continue the practice in many areas, including our own Quarter in recent times. Most of those recorded have been associated with pastoral meetings, and some of this may be due to misconceptions about the need for a Friends pastor to be recorded. There is no need for this to be done for an individual serving in this capacity in the state of Maine. The recognition of him or her by a meeting as their pastor, allows this person to perform all the functions of a pastor in the wider community including officiating at weddings. Friends who do not serve in this role, but who feel called to minister in settings which require some official recognition by their religious community, may find that the exercise of their gifts in the wider community is easier if they are recorded as ministers by the Religious Society of Friends. There is, however, a way for meetings to provide affirmation of a member's leading to serve in a particular ministry outside the Religious Society of Friends, by providing that Friend with a Minute of Service which expresses the meeting's support and confidence that the person demonstrates the gifts necessary for him or her to pursue that ministry. This may be limited in duration if this is appropriate to the situation.

The recording of gifts in the ministry is different from this utilitarian need. As *Faith and Practice* says, it is something which may be done when a member has consistently spoken to the edification and spiritual help of the Meeting. Those

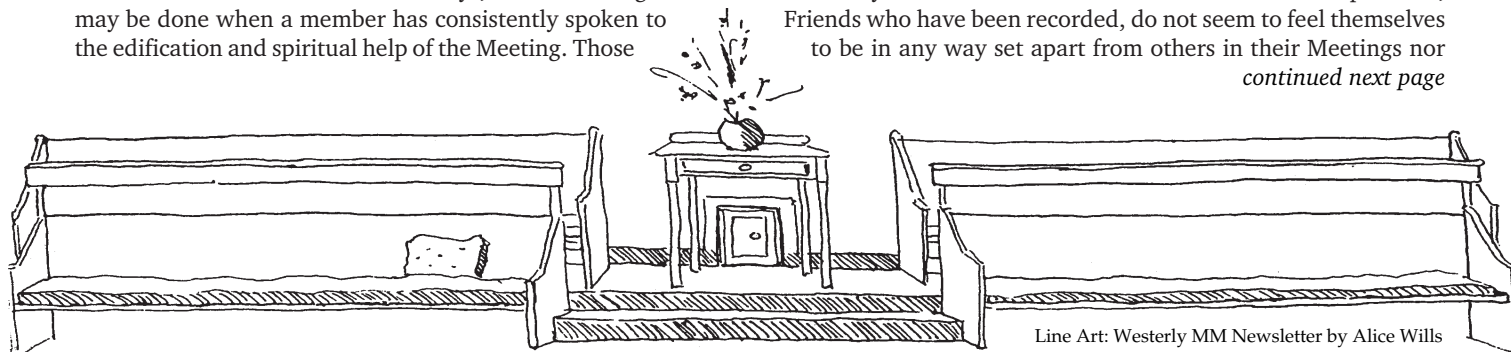
of us who presently feel that it is a useful thing to do, see it as a possible way of encouraging ministry and calling forth spiritual leadership; a way of encouraging those whose passion is for ministry and whose ministry encourages others to move ever deeper in the way of seeking to grow in knowledge of the Light. This quickening and enlivening is crucial to the health of any spiritual community. We believe that with care and oversight, it can be a useful tool and that by nurturing and supporting individuals demonstrating qualities of spiritual leadership within the Religious Society of Friends, we will strengthen it as a religious body. It is also a way of supporting and affirming the individuals recorded, as representatives of Quakerism outside the Society.

While the gift is there, whether we officially record it or not, the recognition of it, through recording, should imply that we are responsible to this individual and they to us for the exercise of their gift. It is a mutual obligation for support and accountability and we feel that we could do much more in faithfully supporting those recorded, maintaining contact with them, celebrating the ways in which they are being faithful to their gift, holding them to their responsibility to check their leadings with the larger group, and maintaining a tender care of them should they seem to be moving in directions we find troubling or inappropriate.

Those of us who feel that it may no longer be a useful or appropriate practice in the Society of Friends fear that it undermines the importance of every individual realizing his or her responsibility for ministry. We also feel that it can be perceived as implying that some have the gift and some don't rather than remembering that all are gifted at times. While recognizing the importance of encouraging spiritual and organizational leadership, some of us do not see recording as a means to that end. We have a sense that the practice creates a kind of Quaker elite which is not helpful and that it is not appropriate to single out one particular kind of ministry to recognize rather than celebrating the gifts that each member brings to their meeting. Maybe the encouragement of gifts of all kinds is something we could be more intentional about rather than singling out this particular gift for recognition.

It may be useful to note that in the committee's experience, Friends who have been recorded, do not seem to feel themselves to be in any way set apart from others in their Meetings nor

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Line Art: Westerly MM Newsletter by Alice Wills

Recording Gifts in the Ministry

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do they have a sense of some kind of status afforded by it. It may be that the problem of viewing them as an elite group lies more in the beholder than the beheld, that it lies in a misconception that the act of recording is an honoring of the person and bestowing a title upon them. As Thomas Hancock says in his writings on the subject, the recording of gifts in the ministry is a recording of the gift not a recording of the person. The spiritual gift rather than the human vessel was recognized, and the monthly meeting recorded its recognition. This gift, with the concurrence of Friends, is simply acknowledged to exist by recording the Friend as a minister. The latter has been actually made a minister by the Lord, and not by men. Perhaps it is unhelpful to refer to Friends through whom this gift is being expressed as “recorded ministers,” even though this seems like a convenient shorthand. It may give rise to the feeling that it is a title. Are there ways we could make this clearer?

Other writings which struck us as particularly helpful and provocative in our discussion and understanding of ministry in the Religious Society of Friends, were the following extracts from the writings of D. Elton Trueblood: “This is a ministry which has nothing to do with status or honor and in which the entire function is a loving, mod-

est, concern for the nourishment of the Divine Seed in each human heart.” He also states, in relation to the idea that there is a need for a particular ministry in addition to the general ministry of all members: “The fact is that people cannot have equal responsibility because they do not have equal concern.”

While the members of the committee differed widely in their opinions as to the usefulness and appropriateness of the practice of recording gifts in the ministry, we were in agreement that the nurturing of each other’s gifts and the nurturing of leadership within the Quarter and its constituent meetings, is of great importance. Whatever conclusion Friends come to about the continuance of the practice and how we as a Quarter might want to be more faithful in nurturing leadership, we would hope that it would be based on providing the most encouragement possible to all, rather than on fear of someone somehow abusing the practice, or in reaction to particular situations which are outside the norm. The committee was in agreement that the whole question of whether to record or not to record gifts in the ministry is of secondary importance to the question of how we faithfully nurture leadership of all kinds in our midst and would encourage meetings to consider how they can do this.

