

2011

MINUTES

of the

North Carolina

Yearly Meeting

of the

Religious Society

Of Friends

(Conservative)

The 314th Session

2011

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**North Carolina
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**Religious Society
of Friends**

(Conservative)

The 314th Session

**Held at UNC Wilmington
Wilmington, North Carolina**

**By Adjournments
From the Fourteenth of Seventh Month
To the Seventeenth of the Same, Inclusive**

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) – 2011

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**Minutes of the
North Carolina Yearly Meeting
Of the Religious Society of Friends
(Conservative)**

1. Opening of the Annual Session

The 314th session of North Carolina Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Conservative) convened at University of North Carolina at Wilmington, in Wilmington, North Carolina, from the fourteenth of Seventh Month to the seventeenth of the same, 2011.

The sessions opened with expectant waiting worship, out of which clerk Richard Bryan Miller shared the following passage from Daniel 2:

“Daniel said: Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings, he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him.”

Daniel 2:20-22 (New Oxford Annotated Bible)

2. Welcome from the Dean

We were kindly welcomed by the dean of the Cameron School of Business at UNCW, Lawrence Clark. The campus, with 13,500 students, continues to grow with new buildings and other facilities. He spoke about many facets of UNCW including conversations with the local community college, and wished us well in our conversations.

3. Visitors (Part One)

Visiting Friends introduced themselves, were welcomed, and letters of introduction and travel minutes for Micah Bales, Bill Geary and Mark Wutka were read.

Micah Bales, Rockingham Monthly Meeting, Harrisonburg, VA, Ohio Yearly Meeting;

Wanda Battle, Union Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Montgomery, AL;

Pat Bradbury, Preston Patrick Monthly Meeting, Britain Yearly Meeting;

David Eley of Austin, Texas, recorded friend of our yearly meeting, member of Keystone Fellowship Monthly Meeting in Pennsylvania, Ohio Yearly Meeting;

Cassandra Fralix, Columbia Friends Meeting, Columbia, SC, SAYMA;

Bill Geary, Mullica Hill Friends Meeting and Southern States Worship Group, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting;

Evelyn Jadin, Jamestown Friends Meeting, Jamestown, NC, North Carolina Yearly Meeting – FUM;

Lee Lougée, Annapolis Monthly Meeting, Annapolis, MD, Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Anne Margaret (Meg) McCormick, Yahara Monthly Meeting, Madison, WI, Iowa Yearly Meeting;

Alice M. Wald, Columbia Friends Meeting, Columbia, SC, SAYMA;

Darlene Walker, Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA;

Caroline Whitbeck, Northhampton Monthly Meeting, Northhampton, MA, New England Yearly Meeting;

Mark Wutka, Atlanta Friends Meeting, Atlanta, GA, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA);

Friends approved that the clerk endorse the letters of introduction and minutes of travel.

4. Minutes of the Representative Body

The Minutes of the Representative Body of NCYM(C) Tenth Month 23, 2010 and those of Fourth Month 23, 2011 were read. Friends approved that these minutes be included in the 2011 yearly meeting minute book.

Minutes of the Representative Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Tenth Month 23, 2010

The Representative Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) convened at Cedar Grove meetinghouse in Woodland, North Carolina on the 23rd of Tenth Month, 2010. Meeting opened with expectant waiting worship, out of which the clerk read chapter 3, verses 1-2 from 1 John.

Felicity McCartney of Ireland Yearly Meeting; Alan Rochussen of Foothills Friends Worship Group, Unaffiliated, Greenville, SC; Sheila Hoyer of First Friends Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM), Greensboro, NC; and Mark Wutka of Atlanta Friends Meeting, SAYMA, Atlanta, GA, introduced themselves as visitors and were welcomed. Meeting approved that the clerk endorse the travel minute for Felicity McCartney. The travel minute was read.

The minutes from the Fourth Month, 2010, Representative Body Meeting were read.

The clerk read a message from Les Fleming updating the Body on the *interaction with NCYM (FUM) regarding the year of peace*. Friends approved that the message be included in the minutes.

(The message was misplaced before it could be recorded.)

Judy Reese reported that there are several Friends from NCYM(C) who will be leading workshops and who will be involved in some of the organization of the Celebration of the Peace of God event. The event is a celebration of the Declaration of 1660 regarding the peace testimony. Friends are encouraged to take additional information about this event back to their meetings. Robert Gosney stated that this is hoped to be the beginning of on-going interaction between the two North Carolina Yearly Meetings in the future.

Edward Pearce reported that Rich Square Meeting recently had a discussion about the Declaration of 1660 as a way of recognizing the anniversary of that document. Chuck Fager reported that Quaker House and Friends Center of Guilford College will hold an event First Month 14-16, 2011 at Guilford College highlighting concerns about the continuing role of the military-industrial complex in the life of America.

The clerk read the *travel minute for Deborah Shaw* from Friendship Meeting, and the body approved endorsement of the minute.

Patty Levering reported for the *Yearly Meeting Planning Committee*. The committee selected the theme, "Living the Faith: Becoming the Beloved Community." Evelyn Jaden, a young adult Friend who spent time with West Grove Meeting and is now a student at Earlham School of Religion will present on the Yearly Meeting theme one evening. On another evening, Peter Buck and Joy Anna Hodges of Asheville Friends will lead us in a program called InterPlay. This is a program designed to learn from our bodies about the things that matter to us spiritually, and designed to build community. There will be intentional contemplative time during the yearly meeting, organized by Susan Wilson. There will also be intergenerational bible study lead by Lloyd Lee and Susan Wilson, and other intergenerational events will be planned. The morning bible study leader is yet to be determined.

Joy was expressed by the body regarding the program and particularly the intergenerational emphasis.

Friends considered *the location for the 2012 Yearly Meeting Sessions*. It was suggested that the yearly meeting plan to return to Guilford College in Greensboro, and Friends approved this.

Friends considered *the location for the Fourth Month, 2011, Representative Body*. Jennifer Ginsburg offered on behalf of West Grove Meeting to host us and Friends approved.

The *Finance Committee Report* (for the quarter ended 9/30/2010) from Dora Owens was read, and Friends approved that the report be included in the minutes.

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is in good financial position at the end of the first quarter of the 2010-11 fiscal year. As of the end of Ninth Month, 2010, 19% of contributions from monthly meetings have been received and 22% of budgeted payments to organizations have been made. Interest income is well below projected amounts; however, generous individual contributions more than offset the deficiency. The yearly meeting has enough money available to meet expected outlays for the coming

quarter. No disbursements from the Scholarship or Travel allowances have been made thus far. Few operating expenses have been incurred this quarter.

As concerns the various fund balances, the largest change was in the yearly meeting Gathering Reserve, reflecting the completion of the 2010 event. We will file for a refund of the sales tax paid to Guilford College in First Month 2011 and will hold the 2010 Reserve open until this amount is received. The remaining reserve will be held for the 2011 Gathering. The yearly meeting Assistance Fund and the Youth Activities Fund are now entirely depleted; Friends may contribute to these restricted funds as they feel led. Total assets are \$28,778.52 as of 09/30/2010. Below is a detail of the balances in each fund:

| <u>Changes of Funds in Checking Account</u> | <u>Beginning Balance</u> | <u>Ending Balance</u> | <u>Change</u> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| General Operating Fund | \$ 10,518.68 | \$ 14,491.76 | \$ 3,973.08 |
| Yearly Meeting 08 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 09 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 10 Reserve** | \$ 13,342.19 | \$ (799.91) | \$ (14,142.10) |
| Yearly Meeting 11 Reserve | \$ - | \$ 4,053.05 | \$ 3,253.14 |
| Youth Activities | \$ 282.50 | \$ - | \$ (282.50) |
| Journal Fund | \$ 134.09 | \$ 134.09 | \$ - |
| Disciplines | \$ 2,152.00 | \$ 2,152.00 | \$ - |
| Travel | \$ 63.40 | \$ 63.40 | \$ - |
| YM Assistance Fund | \$ 474.14 | \$ - | \$ (474.14) |
| Memorial Funds | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Hearing Assistance Device Fund | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Jamaica Fund -- FWCC | \$ 1,921.20 | \$ 1,921.20 | \$ - |
| Total | \$ 28,888.20 | \$ 22,015.59 | \$ (7,672.52) |
| <u>Account Balances</u> | | | |
| Wachovia Checking | \$ 28,888.20 | \$ 22,015.59 | \$ (6,872.61) |
| Petty Cash | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Calvert Fund | \$ 6,762.85 | \$ 6,762.93 | \$ 0.08 |
| Total | \$ 35,651.05 | \$ 28,778.52 | \$ (6,872.53) |

**balance reflects sales tax refund due

Respectfully submitted,
Dora Owens, Treasurer

Barbara Gosney reported on behalf of the FWCC representatives charged with *determining the three Yearly Meeting delegates to the FWCC Sixth World Gathering*, now scheduled for Fourth Month 17-25, 2012, in Nakaru, Kenya. Seven strong candidates were found, and the committee is reflecting on applications that were made. The committee expects to select the delegates by Twelfth Month 15, and will notify FWCC accordingly.

David Perry announced that *Davidson Meeting was beginning a fundraising campaign to support the construction of a meetinghouse*, with a goal of beginning construction in 2013, if in keeping with Divine Will. Davidson members have donated the property and pledged to contribute over \$200,000 towards the anticipated \$350,000 cost of construction. The meeting has approved asking those outside of the meeting to contribute toward a \$150,000 goal by the end of 2012.