An historical note on recording gifts in the ministry

Brian Drayton, Weare (NH) Monthly Meeting

FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE QUAKER MOVEMENT, Friends have assumed that, while anyone may be called to ministry, some seem to be called, appropriately and faithfully, to more responsibility or concern for the work than others. The assumption is that Christ is the head of the Church, and pours out the various gifts that the community needs. These gifts (tasks, responsibilities, abilities) come for longer or shorter periods of time, and vary in many other characteristics as well. Robert Barclay’s (circa 1670) articulation of this, as it applies to vocal ministry, is retained in some books of *Faith and Practice*:

We do believe and affirm that some are more particularly called to do the work of the ministry, and therefore are fitted by the Lord for that purpose; whose work is more constantly and particularly to instruct, exhort, admonish, oversee, and watch over their brethren; and that... there is something more incumbent upon them in that respect than upon every common believer.” (*Apology*, Prop 10 §10)

In the early days of the movement, Friends who felt the call to ministry were in touch with each other on a local, regional, and national level, by frequent meetings and in correspondence. They felt strongly their fellowship, their special kinship, as a result of their shared calling, though in each life the calling looked different.

During the growth of the meeting structure

By the 1670s, there was a regular meeting in London of all public Friends who happened to be in town. They met for mutual support, and to work out who would go to which meetings in the coming week, so that “ministers should not go about in heaps.” There was also discussion of places that might need special attention or support. Since this meeting was held on Second-Day (Monday), it was always called the Second-Day Morning Meeting (or Morning Meeting, for short), and it continued until the early part of this century. (After

Fox’s death, it also served as a way-station for Friends correspondence, and as the censor of Friends publications in London Yearly Meeting, though it had no official status as part of the Yearly Meeting—it was not the same as the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, for example.)

The way you were accepted as a member of the Morning Meeting was to sign in a big book on Second Day morning, as you came to attend. It happened in 1734 that a Friend signed in, who some felt was not in unity with Friends, and his right to attend the meeting was challenged. After lengthy wrangling, London Yearly Meeting ruled that the Second-Day Morning Meeting could not exclude anyone who came with a letter from their monthly meeting attesting to the fact that this Friend was a minister, or “public Friend” in good standing there. Hence arose the custom of the monthly meeting minuting its recognition of sustained gifts in the ministry.

No one has yet traced in detail the growth of the more formalized system that we maintain in our discipline; as with other parts of meeting structure, it grew in various places at various times, though, by the time of John Woolman, being “approved as a Gospel Minister” implied the process of observation, careful discernment, and approval that we associate with the recording process. After the institution of the formal process of recording, which spread rather quickly on both sides of the Atlantic, the procedure very soon assumed the shape we find described in our Book of Discipline (*Faith & Practice*). The monthly meeting, either spontaneously, or more often at the request of the Meeting of Ministers and Elders, recommended that a Friend who appeared to have received a sustained gift in the ministry be admitted to the Preparative and Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders. With some consideration by ministers and elders, the gift was noted in the minutes. The recorded Friend would also become a member of the system of parallel meetings of minis-

ters and elders, at the levels of monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. There was not a closed membership to the meeting of ministers and elders. There might well be more than one minister in a meeting (better if there was), or none.

The Separations of the early 1800s

By the latter half of the 18th century, the custom had settled that Elders (Friends of discernment who did not minister) met regularly with ministers. In several ways, as Friends let theology color their discernment, during the Hicksite/Orthodox Separation (1827-28) and the Gurney/Wilbur Separation (1845-58), the recognition of ministers was a focal point for some of the schismatic activities of this era. Ministers who were considered doctrinally unsound were sometimes hushed (a famous case from the revival period in the 1880s is that of Joel Bean of Iowa Yearly Meeting). Meetings divided over whether to accept a traveling minute or not, depending on its source and the theological stripe of its bearer. In some meetings, members who were considered to be unsound, and therefore were for years unacknowledged, quickly were recorded when they became part of separated meetings of more united sentiment. Such ministers, if their history was known, were sometimes considered a little suspect in other branches of Friends. The Wilburite outcry against Joseph John Gurney used as a weapon the fact (viciously and gleefully leaked by British traditionalists) that Gurney's travel minute to the United States was not fully united with by London Yearly Meeting's Ministers and Elders. Howard Brinton recounts how so orthodox a British Friend as Benjamin Seebohm was denied the opportunity to appoint meetings in certain quarters of the orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meeting where "Gurneyism" was considered innovative apostasy, and "Wilburism" held sway.

Some meetings discontinue the practice

Friends in the Hicksite yearly meetings, and in London Yearly Meeting, were confronting several difficult facts about the Religious Society of Friends. In the first place, it was shrinking numerically, even in yearly meetings where the excesses of disownment for scruples had been curbed. In the second place, the members were much less in unity about some of the traditional defining peculiarities of Friends, in dress and address, and they were finding new openings in the educational and political establishments. Intellectual movements also were challenging the long-held beliefs and modes of expression among Friends. In sum, it was getting harder to say with any degree of clarity just what it was to be a Friend.

These Friends assumed the unprogrammed form of worship, and the "free ministry." The increase in education, social action, and general mixing with the world was working important changes on the nature of religious expectations, and therefore on the ministry in meeting, and on the idea of the ministerial vocation. Increasingly, the ministry in meeting was shared by very many, the acceptable of whom were sometimes referred to in the literature of the time as "unrecorded ministers." More and more, the discussion of spoken ministry turned on what happened in regular meetings for worship, and from that narrowed point of view, the distinction between recorded and unrecorded (never clear in any case) was hard to define, and therefore hard to say anything useful about. Some Friends came to believe that the vocation to the ministry of the Word did not in fact exist. The long and the short of all this was that the practice in most places in Hicksite and London Quakerdom was disappearing fast, except where tradition was rather strong. Although lively debate occurred in publications such as the Friends Quarterly Examiner, the focus in contemporary discussions of ministry was on preparation of individuals, since each has some share, and may be called on at any time, to an act or episode of ministry. Further, the ministry in the meeting for worship was seen as only one of many ministries urgently needed and yearned for in the sometimes appalling modern world.

Advice to ministers

FRIENDS WHO HAVE BEEN SEEN to have this burden and gift laid on them must take care that their life is (in increasing degree) so ordered as to carry this responsibility seriously. It should make a high claim on one's life. We cannot prescribe the details, but we can describe the overall pattern that we encourage ministers to bear in mind as a guide and inspiration. Since ministers are called, as way opens, to articulate and nourish the spiritual life among us with the instrument of language, they must see as their prime duty to grow in the depth of their practice of Friends way of life—living experimentally with the Spirit on a daily basis. The minister's life should make room for consistent practice of prayer and scriptural study. A minister need not be a scholar, but should strive for a comprehensive and balanced familiarity with the main outlines of Friends history and traditions, as well as of current meeting life. A long-term acquaintance with the writings of the early Friends, and of some of the journals of ministers in all periods of Friends history, has often been found to be of help.

The minister's life must include time for reflection, so that the exercise of the gift is appropriate. The minister must learn discernment about when to speak and when not to, when to accept invitations to teach or lead, and when to open this opportunity to another. This gift is a gift of service which we hope will appear widely among us, and part of the minister's calling is to pray and seek for its appearance in others.

The minister should not see this work as taking place in isolation. It is properly contextualized in the demands of daily work and family life, and of the work and life of the meeting. Further, the minister should find opportunities, both unexpected and regular, to worship with and talk with others in the ministry, not necessarily about the ministry itself, but out of each other's life, and the fellowship of carrying a shared concern on behalf of the meeting's life.