Davidson Meeting welcomes donations, and requests approval of the use of the meeting directories listed in the yearly meeting minutes book to mail or email informational fundraising pamphlets to members and attenders of meetings in the yearly meeting.

The sense of the meeting was that these directories are provided by the monthly meetings for yearly meeting business. We ask that Davidson Meeting contact each monthly meeting individually regarding how to present the fund-raising effort, including requesting the use of their directory lists.

Janis Ansell reported on the *representative body of the Yearly Meeting of Ministers, Elders and Overseers*. On 11th month 20, 2010, there will be a called meeting of named representatives at West Grove meetinghouse. The meeting is to consider how the representatives can prepare to meet the spiritual needs of the meetings within the yearly meeting.

Travel minutes for Lloyd Lee Wilson and for Susan Wilson were returned and the endorsements were read. The Lake Erie Yearly Meeting minute of gratefulness for Lloyd Lee Wilson and Susan Wilson was also read.

Charlie Ansell reported on *Friends Committee on National Legislation*. The upcoming meeting will be exciting given the end of Joe Volk's term as General Secretary, and the naming of a

new person in that role. FCNL is hopeful that there is an opening at this moment in history to reduce military spending, and Friends are invited to participate in the meeting.

The Clerk thanked Rich Square Meeting for hosting Representative Body, and congratulated the meeting of the celebration of 250 years of continued presence in eastern North Carolina.

Undertaking no further business, the meeting closed with worship, intending to meet next on Fourth Month 23rd, 2011, if consistent with Divine Will.

Richard B. Miller, Clerk
David Neil Perry, Recording Clerk

**Minutes of the Representative Body of North Carolina
Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Fourth Month 23, 2011**

The Representative Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) convened at West Grove meetinghouse near Snow Camp, North Carolina on the 23rd of Fourth Month, 2011. Meeting opened with expectant waiting worship, out of which the clerk read Isaiah chapter 40, verses 28-32.

Mark Wutka of Atlanta Friends Meeting, SAYMA, Atlanta, GA, introduced himself as a visitor and he was welcomed, in the sense of being welcomed home.

The minutes from the Tenth Month, 2010, Representative Body Meeting were read.

The clerk checked on the success of distributing the agenda via email, with mixed results. Barbara Gosney asked on behalf of the webpage committee that each monthly meeting ensure that the yearly meeting is aware of the most current contact information for each meeting.

The clerk also made the body aware that there was an inquiry into procedures for becoming part of the yearly meeting, and although there has been no further response to his follow up information, his recollection is that this inquiry was made by Salem Meeting in Winston-Salem.

The clerk asked for guidance on how to respond to groups that feel a kinship with our yearly meeting but which are not within easy traveling distance. There is a sense that true faith community requires face-to-face contact. Of concern were the questions, “Should we be reaching out at all?” and, “What kind of relationship should we seek to maintain with these individuals or groups that contact us?”

The sense of the meeting was that when groups (including existing monthly meetings) or individuals inquire, the yearly meeting clerk is to welcome them, especially to visit; To come and be with us. The clerk should do this as requests come in, and is to emphasize being with us in our true form, and then see if they still want to be with us after knowing us.

The sense was reaffirmed that individual membership is for the discernment of monthly meetings not the yearly meeting.

The sense was that requests for affiliation with North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) from monthly meetings affiliated with other yearly meeting require special tact in proceeding with discernment, but we are open to exploring. It was reiterated that this exploration requires extended interaction and being led by the Spirit as to the rightness of this relationship.

The body approved directing the website committee to develop statements providing information that would be useful for inquiring individuals or groups and bring those back to the yearly meeting for approval. This communication is to include making it clear that the door is open.

Janis Ansell reported for the *representative body of the Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight*. Friends approved that the report be included in the minutes.

On Eleventh Month 20, 2010, our yearly meeting’s Ministry and Oversight representatives met in a called session at West Grove meetinghouse to consider the query, “How can we, as a body of ministers, elders and overseers of the yearly meeting, serve to nurture our monthly meetings?”

Those present united in the importance of visitation within the monthly meetings as a form of nurture both to the meetings visited and also to the visitors. To facilitate this action, the Clerk agreed to receive requests for visitation

from monthly meetings and to relay this information to the named representatives to the body of Ministers, Elders and Overseers.

To date, the Clerk has received two requests for visitation which led to five Friends visiting Wilmington Friends Meeting on 1st Month 30, 2011 and seven Friends visiting Davidson Meeting on Fourth Month 17, 2011.

In addition, some Friends have informed the Clerk of their independent travel to Wilmington and Core Sound.

Janis Ansell
Clerk, Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight

Patty Levering reported for the *Yearly Meeting Planning Committee*. Friends approved that the report be included in the minutes.

The theme of this summer's yearly meeting sessions will be "Living the Faith: Becoming the Beloved Community."