Ministers are reminded that the use of words is to bring others to the end of words, and that the goal always is to gather Friends or any other group into a deeper sense of the Presence of God among us, and into a realistic, dedicated, and joyful response to that Presence in the moment, and over time...

—Brian Drayton

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Practices in other Yearly Meetings

THE RECORDING PROCESS of Western YM, which is part of Friends United Meeting (FUM), is typical for both FUM yearly meetings with predominantly pastoral meetings and Evangelical Friends International (EFI) yearly meetings. There are clearly defined steps. First, the gift is recognized by the monthly meeting committee on Christian Ministries and Evangelism. The candidate's character, knowledge of scripture, and Friends testimonies are carefully examined, and a recommendation is sent to the monthly meeting. If it concurs, a minute is sent to the YM Board of Christian Ministries and Evangelism, which, after careful consideration, refers to the YM Committee for the Training and Recording of Ministers. The candidate is put under the care of this committee and is required to take a prescribed course of study taking up to three years. The name is then sent to the yearly meeting for recording as a minister, recorded also in the monthly meeting minute book.

In Iowa YM (FUM) the local Ministry and Counsel requires the written answer to ten questions for ministers, including belief that it is Jesus Christ who qualifies one as a minister of the gospel, the Bible is given by divine inspiration, resurrection of all, and eternal punishment of the wicked, and blessedness of the righteous. Eventually, elders prepare a recommendation asking that he/she be recorded as a minister of the Gospel. If approved, the recommendation goes to the YM on Ministry and Counsel. It appoints a committee to carry out training and recording. All candidates are expected to complete studies on the YM Discipline, Christian doctrines, church history, Biblical studies, the history and doctrines of Friends, and Christianity and social concerns.

North Carolina YM's (Conservative) recognition begins with the monthly meeting. "If it feels that a true gift for vocal ministry has been bestowed," it informs the Quarterly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight. If they approve, the matter goes back to the entire monthly meeting for approval. If approved, the meeting so records, and sends a report in writing to the next yearly meeting sessions.

Philadelphia YM [Friends General Conference (FGC)] "no longer follows a general practice of granting formal recognition as 'recorded ministers' to those with special gifts in the ministry." However, some meetings have continued its observance "as a nurturing support to those individuals with unusual gifts in the ministry" although "a monthly meeting may, upon the advice of its Committee on Worship and Ministry, record as ministers those members who are recognized as having a clear leading to vocal ministry and prayer or counseling of individuals. This recognition is not one of status or privilege and should be reviewed periodically. It is an affirmation based on loving trust."

In 1924 London Yearly Meeting discontinued the practice of recording ministers, after some decades in which it was done more and more rarely. The reasons were largely those mentioned in the paragraph above, and also included the fact that some Friends kept the designation of recorded minister after their gifts had, as far as could be seen, been withdrawn, or their testimony had lost its value for other reasons. However, twenty years after the cessation, T.H. Harvey concluded in a report to the London Yearly Meeting that meetings had largely not taken up the challenge to support and nurture the ministry adequately, and to stimulate and sustain the (unrecorded) ministers. No institution had arisen to replace the older system of individual consecration under the guidance of the meeting.

The Pastoral System

During the 1880s, in the midwest of the USA and then elsewhere, the practice arose of inviting recorded ministers to come to a meeting for some period of time. The descriptions of this trend, generally and stereotypically, mention how many new "converts" to Friends there were in the revivals of the time (the terminology is different from that of earlier generations of Friends), and how these unseasoned new members looked to the traveling evangelists for guidance. Ministers at first were invited for a short time to help settle a meeting, and these transactions took on more and more the nature of "callings" to pastorates, influenced by the value of the practice in other Protestant denominations (as such Friends felt they were). This differed from the Friends practice of ministry before, but not quite as usually described.

Elton Trueblood and others have pointed out that in very many meetings, one or a few Friends who were able and called might bear the burden of ministry (there was no distinction between "spoken ministry" and "pastoral ministry" as these terms are used in unprogrammed Friends circles). Trueblood points to this as an antecedent of the system of settled pastors, and therefore as a connector between the successive generations of Quakerism. This is somewhat inaccurate. The difference lies in the fact that, traditionally, ministers went (or stayed) *as called by God*, with the concurrence of their meeting. In the "new Quakerism" of the late 19th century, the practice grew in such a way that *local meetings called for individuals*. The meetings and the individuals involved are of course bound to seek whether there is any stop in the way of the new arrangement, but I feel this to be different than a Friend feeling drawn to visit a meeting, and showing up there, proceeding as way opened, and then returning home, and in the process presenting the Friends visited with an unanticipated opportunity. Others may not see a difference in kind, but only degree.

Current Practices

In some contrast (and reaction) to this, and also as an extension of the increasing "modernizing" trend among Hicksite Friends, most Hicksite meetings after the rise of Friends General Conference dispensed with the practice of recording altogether, and the corporate care for the ministry rested with Meetings or Committees of Ministry and Counsel, Ministry and Oversight, Worship and Ministry, etc. This was also the norm among the independent meetings springing up across the country, though some (even now) mention that, as in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, a monthly meeting is free to record ministers.

In many Friends United Meeting and Evangelical Friends International yearly meetings, recording has come much more under the care of the Yearly Meeting. Although the monthly meeting is the organ of initial discernment and exercise of the gift, the yearly meetings have well-defined procedures for training, educating, and otherwise equipping ministers. Some have widened the definition of recordable ministry somewhat (the discipline of Northwest Yearly Meeting has a very lucid discussion of ministerial functions); and the final stage of recording is at yearly meeting sessions themselves.

In the united yearly meetings (those with affiliation to both Friends United Meeting and Friends General Conference, as is the case with NEYM), the prac-

tice has tended to survive (if at all) in areas where there were pastoral meetings historically. Meetings which were Hicksite or sprang up as unaffiliated meetings generally do not record ministers, and some have decided that they will not, on principle.

In the Conservative and Wilburite bodies, the practice survived, but has been applied spottily, undergoing near-deaths and rebirths as conditions have changed. The renewal of the recorded ministry in Ohio Yearly Meeting in the past twenty years, for example, has been a significant part of the renewal in that yearly meeting. In the minutes of the Wilburite New England Yearly Meeting of Friends (which united with the orthodox "Yearly Meeting of Friends in New England" and other Friends bodies in 1945 to form the present day New England Yearly Meeting of Friends), I have found no notice of a Friend's being recorded a minister in the last two or three decades of the yearly meeting's existence, though "prerecorded" ministers certainly were active and valued among them.

NEYM and recording of gifts in the ministry

It is not perhaps useful to multiply examples of the variations now extant among the yearly meetings; there is variety enough among our own numbers in New England. The book of discipline, our *Faith and Practice*, since the reunification of the Yearly Meeting in 1945, has maintained the procedure for recording ministers at every revision. But in this, as in some other issues, individual meetings have felt the need to specify their attitude. At least two monthly meetings have minuted their sense that they should not record ministers, though they do not obstruct ministers recorded elsewhere from maintaining that status upon transferring membership. There has been a continuing concern that recording of ministers is in contradiction with our sense of the "universal ministry." There has also been a vague association in the minds of some between recorded ministers and pastors, natural enough in those parts of New England where the older system was replaced in the last century. Some meet-

ings (mostly pastoral, but not exclusively) have maintained the practice. Meanwhile, the structure and spirituality within which recording once found its context has been weakened.

In a way, we have in many meetings returned to a situation which has some parallels with the first few years of the Quaker movement, when ministers arose in response to an inward call, and the meeting structure had rather little weight in the matter. Outward guidance was performed by other ministers who had some experience of the demands and dangers of the vocation. The existence of people with such a vocation was accepted as a matter of course, in harmony with the Biblical descriptions of the early church and the prophetic offices.

We differ from this, of course, in many respects, some of which at least follow naturally from the many differences between 17th and 21st century Quakerism. Some have seen a problem in the numbers of Friends trained as pastoral counselors, or in other church-related helping professions, where some kind of approbation from the faith community is required. It is hard to understand the role of the call, the meeting, the job, and other variables in a situation such as that. This is especially so, since most meetings are no more involved in supporting these Friends than they are with any other concerned Friends struggling to integrate a concern with their prayer life and their meeting.

The process of recording was [1] consistent with our theology, and [2] addressed real needs for the care of Friends carrying a long-term concern for the ministry of the Word. The discussion of recording must continue among us in such a way that we do not just reach some conclusions about an old custom. Instead, we should take creative steps that build both on our current understanding and on three centuries of Quaker practice—practice in a very specific spiritual path with its own boundaries and its own kinds of truth. So we can renew Gospel Order, which in the end is discovered, not "created" by us.

Since we are all ministers, why record the gifts of any?

Marcianna Caplis, Westerly (RI) Monthly Meeting

WESTERLY FRIENDS HAVE BEEN SEEKING CLARITY on recording gifts in ministry. We have distributed and read New York Yearly Meeting's pamphlet on the topic, and invited the Field Secretary of New England Yearly Meeting to join us for an information session. We've discussed it in Ministry and Counsel and at Quarterly Meeting with Friends from Providence, Smithfield, and Worcester Meetings. The subject has been under examination and discussion in Westerly since fall 1999. We have not achieved clarity, and while we understand the process, many of us fail to understand the reason.

I am one such Friend. While some Westerly Friends seem to be comfortable, I may be representative of the Friends in the Meeting who are uneasy with the practice of recording gifts in ministry. My question is, "Why?" I have heard thoughtful and reasonable responses, but none has moved the stop in my mind. Why should this practice continue or be actively pursued in New England Yearly Meeting? Both Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and London Yearly Meeting have

discontinued recording of ministers, and did so early in the 20th century. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* states that "the formal recording of ministers and elders was largely discontinued, first in London and then in Philadelphia, as a practice that had lost its usefulness." I question what we will find useful in recording ministers now.

There is much in Quakerism to cherish. There is such wisdom in *Faith and Practice* that I am often awed by it. Not only are the words of the Advices and Queries themselves profound, but the very format is brilliant. These are not dogma, not commandments, but thoughtful questions and pieces of advice, which provide guidance and support but do not demand anything, particularly blind obedience. Quakerism trusts. It trusts that people develop most surely spiritually when led to seek for themselves. The Religious Society of Friends leads us to be mindful of our responsibilities for our spiritual growth, the care and feeding of the soul, if you will. We are also guided to make the connection between our spiritual life and

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our actions in the world – all by a short series of tenderly worded questions and carefully thought-out advice.

It has been said that Friends did away with the clergy, but perhaps it is more accurate to say that Friends did away with the laity. Each Friend is responsible for ministry. No Friend speaks as the voice of Quakerism, yet all Friends speak as Quakers. I am concerned that the act of identifying some Friends as gifted in ministry is unwise in two obvious ways. Recording some individuals as gifted in ministry implies a caste among Friends — those whose ministry is worth recording and those whose is not. Equally damaging is the potential for those Friends not recorded to leave their spiritual work to those Friends singled out as recorded ministers. Why would we want to create and memorialize value differences among Friends?

And what of the process of recording ministers? Do we want to be in the business of passing judgment on Friends—of assessing the gift and deciding whether it merits recording? To what end? A Friend gifted in ministry is unmistakable. We have all recognized the ministry that emanates from a Friend's strong and clear Inner Light. Such a gift is neither enhanced by being recorded, nor diminished by not being recorded. Can we not accept a gift from God spontaneously and gratefully? Do we need to categorize it? I fear that we, as a yearly meeting, may well diminish ourselves by immersion into naming, judging and singling out.

Let us cherish our gifted Friends and recognize the Divine Light that reveals itself in their ministry, remembering that revelation is continuous and unlimited. Let us not limit ourselves.

“The Piper at the Gates of Dawn”—Thoughts on being a recorded minister in the Religious Society of Friends

Alice Hildebrand, Eggmoggin Reach (ME) Monthly Meeting

ONE OF MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES IS OF PLAYING “CHURCH” in my backyard at the edge of the woods with my stuffed animals — inspired by my mother’s reading to me the chapter in *Wind in the Willows* which is the title of this piece. A baby otter has been lost overnight; the anxious searchers find him at dawn, asleep peacefully at the feet of their god, Pan. The animals fall on their knees, overwhelmed by the majesty and the tenderness of the god before them. The sun rises, and the vision is gone; the baby otter awakens and runs towards the searchers. They turn to each other, knowing that Something has just happened but already not sure what it was. For me, a shy little girl more comfortable with animals than with people, this vision both of God’s care and of God’s mystery was somehow more clear than the Bible stories I had learned. It didn’t matter that the god was Pan. I knew instinctively that the name wasn’t important. Seeking to know, to relate to, both that loving, intimate God, and the incomprehensible, “wholly other” God, and to share that knowledge and that search with others has been the defining passion of my life.

I became a Quaker in 1979, during a time of much personal tumult, including recovery from substance abuse. The sober alcoholics that I met were people with the most vivid spiritual lives I had ever experienced—they knew that God’s grace was saving them on a daily basis. There was nothing theoretical about it. The clarity that began to emerge in me was that the “interest” (all I was willing to call it) I had in going to Seminary could possibly be what was meant by “call.” I went to Seminary in 1984, clarifying my Quakerism and that sense of call against a backdrop of other denominations.

After Seminary, one of my challenges was how to earn a living and still have the time to live into the meaning of that call. I worked part-time for Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, developing with Molly Duplisea an intergenerational spiritual education program, and part-time for a local Congregational Church, mostly doing religious education. In 1991, I spent a year as a chaplain in the Hartford Hospital Clinical Pastoral Education program. After I returned to Eggmoggin Reach Monthly Meeting in 1992, the Meeting felt led

to begin the process of recording.