The Bible study will be led by Andrew Wright of Durham Friends Meeting, currently a student in the Access program of Earlham School of Religion. He has a leading to teach Bible and we wanted to encourage his leading. He will speak to us on the theme of the yearly meeting sessions, drawing from New Testament scriptures.

The evening programs will begin on Thursday with a panel presentation on Living the Faith. Panel members are Karen Stewart of Durham Friends, Ray Treadway of Friendship Meeting, and Charlie and Janis of West Grove. The panel will talk about their faith, their involvement with Quakers, and how that has impacted the choices in their lives. The panel presentation is intended to encourage sharing from others at yearly meeting.

On Friday night we will have Evelyn Jadin, currently a student at Earlham School of Religion, formerly a QLSP student at Guilford. She was on the editorial board (with our own Rachel Miller) that produced the collection of writings by young Quakers called *Spirit Rising*. To give us a sense of our connection with this young adult Friend and to open

us to the message she will be bringing us, a portion of her piece in *Spirit Rising* was read.

On Saturday night we will have an intergenerational experience, something suited for all ages and physical abilities, called InterPlay. InterPlay is a creative, active way to unlock the wisdom of the body and build community. Our leaders will be Peter Buck and Joy Anna Hodges of Asheville, who use InterPlay to help connect us with the wisdom of our faith. It is very unthreatening, easy, and fun.

The committee hopes these programs will enrich our business meetings, teach us, challenge us, and deepen us as a beloved community.

The committee has one request. In order to release Andrew Wright to give the Bible study, we need someone to volunteer to be a substitute parent for his daughter Miriam on Thursday and Friday mornings until his wife Jessica is able to arrive.

On behalf of the *Hospitality Committee*, Patty shared that the program for yearly meeting has been developed. In addition, Wilmington Meeting has developed a list of volunteer opportunities that need to be filled, and it was agreed that the list and program will be distributed via email, particularly to the monthly meetings. Friends also approved that the schedule should be placed on the yearly meeting website. Patty especially mentioned the intergenerational bible study which will shift the business sessions, which Friends approved. Patty also emphasized that one cannot register late at UNCW. Please be sure to register well in advance. Room fees have remained the same, while food costs have risen slightly.

The *Finance Committee Report* (for the quarter ended 3/31/2011) was presented by Dora Owens, and Friends approved that the report be included in the minutes.

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is in good financial position at the end of the third quarter of the 2010-11 fiscal year. As of the end of Third Month, 2011, 54% of contributions from monthly meetings have been received and 76% of budgeted contributions to organizations

have been made. Regarding other income, interest is still well below projected amounts; however, generous individual contributions have more than offset the deficiency in this category. The yearly meeting has enough money available to meet expected outlays for the coming quarter. Publication and website costs are in line with the budget, and operating expenses are well below budgeted amounts. One disbursement from the Scholarship allowance has been made thus far, and there have been no requests for travel reimbursement for the fiscal year to date. The planned transfer to a special fund for FWCC expenses has been made; this does not change the total cash balance of the checking account, but does reserve these funds for the upcoming event.

As concerns the various Fund balances, the most notable change is the establishment of the FWCC Conference Fund. The refund of the sales tax paid to Guilford College for the 2010 Gathering has been applied for, but has not yet been received. The remaining yearly meeting Reserve will be held for the 2011 Gathering. The yearly meeting Assistance Fund and the Youth Activities Fund are now entirely depleted; Friends may contribute to these Restricted Funds as they feel led. Total Assets are \$26,723.94 as of 03/31/2011. Below is a detail of the balances in each fund:

| <u>Changes of Funds in Checking Account</u> | <u>Beginning Balance</u> | <u>Ending Balance</u> | <u>Change</u> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| General Operating Fund | \$ 10,518.68 | \$ 11,787.07 | \$ 1,268.39 |
| Yearly Meeting 08 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 09 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 10 Reserve | \$ 13,342.19 | \$ (799.91) | \$ (14,142.10) |
| Yearly Meeting 11 Reserve | \$ - | \$ 4,053.05 | \$ 4,053.05 |
| Youth Activities | \$ 282.50 | \$ - | \$ (282.50) |
| Journal Fund | \$ 134.09 | \$ 134.09 | \$ - |
| Disciplines | \$ 2,152.00 | \$ 2,152.00 | \$ - |
| Travel | \$ 63.40 | \$ 63.40 | \$ - |
| YM Assistance Fund | \$ 474.14 | \$ - | \$ (474.14) |
| Memorial Funds | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Hearing Assistance Device Fund | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| FWCC Conference Fund | \$ - | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Jamaica Fund -- FWCC | \$ 1,921.20 | \$ 571.20 | \$ (1,350.00) |
| Total | \$ 28,888.20 | \$ 19,960.90 | \$ (8,927.30) |

The Treasurer requests the Representative Body to consider the following items and provide instruction:

There is a considerable balance in the yearly meeting Reserve. We request that a portion of these funds be transferred to the yearly meeting Assistance Fund and the Youth Activities Fund.