The process of being recorded, the questions asked of me by myself and others, was very nurturing, and the fact of being recorded is also nurturing. Being recorded holds me accountable to express whatever measure of light I have been given, and to a cloud of witnesses, both present and historical. It does not mean that at any given time I have a greater ability to articulate the prompting of the Spirit than someone else does; for the first two years after my recording I almost never felt led to speak in Meeting for Worship. It is an acknowledgment of the passion that I describe above, and of the time and hard work I have put into the living out of that passion.

At present I work in two non-Quaker settings: as a Hospice chaplain, and as “parish assistant” at a local Congregational Church, doing education and outreach. I am continually reminded of how Quaker my own faith and practice are, and I think that I bring the strength of that with me as an offering to others. Am I serving the Society of Friends in this work? I don’t know. I’m not trying to win converts. Maybe, if I’m a good example of a Quaker, that serves the Society of Friends. I think it is vital both to Quakers and to ecumenical dialog that we not be a people turned inward in our ministry; we need to have Quaker chaplains in jails and hospitals, Quakers at ecumenical prayer breakfasts, Quakers speaking and teaching as boldly as they once did. We are called by God in different ways and to different activities; recording gifts in ministry is part of that.

The joy of my present work life is that, whether it’s in Hospice or at the Congregational Church, the point of the conversation(s) is the God stuff. My life in the Society of Friends is also a joy, as it’s sometimes important to be with people who use the same language for their spiritual understanding that I use. But a sectarian conversation can be limiting. That’s why I like working in ecumenical settings. If it’s the real stuff, it doesn’t matter to my faith life how it’s expressed, what the language is, what the icons are, how silent it is. I seek these places, these relationships, and wherever I can—whether in secular or spiritual settings—I bring this theme, this reality with me, in some form.

Observations on ministry, leadership, and the recording of gifts

Allen Myers, Eggemoggin Reach (ME) Monthly Meeting

WHEN WE SPEAK OF THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP in the Religious Society of Friends, in NEYM at least, we seem focussed on the development of people who will do the work of the yearly (quarterly, monthly) meeting as clerks or other functionaries. What seems lacking, however, is leadership in ministry: who is articulating the message, the good news, the gospel? Without a living message of God's presence, the Society of Friends is but an empty shell, hollow at its center—a state which will soon undermine Friends practices of all kinds. It may be that we have not given enough thought and prayer to how leadership in the Society of Friends might differ from secular models of effectiveness. One senses in the reports of those who have visited Cuban Friends a longing for the kind of leadership which leads us into an active relationship with God (and therefore, with each other).

One argument advanced against recording is that it confers some kind of special status on the person whose gifts are recorded. Recognizing that some people have special abilities to illuminate our relationship with God and with each other does not bestow on them the role of priest or intermediary of that relationship. One of the points of Quakerism's beginnings was to eliminate all religious practices that got in the way of one's relationship to God. But, of course, ignorance and lack of spiritual nourishment also get in the way of that relationship. The recording of gifts in ministry points to a different understanding of the leadership needs of Quakerism.

To recognize (by recording) the existence of a gift, but then to

leave the individual to flounder about unsupported and undirected while she/he tries to exercise it, is simply unacceptable in a community of faith in which we are obligated to one another's spiritual growth and development. If, after we have recorded a gift, we have failed to support and nourish its carrier, if we have not helped to find or make opportunities for the individual to bring her/his gift to bear, and if we then find the gift is no longer being exercised, or if we find the individual bringing that gift to bear elsewhere, how can we then "unrecord the gift"? This is not to say that there should not be some mechanism for rescinding a recording—such a mechanism already clearly exists in *Faith and Practice*, and it is broadly worded and should be carefully applied in those cases where the application of a recorded gift is clearly at variance with the testimonies of Friends.

We need to be accountable to that individual and to that gift just as much as we hold that individual accountable. When we come to unrecord a gift, we must ask ourselves, "What have we done to nourish the gift we recorded and the individual carrying it? Have we provided a peer group to which this person could be accountable (as well as being accountable to us)? Have we been attentive to the ministry this individual's gift conveyed? Have we responded supportively?" Friends need leaders whose primary focus is ministry; nurturing such into being is our challenge. A deep, searching look at our process of recording gifts, and which gifts we record, is a necessary part of this process.

The quality of worship is a corporate responsibility

Nancy Haines, Wellesley (MA) Monthly Meeting

WHY NOT RECOGNIZE OUR GIFTED MINISTERS? After all, Friends have had a long-standing practice of officially recognizing members who have been called to this service. This recording identifies to the larger community that this Friend has the approval of his or her meeting and that he or she testifies agreeably to the leadings of the Spirit. The title "Recorded Minister" implies that this is a person worth listening to.

Nevertheless, I am concerned about creating a separate distinction for some individuals. Friends practice of ministry is based on the belief that the gifts of the Holy Spirit may be bestowed upon anyone at any time. We believe that God speaks to each one of us and we receive the leadings of the Spirit when we listen to that still small voice within. Everyone, member and attender, is an essential participant in our meetings for worship, whether in prayerful silence or in spoken ministry. The quality of worship is a corporate responsibility.

Although recording is generally used to recognize a gift for spoken ministry, religious service comes in many varieties. Everyone has spiritual gifts that contribute to the life of the meeting and to the Society of Friends. Last year during our State of Society discussions, Wellesley Meeting considered the nurturing of ministry. We defined ministry as the result of discerning and following God's lead-

ings in our lives. We asked ourselves what is my ministry and how do we seek and nurture our own ministry as well as that of others in our meeting.

Many of us find our ministry in serving the meeting. Some of us run the committees, take care of the house and grounds, educate and nurture our children, provide hospitality, offer pastoral care, and oversee the quality of worship in our meetings. Others use the meeting community as a stepping stone to service in the community and for activism for peace and justice. Many of our members have found their ministries their jobs and are teachers and physicians, work with

continued next page



A young minister, Elizabeth Baker Allen's Neck (MA) Monthly Meeting

continued from previous page

battered women and in the prisons, or provide services to those in need. And most of us see a ministry in serving our families and in creating homes where God's spirit is reflected in our Quaker values and testimonies. All are important ministries and necessary to the well-ordered functioning of our meeting community. Unfortunately, the term ministry so often refers to preaching that many in our meeting found it difficult to recognize that their service is indeed ministry.

Recording ministers elevates the ability to speak comfortably and devalues the variety of ministries that exist in the Society of Friends. How easy it is when we hear a particularly inspiring message to think of the bearer as a "gifted minister" particularly when that Friends speaks often and well. However, the old Quaker phrase "thee was well-favored" reminds us that the gift of vocal ministry is not a characteristic of the messenger but a gift of the Spirit, given in that moment to a person who is receptive to the leading. Moreover, there

may be a temptation for a recorded minister to feel that they have the "job" of vocal ministry and a designated role in preaching the gospel, rather than waiting to see whom the Lord has favored.

Instead of assigning the ministry to individuals, we should foster the ministries of all. We should encourage every ministry, no matter what form it takes. We should train everyone to be receptive to the teachings of the Spirit and create places of love and trust, where even hesitant speakers can share their love of God. We should recognize that the leadings of the Spirit take other forms than messages. Not all deeply inspired and inspiring Friends are able to speak comfortably. Nevertheless, their gifts are also well worth noting.