We ask the yearly meeting Planning Committee for a tentative budget for the Gathering.

Respectfully submitted,
Dora Owens, Treasurer

Based on the Treasurer's report, Friends discerned that children will continue to have the costs of attending yearly meeting annual sessions paid for by the yearly meeting. This year, the costs are to be taken out of the yearly meeting General Reserve fund as well as any additional contributions for assistance. The Finance Committee is charged with including a specific line item in the budget to address these costs in the future. The Planning committee is asked to discern whether and how any portion of the children's fees in the future should be paid for by families.

Jennifer Ginsburg presented a report for the Nominating Committee. She shared that there are various openings to be filled and they are expected to be addressed at annual sessions.

Les Fleming spoke about the "year of peace" activities coordinated by the Jamestown Monthly Meeting (NCYM-FUM). The workshops were well received and well attended and there is consideration of doing a similar event again. In addition, Jamestown Friends and a Jamestown peace group are considering doing a listening project regarding the peace testimony among Friends. They would like the involvement of both programmed and unprogrammed traditions, and particularly hope to understand the support that our yearly meeting generally has for the peace testimony. Friends are asked to give additional consideration to supporting this work, although it was unclear what the vision is for our role in the process given that there does not appear to be disunity with the testimony within our

community. Les hopes to bring more information to annual sessions.

Ray Treadway reported that he attempted to revise the description of our yearly meeting as provided by Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC) in the publication *Friends Around the World* (2008 edition), but this change did not get incorporated in the 2010 edition. Friends approved that Ray should continue to attempt to get this revised by FWCC, and trusted in his ability to describe the community accurately.

Barbara Gosney reported on behalf of the FWCC representatives charged with *determining the three Yearly Meeting delegates to the FWCC Sixth World Gathering*, scheduled for Fourth Month 17-25, 2012, in Nakuru, Kenya. Friends approved that the report be included in the minutes.

Last summer, while meeting in session, the yearly meeting tasked our members appointed to the Friends World Committee for Consultation to devise a process and select three delegates from our yearly meeting to attend the “Salt and Light Conference” in Kenya in 2012. The members named to the committee were Barbara Gosney (convener), Ray Treadway, Nancy Craft and Sidney Lee Kitchens.

During seventh and eighth months we contacted meetings and individuals to inform those interested about this opportunity. Seven interested people contacted the committee. This response indicated to the yearly meeting clerk and to this committee that we do, indeed, have candidates for our allotted three delegates. The committee asked those interested to submit, by tenth month 18, a written narrative describing their interest in the conference and addressing the following criteria:

- 1) Is familiar with and sympathetic with the goals and mission of FWCC.
- 2) Is a member of a monthly meeting of NCYM(C).
- 3) Is active in his or her monthly meeting.
- 4) Has attended sessions of NCYM(C) in the past and will most likely continue to be active in the yearly meeting in the future.

- 5) Expects to come back from the World Conference and share with the yearly meeting his or her experiences and perceptions of the many differences and similarities among Friends.
- 6) Indicates an interest in the wider body of Friends.

After the committee received and read all responses, we used a scale based on the criteria to rank the seven candidates' strengths to serve as FWCC delegates from our yearly meeting. By eleventh month we saw more than three strong candidates, but knew we could name only three. Our committee held a concern that we should be able to name a replacement if some unforeseen event prevented one of the three named delegates from attending. We contacted the FWCC World Office to inquire whether we could name an alternate delegate. Their response was that they could accept only three delegate names. If the need for a replacement should arise, we would have to consult the World Office at that time.

The three delegates we selected who have set aside their time to attend the conference next spring are Deborah Shaw of Friendship Meeting, Kristin Olson-Kennedy of Davidson Meeting and Emily Stewart of Durham Meeting. We had no male applicants.

Last summer the yearly meeting anticipated a cost of \$2000-\$3000 per delegate. Registration fee for each US delegate to attend is posted as £550, or \$900. Our delegates received a request from the World Office that they pay one third the registration fee this spring. We must reimburse the delegates for what they have paid toward registration so far. We must set aside the remainder of the funds for their full registration and airfare assistance to be available no later than twelfth month of this year. Our committee thanks the yearly meeting for supporting this endeavor.

The Clerk thanked West Grove Meeting for hosting Representative Body.

Undertaking no further business, the meeting closed with worship, intending to meet next on Tenth Month 22nd, 2011, if consistent with Divine Will.

Richard B. Miller, Clerk
David Neil Perry, Recording Clerk

5. Representative Body Location in Tenth Month, 2011

Friends approved that in tenth month the Representative Body would meet at Greenville Monthly Meeting.

6. Committees to Write Epistles, Letters, and the Summary of Exercises

The following Friends volunteered to prepare the following documents: Summary of Exercises – Caroline Whitbeck, Robert Cooper, and Scott Holmes; Letter to Absent Friends – Sidney Lee Kitchens and Deborah Shaw; Epistle to All Friends Everywhere, Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative and Epistle to Ohio Yearly Meeting – Marguerite Dingman, Robert Cooper, Scott Holmes, and Lloyd Lee Wilson.

It was discerned that we would continue the practice of writing specific letters to conservative yearly meetings, as well as one to Friends everywhere all of which are intended to express our spiritual condition.

7. Travel Minute for Lloyd Lee Wilson

The travel minute from Rich Square Monthly Meeting for Lloyd Lee Wilson to “visit groups outside North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative who have made inquiries and expressed interest in learning more about our yearly meeting,” was read and Friends approved that the clerk of the yearly meeting endorse the minute.

8. Hospitality Committee and Registrar Report

Cheryl Fetterman presented a report on behalf of the Hospitality Committee and as Registrar, and Friends approved including the report in the minutes and expressed their appreciation for the committee and Cheryl in particular.

There are 103 people attending this year. Fifteen attenders are 18 years or younger. Sixteen attenders are visitors from other meetings.

The cost of golf carts, admission fee for bowling, the UNCW campus-use fee, and speaker travel was included in the registration fee.

There were too many late registrations and changes. The registrar took a “what would you do if Jesus knocked on your door” approach to late registrations. Although UNCW is happy to take our money for extra people, it is difficult for UNCW to get last minute rooms ready if their set up crew has already been through the dorm with sheets and to lower beds. There is also a burden on the hospitality committee due to last minute registrations and changes.

The CIS building that we usually use was not available this summer due to a youth entrepreneurship program previously scheduled. The bookstore, displays, and youth activities space have been moved into the dorm.

We have had a suggestion that Wesleyan College in Fayetteville would be a nice place to have yearly meeting. This suggestion is made partly due to bathroom arrangements in Cornerstone Hall. During this yearly meeting a couple of the hospitality committee members plan to look at other possible arrangements here at UNCW.

9. Report by School of the Spirit Participants

Kristin Olson-Kennedy and Marguerite Dingman expressed thanks for the support of the yearly meeting in being able to participate in School of the Spirit: On Being a Spiritual Nurturer program. They read the epistle from the 8th class of the program and spoke about the powerful impacts the experience had on their hearts and on their connections with Spirit, family and communities of faith. They spoke about having a greater ability to listen to and follow leadings, allowing their fuller presence in those leadings and in the monthly and yearly meetings. Kristin offered to share her retreat program “Uncovering our Hidden Wholeness” with Friends anywhere. She has shared this with Piedmont Friends Fellowship, Charlotte Monthly Meeting and also Davidson Monthly Meeting.

She understands this as one way to give back what she has received.

Friends approved that the epistle be included in the minutes.

Friends also expressed appreciation for Carole Treadway's work as a Core Teacher of the program. She has retired from that role, and her ability to faithfully carry the spirit of this community and the conservative tradition with her in that work has been invaluable for the students and this yearly meeting.

10. Epistle from the 8th Class of the School of the Spirit: On Being a Spiritual Nurturer Program

To Friends Everywhere,

Two years ago, 23 women and men arrived at Avila Retreat Center in Durham NC to form the eighth Class of the School of the Spirit Ministry's *On Being a Spiritual Nurturer* program. We came from diverse backgrounds: most of us from unprogrammed liberal and conservative meetings and some from other branches of Quakerism or the Episcopal Church. All of us came with a deep commitment to strengthen our understanding of God, which we call by many names or no name. We also came with a diversity of belief and vocabulary, expecting to explore them together. We could not have anticipated that each of us would emerge from the program so transformed.

Extensive readings in Quaker literature, Bible passages, and writings from a variety of faith traditions provided the background knowledge for each residency. With the guidance of our core teachers and visiting teachers and ministers, we have explored how to translate unfamiliar or difficult language and concepts in the context of our individual beliefs and experiences. With our shared stories we have met and learned from each other. Like Jacob with the angel, we have wrestled with hard things and held each other in times of grief and loss. We have grappled with spiritual disciplines, Christian vocabulary and symbols, our

Quaker past and present, and the wisdom of other faith traditions. We have been challenged and stretched.

This was both head and heart work. Worship permeated each residency: We began each day with an hour of worship and worship was woven into the fabric of our life together. Reflection papers and projects, periodic self and group exams, and times spent in our smaller Koinonia groups have helped us begin to heal all that has prevented our growing more fully into being the people God created us to be. Our care committees at home held us in prayer and bridged the space between residencies. We have laughed until our sides ached and wept in each other's arms. We have sung, danced, walked the labyrinth, and delighted in the beauty of nature. We have learned to trust each other in our vulnerability, to accompany one another on our journeys, and to name and celebrate the small victories. We have each been changed.