As a Friend noted in our State of Society meetings, we are like a "mosaic quilt," all fitting together, yet so different. In nurturing everyone's ministry, we are enhancing the beauty of the whole and creating a deeply bonded community of the Spirit.



Line Art: William Allick

Friends ministry

Ralph Greene, Narramissic Valley (ME) Monthly Meeting

A YOUNG MAN FROM THE MIDWEST has been attending our meeting lately. After meeting for worship one morning he observed that he has been trying to find a spiritual home among us since moving east but found it difficult because most of the Meetings he has attended had so little sense of ministry and he was left spiritually hungry. He asked pointed questions as to how we go about nurturing our leadership and what the future of our meetings will be without a clear sense of purpose. He went on to say that it seems that we are developing a "do your own thing" religion by not actively encouraging a leadership with a sense of spiritual discipline.

His questioning has made me ponder, again, the role of my own particular ministry. I need to remind myself of how Christ's message can be made real to my fellow travelers in this world. This can only come when one hears a clear, inward call to work for the Kingdom of Christ. From that place a minister can help bring others to feel and know the Inward Christ who will then send them on to their own paths of ministry. This is the hope of our church!

But in nurturing leadership we need to consider the second half of ministry, that of corporate/communal encouragement of that ministry. To have any meaning at all, ministry has to come out of a community of committed Christians. Early Friends in their wisdom recognized that there were those who were gifted in the ministry and as such should present by word and writing that message to the people of the world. The corporate act was recording the gift of the ministry. This did not mean that a person was recorded a minister as a matter of ordination as is practiced by most other Christian groups.

In one of his most stirring messages from jail, (Launceston Gaol, 1656), George Fox sent an epistle which came to be known as "An Epistle to Friends in the Ministry." In it he spells out the challenges of those who freely exercise their gifts of ministry, with all the joy and power which can come by being faithful. Three times in this short epistle he writes of speaking to that of God in every person,

which is a common expression among Friends today. We must remember, however, to keep this expression in context, for it is not used in a manner which would weaken our sense of ministry, but rather makes it clear that our ministry is a deeply Christian spiritual experience which is to be supported by the community of faith.

In that same message he writes that the minister "reigns and rules with Christ," who brings "all into the worship of God; plow up the fallow ground, thresh and get out the corn, that all people may come to the beginning, to Christ, who was before the world was made." He then states what the tasks of a minister should be in specific terms: "This is the word of the Lord God to you all, and a charge to you all in the presence of the living God: Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you go, so that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering to that of God in every one."

Friends, our task is to continue to encourage a strong ministry whether it be by recording gifts, by the nurture of the many forms of the ministry available to a local meeting, by establishing a strong and sure teaching foundation under our leadership, and by fearlessly preaching Christ's Kingdom to this world. Otherwise we might find ourselves as members of a small but interesting anachronism which merely hides in the shadows of those mighty "publishers of Truth," our ministers of past days.

In closing his epistles, George Fox urged us, as ministers, to "be obedient to the power, for that will save you out of the hands of unreasonable men and preserve you over the world to himself. Hereby you can live in the kingdom that stands in power and has no end, where there is glory and life."

Ralph Greene is a recorded minister and former pastor of several meetings in NEYM. He wrote this article in 1981, while serving Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting.

Around the Yearly Meeting

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

• **Worcester (MA) Monthly Meeting (MM)** held a memorial meeting on 3/11 for Candida Palmer, a former NEYM Administrative Secretary, a recorded minister of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, author of books for children and on prayer, and a former coordinator of work for homeless outreach and advocacy.

• **Waterboro (ME) MM** will hold a memorial meeting at the Portland Friends Meetinghouse on 4/15 at 2 pm for Robert Wehmeyer, long-time active yearly meeting Friend, a World War II conscientious objector, a former clerk of Mountain View (CO) Monthly Meeting, and an active volunteer for numerable community causes.

• Several meetings, including **Cambridge (MA), Wellesley (MA), Providence (RI) and Mt. Toby (MA) MMs**, have taken up consideration of the Campaign of Conscience for the Iraqi People and for lifting sanctions, sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. This would involve sending funds with or without a license to do so, and accepting any penalties imposed. The aid is to be symbolic, expressing humanity, love and compassion. The aim is also to have the sanctions lifted which are causing great suffering.

Among the ideas raised in considerations, if a meeting is not clear to break the law, or risk penalties, included: address news media, elected officials, and the public about the terrible effects of the sanctions; urge individuals to support the Campaign; a subgroup can sign on, and urge others to join; the meeting could be prepared to support individuals who might need it because of participating; devote a peace witness to the Iraqi situation, perhaps as a moving vigil; adopt an institution in Iraq.

• **NEYM Permanent Board** (the yearly meeting's interim body) approved with enthusiasm the names of the following Friends to represent NEYM at Cuba Yearly Meeting's Centenary Celebration in Cuba, 11/2000: Karen Armstrong, Gordon Browne, Elizabeth Cazden, Susan Furry, Cynthia Ganung, Greg Holt, Christel Jorgenson, Douglas Logan, Benigno Sanchez-Eppler and Jonathan Vogel-Borne.

• **All NEYM Monthly Meetings** have received the Friends United Meeting's (FUM)

published minute on the care of the creation, approved at its 1999 Triennial. It calls on Friends, individually and as meetings, to examine our lives and not take more than we need. It recommends publications of the Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN), particularly the brochure, "Understanding Sustainability," and the book, *Caring for Creation*, by Lisa Lofland Gould (of NEYM), well-suited for First Day School discussion, with a bibliography. FCUN is at 173B North Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401, 802/658-0308, fcun@together.net

• **Wellesley (MA) MM** minuted: "Acknowledging that we are individually at different points in accepting extending the term marriage to same gender couples but recognizing the need for spiritual commitment within our community, we affirm the following minute: 'Wellesley Friends Meeting is an open and affirming faith community. We welcome all seekers. We believe that marriage within the meeting is a spiritual and communal commitment. Any couple affiliated with our meeting, regardless of gender, may request a clearness committee for marriage. If found clear, they may be married under the care of our meeting.'"

• **Mahoosuc Mountains (ME) Worship Group** writes that one of their group, Arla Patch, was invited to be a presenter in the "Quakers in the Arts" Conference 3/17-19/2000 at Guilford College, Greensboro, NC. The Conference was sponsored by the College's Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. Arla showed a slide show and talked about her ministry with women with breast cancer that uses art as a healing tool.

• **Fresh Pond (MA) MM** sent the following letter with donations to OXFAM: "[We] held a hunger banquet in order to educate our young members about hunger around the world. Thirty children, (and a handful of parents), gathered together to take part in this activity. Five of the children were wealthy upper class people, dining on rich muffins and Danish, eating at a decorative table, complete with a waitress. Ten children ate beans and rice at a plain table with plastic silverware, representing the middle class of the world. Fifteen children were the lower class of the world, eating rice on the floor, able to use only their hands to feed themselves. The banquet was a learning

experience for everyone involved, and opened many eyes to the plight of the hungry. After the banquet, we held a drive for food to go to a local shelter for battered women, and for donations to go to Oxfam America. Contributions from our entire Meeting, amounted to \$376.25 for Oxfam."

• **New Haven (CT) MM** has formed a Ministry and Counsel subcommittee for pastoral care. However, as the committee writes, "As our meeting has grown closer as a community, nurturing those within the community has changed; it now seems to spring up organically from within the community. Individuals are looking out for one another: we note the needs of others, and spontaneously organize practical types of support (i.e., meals, transportation, telephone calls, and note-writing)." The committee's goal will be to coordinate these outreach efforts, including asking for information about needs and for volunteers to assist.

• **Vassalboro (ME) MM** created a Music and Festivities Committee to coordinate such activities on Christmas, Easter, etc. One aim is to find occasions to put to Friendly use the unusual amount of musical talent in the meeting.

• **Northampton (MA) MM**, after a long search, announced the decision to purchase space in an existing building in the center of Northampton for meeting use and to rent for income. They plan to build worship space over an existing ground floor extension.

• **Mt. Toby (MA) MM** will host the Friends General Conference (FGC) Religious Education Committee on 4/27-30. The Committee writes and publishes curriculum and is actively visiting yearly and monthly meetings. On Saturday, 4/29, at 5:30pm the FGC Religious Education Committee will make a presentation, with subsequent discussion, of the questions, "What do we want our children to get out of First Day School? What emphasis on biblical texts, new texts, and Quaker values?"



Mt. Toby (MA) Monthly Meeting

In other Quaker news

Staff for summer YM Sessions needed

Several opportunities to serve the Yearly Meeting at the annual Sessions are available, including Audio/Visual Coordinator, Registrar-In-Training, and Office Assistant. All of these positions include room and board at YM Sessions. Contact the NEYM Office.

Art work at YM Sessions

If you have the leading, we have the calling... NEYM encourages and welcomes your creativity! It is time to consider sharing these gifts at the art show this year at Annual Sessions. We'd like to see the full breadth and depth of the creative spirit moving through us. You bring your framed work and labels; we'll have on hand basic hanging supplies. The exhibition space is best suited for 2D art forms. For other kinds of work and any questions or just plain encouragement, call the art space coordinator, April Claggett, 603/563 9974 • apclaggett@yahoo.com.

Grants available

Over the years, the ability of the YM Committee on Prejudice and Poverty to make small grants has waxed and waned. By last summer, the Contributory Fund from which the committee's grants are made was nearly empty with little anticipated growth in the near term. Since then, however, the fund has received unanticipated replenishment. The committee is therefore again inviting proposals seeking financial support for projects aimed at eradicating the root causes of prejudice and poverty in New England. Awards have a ceiling of \$2,000, and are usually less than that. Preference is given to start-up projects and to projects that have some Quaker affiliation: sponsorship by a Friends meeting, participation in the project or the sponsoring organization by Friends, etc. Contact: Rob Yager, 12 Tanglewood Drive, Henniker, NH 03242 • robbyager@hotmail.com.

NEYM web strategy

For the Committee, Bill How sent the following e-mail message: "The 'Ad Hoc Committee—Web Meeting' was initially formed from members of the NEYM Permanent Board and NEYM Ministry and Counsel. We have met approximately six times over the last 18 months and have worked to develop guidelines in connection with the NEYM

website and use of electronic communication. We approach this work as an ongoing experiment. We have given feedback and support to our Administrative Secretary, Katharine Clark, and web servant, Dave Baxter. The NEYM web site has the potential to stimulate greater connection among us. It can provide information, articles, and reports not otherwise available to Friends. Increased electronic communication among Friends has challenged us to find ways to stay in unity with God while exploring this opportunity. We need to protect Friends privacy. We need to stay attentive to Friends who don't have and/or wish electronic communication. We need to find ways to see "that of God" in our world and each other while communicating electronically. We need to insure that electronic communication is a vehicle and not an obstacle to God's will in our lives. We will be elaborating and exploring these concerns in a future article in *The New England Friend*.

USFW to meet

The United Society of Friends Women (USFW) holds its spring gathering Saturday, 4/29/2000, 9:30am-3pm at the Wellesley (MA) Meetinghouse. A panel of Minga Claggett-Borne, Jeanne Kinney, and Christine Wozich, will respond to the theme, *Violence and the Fracturing of American Families: Reknitting Our Bones*.

Youth event begins preparation

12/27/2000 to 1/1/2001, YouthQuake 2000 will be held at Camp Berachah, Auburn Washington. Young Friends aged 14 to 20 will get a chance to meet youth from around the country in workshops, small groups, speaker presentations, worship, music and play, as well as a day of exploring the Seattle area. This is the fourth YouthQuake (a triennial event) that we have been involved in. A group of Young Friends from NEYM are preparing, fundraising, and will travel together. In this particular conference, youth from all branches of Friends will focus on Christ, aiming to experience what George Fox meant when he said "Christ has come to teach his people himself". Interested teens need to begin preparation now so that they can be active and engaged participants. Monthly meetings are asked to mentor their teens, giving both adults and youth an oppor-

tunity to get acquainted and learn together. For more information, including the purpose statement of YouthQuake 2000, go to www.ultranet.com/~neym/youthquake. Contact Chris Jorgenson at 617/625-4494 • cmjorgens@aol.com.

Full-time Quaker volunteers invited

Quaker Volunteer Service (QVS), a community of service and transformation being considered by Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, wants to know of potential volunteer interest. Room, board, transportation, insurance, small stipend provided for one year of service beginning September. Student loans may be postponed. Anticipated program includes community living, spiritual and leadership development program. We welcome interest from people of all ages, backgrounds and faiths who want an experience through Friends principles. Our work is to be a witness to the sacredness of every person and the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. Inquire Quaker Volunteer Service c/o Chris Parker: cparker@afsc.org • 617/629-7513 • www.afsc.org/qvs.htm.

FUM General Secretary sought

"Friends United Meeting (FUM) commits itself to energize and equip Friends through the power of the Holy Spirit to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord." The General Secretary is responsible to the General Board for implementing this purpose through effective programming, public leadership, administration and staff supervision. Applications and résumés due by 5/1/2000, the search will remain open until filled. Nominations, expressions of interest and requests for a job description should be directed to Wayne Carter, Clerk of Search Committee, FUM, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374 • 765/962-7573 • www.fum.org.

FWCC Triennial study booklet issued

A study booklet for all interested meetings and individuals in preparation for the 20th Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Triennial, 7/22-30/2000 at Geneva Point, NH, has been sent to each meeting in NEYM. Extra single copies are free from FWCC (address in Minute Book). The essays may be reprinted by Quaker publications.

The Meeting School continues to thrive

Margaret Hawthorn, Monadnock (NH) Monthly Meeting and TMS Special Projects Coordinator

THE MEETING SCHOOL is a thriving community this year, having opened in September with 32 students. Since then, a rolling admissions policy has further increased enrollment to near full capacity of 38. In the mix are three day students and two international students from Japan and the Czech Republic. Tijana Popovic, born in Yugoslavia and more recently from Prague, is a senior being sponsored by Friends Meeting at Cambridge. Sixteen students look forward to graduating this June. Jacqueline Stillwell remains Head of School and Cliff Harrison is Friend in Residence. Six new faculty members and one faculty intern joined the five continuing faculty members from 1998-99.