Two years later, we leave the program, but not the School of the Spirit. Together we have explored what ministry is, what gifts we each have to share, and what our faith communities might need from us. We have a deeper and holier appreciation of our diversity, as well as the common ground we can stand on. We bring you the joy we have found in the Blessed Community we have formed and the compassion we have experienced as we learned to listen beneath the words and to be companions for one another. The good news we bring is that we are all held and grounded in God's love. Out of that grows the fruit of the spirit as well as compassion, unity within diversity, and interconnectedness, even as we walk our own paths. We leave with our hearts tender and broken open: opened so that we can give and receive the Love we have felt and shared.

In that Spirit of Love,

On Being a Spiritual Nurturer

Eighth Class

11. Reports from the Monthly Meetings

Reports from the monthly meetings were read and accepted:

Report from Davidson Monthly Meeting

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Jan Blodgett
Recording Clerk: Malcolm Campbell
Treasurer: Barbara Gardiner

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2011 Sessions

Patty Levering Kristen Olson-Kennedy
David Perry

Changes in membership

1 new member: Susan Olson (Susie) Lawson
2 released from membership: Paul and Evelyn (Evie) Hultberg have moved and joined Swannanoa Valley Meeting.
No members' deaths to report.
No birth memberships recorded

Ministers and Elders

Davidson Friends Meeting has no newly recorded ministers or elders.

Advices Read

Advices were not read.

Report from Durham Monthly Meeting

Please accept the following members of Durham Monthly Meeting named as representatives to North Carolina Yearly Meeting sessions this year: Jessica Barnhill, Gail Curry, Marguerite Dingman, Joyce Frederick, Hanna Hobson, JoAnne Jeffries, William Jeffries, Robert Passmore, Emily Stewart, Andrew Wright.

We have 89 members (79 adults are full meeting members, 10 are adult "Family members"), 344 adult attenders, in 215

households. Among distant friends, there are 32 full meeting members plus 25 "Family members" who are now adults.

There are 136 children including 8 babies, 26 three to five year-olds, 20 1st to 3rd graders, 17 4th to 5th graders, 29 6th to 8th graders, and 36 9th to 12th graders.

We welcomed the following as new members of our meeting: Jennifer MacCormack, 10/10/10; Laura Ellen Sell, and her children, Charles Davies Frank and Honoraria Davenport Frank, 3/13/11; Luke Hartford, 6/12/11.

Two babies baby were born in the last year: Rosalia Marjorie Edmonds was born 27 February, 2011; Kell Ulysses Sayre was born 30 May, 2011.

We mourned the passing on March 6, 2011 of Fredda Stevenson. Fredda was an attender at Durham Friends Meeting since 1977 when she moved to Durham with her husband Hale. Fredda was the only Friend, so far as we know who was "drafted" into membership at Durham Friends Meeting. She never felt able to request membership, so instead the meeting simply approved her membership and she graciously accepted. The memorial meeting was held in the manner of Friends on April 2, 2011.

The queries were read and answered during monthly meetings for worship with attention to business. Ministry and Counsel reviewed the Queries for Ministry and Oversight during their monthly meetings. Joe Graedon serves as clerk, Marguerite Dingman as assistant clerk, Virginia Lee as recording clerk and Larry Chapman as Treasurer. In 2011-2012, Marguerite Dingman will serve as clerk and Joe Graedon will be assistant clerk and Virginia Lee will be recording clerk and Larry Chapman will be treasurer. John Hunter serves as our archivist/historian.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Graedon, Clerk

Report from Fayetteville Monthly Meeting

The following Friends will represent Fayetteville Monthly Meeting at North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative

sessions this year: Bob Cooper, Chuck Fager, Wendy Michener, and Susan Lees.

Chuck Fager serves as Clerk, Wendy Michener and Ann Ashford as Recording Clerks, and Susan Lees as Treasurer.

There are no deaths, marriages, or changes in membership to report.

No ministers or elders have been recorded. The Queries have been read and answered, and the Advices have been read.

Report from Friendship Monthly Meeting

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Sidney Lee Kitchens
Recording Clerk: Benji Hebner III
Treasurer: Ray Treadway

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2011 Sessions

Carole Treadway Ray Treadway Sidney Lee Kitchens
Deborah Shaw Claire Koster

Changes in membership

We lost two members through death:

October 2010 - Edith Mackie

January 2011 - Nate Bailey-Harvey

November 2010 - John Cardarelli transferred his membership to Salem Meeting, Winston-Salem.

April 2011 - Kitty Allen and Peter Seiler were removed due to no contact information for a number of years.

Nicole Martin and Gabriel Martin were removed by request of parent.

Frank, Josephine and Patrick Keegan were removed by request of Frank Keegan.

June 2011 - Don Smith transferred his membership from Beacon Hill Friends.

Our membership total is now 105 (including 6 sojourners).