The central dining facility in Aurora Basement has made this a transition year in the culture of the school. Although the changes have been largely beneficial, the new arrangement has meant loss of individual house time, and community members are still adjusting. Each community member serves on cooking crew for half a day, once every two weeks, with the exceptions of one faculty member and the intern, who provide oversight for all meal planning and preparation. To nurture house unity, Tuesday night suppers and Wednesday morning brunches are still served in individual homes. Positive features: the food is better, less is wasted, leftovers are being used more efficiently for the farm. The community gathers as a whole three times a day—instead of just once at morning opening—and people enjoy working together in the roomy, well-equipped new kitchen.

In November three faculty members and five students drove to Seattle for the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks. While they carried a specific concern regarding genetically modified foods, they learned from a variety of folks about different issues involv-

ing the WTO. They found themselves sharing their protest with truck drivers, union members, and people objecting to poor labor conditions in other countries.

The students were pleased to discover, as they went through extensive training in non-violent action, that they were quickly ready to become facilitators. They recognized that from work they've done at TMS they are familiar with finding ways to respond to situations without escalating conflict. They were able to teach other participants skills they take for granted, such as clerking a meeting where people are seeking consensus.

Locally, students heard testimonies against the death penalty at the State House

ing about life in four intentional communities in the US; working at the Environmental Research Station in the Virgin Islands; volunteering with an agency in Washington, DC that sets up programs for at-risk children and helps create legislation serving the interests of underprivileged children; visiting several public and independent high schools in New England, spending a few days at each to learn about student life in various settings.

Some classes offered this year: Newspaper; World Literature; Science and Technology; Biology; Physics; Chemistry; Geology and Earth Sciences; Genetics and Evolutionary Theory; Drawing and Water Color; Pottery; Music Theory and Composition; Band; Art History and Application; Latin; Spanish; French; Oral Communications; Math; Computer Programming; American Sign Language; Asian Studies; Chinese Language, History, and Culture; US History; Playwriting; Farming and Crops.

As the school continues to grow, we need to expand our number of faculty for September 2000. We are

looking for teachers, especially couples, with skills in most subject areas (6-8 openings), plus a business manager. We offer a monthly stipend, room, board, medical insurance, and a benefit package (value 45K+ per couple). Teaching certification is not required; we welcome dynamic people exploring a career change to consider the possibility of teaching.

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For information about job openings, contact Cliff Harrison, The Meeting School, 56 Thomas Road, Rindge, NH 03461 • 603/899-3366 • office@tms.mv.com • www.mv.com/ipusers/tms



Photo: Courtesy of The Meeting School



1998-1999 faculty and students of The Meeting School

in Concord, NH. Field trips have been made to art exhibits in Hanover and Manchester, NH, and to the Boston Science Museum for hands-on learning about what it means to genetically modify an organism. A TMS drama group performed *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*, by Paul Zindel, on the stage of nearby Franklin Pierce College.

In March, students are headed for Costa Rica, London, Oregon, and other places for intersession. Among the projects: working in New York State with a mid-wife; making a film in Oklahoma; working in a nature conservancy in Arizona; visiting and learn-

Presiding Clerk, Anne Kriebel ■ **Treasurer**, Diana White ■ **NEYM OFFICE**: 901 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602-1908 • 508/754-6760 • FAX: 508/754-9401 • neym@ma.ultranet.com • www.ultranet.com/~neym • OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Friday, 9AM-5PM ■ **Administrative Secretary**, Katharine Clark ■ **Youth and Education Secretary**, Christel Jorgenson ■ **Field Secretary**, Jonathan Vogel-Borne ■ **THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND: Editor**, Jonathan Vogel-Borne; **Editorial & Production Volunteer**, William Kriebel ■ **FRIENDS CAMP**, Susan Morris, Director, P.O. Box 84, E. Vassalboro, ME 04935 ■ **MOSES BROWN SCHOOL**, Joanne Hoffman, Head, 250 Lloyd Ave., Providence, RI 02906 ■ **NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME-THAYER HOUSE**, Gretchen Condon, Administrator, Turkey Hill La., Hingham, MA 02043 ■ **YOUTH RETREATS**: Grades 2-5: Kevin Lee 508/994-1638; Grades 6-8: Cynthia Rankin 508/540-6570 & Nort Salz 508/263-0862; Grades 9-12: Christel Jorgenson 617/625-4494.

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

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THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

April 2000

- 3/30-2 Young Friends Officers Retreat – Framingham, MA
- 7-9 JYM 6th Graders Retreat – Worcester, MA
- 8 Committee Day – Concord/Unitarian Church
- 14-16 Emerging Ministries – Woolman Hill, MA
- 14-16 Young Friends Retreat – Cambridge, MA
- 16 RI-Smithfield QM – Worcester, MA
- 22 Falmouth QM – Durham, ME
- 22 Sandwich QM – on Cape Cod, MA
- 28-30 Stillness Retreat – Monadnock, NH [for info, Denise Ginzler, 603/878-3702]
- 29 USFW Spring Gathering – Wellesley, MA [page 10]
- 30 Salem QM – North Shore, MA
- 30 Dover QM – Concord, NH

May 2000

- 6 Vassalboro QM – Belfast, ME
- 7 CT Valley QM – Mt Toby, MA
- 12 Coordinating & Advisory Committee – Belmont, MA
- 12-14 Elementary Retreat – Woolman Hill, 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
- 26-27 Stillness Retreat – Charlotte Fardelmann's home in Portsmouth, NH [for info 603/436-7652]

June 2000

- 3-4 Northwest QM – Hanover hosting at Farm & Wilderness
- 10 Committee Day – Cambridge Friends School
- 16-18 Friends United Mtg General Board – Richmond, IN
- 23-24 Stillness Retreat – Charlotte Fardelmann's home in Portsmouth, NH [for info 603/436-7652]

July 2000

- 3-9 Friends General Conference Gathering – Rochester, NY
- 16 RI-Smithfield QM – Providence, RI
- 22 Falmouth QM – Brunswick, ME
- 22 Sandwich QM – New Bedford, MA
- 28-29 Stillness Retreat – Monadnock, NH [for info, Denise Ginzler, 603/878-3702]

August 2000

- 5-10 NEYM Sessions – Bryant College, Smithfield, RI
Theme: "Be not conformed to this world," Romans 12:2
Keynote Speaker: Paul Lacey
Bible Half Hour Speaker: Becky Phipps

More 1999 Minute Book changes

New London (CT) MM's information is incorrectly listed in the Minute Book. Location is Oswegatchie Rd., Waterford, CT. Mailing address is P. O. Box 385, New London, CT 06320. Also, co-clerks are Joan Warren and Jean Mitchell, and the Healing Meeting meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays (not Wednesdays).