Ministers and Elders

Friendship Friends Meeting has no newly recorded ministers or elders.

Advices Read

Report from Greenville Monthly Meeting

Richard Miller serves as clerk; Joanne Holden as recording clerk and Mary Miller as treasurer. The Advices were read and the Queries answered. Richard Miller, Mary Miller and Joanne Holden are named representatives to Yearly Meeting.

We welcomed Carole Cannon as a new member of meeting this year and celebrated the birth of Ethan Self born to new attender Kelly Self. Joanne Holden was appointed elder.

Richard Miller, Clerk

Report from Rich Square Monthly Meeting

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Barbara C. Gosney
Recording Clerk: Susan S. Wilson
Treasurer: Robert E. Gosney

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2011 Sessions

Barbara Gosney Robert Gosney Edward Pearce
Lloyd Lee Wilson Susan Wilson

Changes in membership

No new members. Loss of six members and one sojourning member:

Nicholas Remmes asked to be released from membership due to distance and inactivity with the meeting.

William and Kathryn Jones transferred to Maury River Friends Meeting in Baltimore Yearly Meeting near their home in Virginia.

Janis and Charles Ansell transferred to West Grove Friends Meeting in this yearly meeting to participate in the meeting nearest their new home.

James Edgar Parker 90, of Roanoke Rapids, NC died first day August 8, 2010

One sojourning member, Anne Lilley Lippincott, 86, of Scotland Neck, NC died firstday, August 15, 2010. She was a sojourning member of Cedar Grove Friends Meeting, Rich Square Monthly Meeting and one of the founding members of Virginia Beach Friends Meeting.

No birth memberships recorded.

We heard from our distant member, Hannah Jones Ripani, her husband Neil Ripani and son Tristan Ripani, of the birth of Laurel Ann Ripani on 05/27/2011.

No marriages recorded under the care of our meeting.

Ministers and Elders

Rich Square Monthly Meeting has no newly recorded ministers or elders. One of our elders, Charles Ansell has changed his membership to West Grove Monthly Meeting.

Advices Read

Rich Square Monthly Meeting heard The Advices read in our meeting for worship on first month 2, 2011. All queries for monthly meetings were answered during the past year and are forwarded to this yearly meeting.

Report from Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting

Monthly Meeting Officers

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Clerk: | Judith Stevens |
| Recording Clerk: | Patricia Swan |
| Treasurer: | David French |

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2011 Sessions

Nancy Craft, Ruth Anne Childres, Keith Williamson, Gigi Williamson

Changes in membership

2 new members by transfer: David and Barbara French transferred from Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, Southeast Yearly Meeting, on November 14, 2010.

1 new member: Patricia Swan became a member on September 12, 2010.

1 marriage: Judith Stevens married Jack Callan on April 17, 2011.

No members' deaths to report.

No release from membership to report.

1 birth was recorded to member Wes Cheney and attender Jennifer Cheney: Their son Kelvin Cheney.

Total membership is 123 adults and 5 children.

Ministers and Elders

Virginia Beach Friends Meeting has no newly recorded ministers or elders.

Advices Read

Virginia Beach Friends Meeting heard the Advices read during meeting on seventh month 10, 2011.

Report from West Grove Monthly Meeting

The queries have been read and answered, and the Advices have been read. The clerk is directed to forward the query answers to our approaching yearly meeting. To represent us therein we appoint Charles and Janis Ansell, Eric and Jennifer Ginsburg, Les Fleming, Dora Owens, Charles and Laurie Newlin, and such others as are able to attend.

No births, deaths, or marriages among our members were recorded, although West Grove Friends shared in the sorrow over the passing of Laurie Newlin's father, Larramore Earl "Larry" Freeman.

Haven Kimmel-Svara was welcomed as a new member to West Grove. The transfers of membership of Charles and Janis Ansell from Rich Square Monthly Meeting to West Grove were welcomed with appreciation to Rich Square for having nurtured the Ansell's during their spiritual journeys. No ministers or elders were recorded during the year. To the body of Ministers, Elders and Overseers, Les Fleming has been added as an overseer.

Charles Ansell has been appointed Clerk for the coming year; Haven Kimmel-Svara continues as Recording Clerk; and Dora Owens continues as Treasurer.

Taken from the minutes,
Jennifer Ginsburg, Clerk

Report from Wilmington Monthly Meeting

Wilmington Friends Meeting did not record any deaths, births, or marriages this year. The advices were read and the queries answered. No ministers or elders were recorded this year, as we are undergoing a time of seasoning.

Cheryl Fetterman faithfully served as clerk until 1st month 2011, when clerking duties were assumed by Goldie Walton for the remainder of the year. Betsy Johnson continues to serve as co-clerk and we are grateful for Connie Keller assuming the role as recording clerk for the rest of the year. We have 33 members, 35 attenders at last count, and approximately 12 to 15 members and attenders faithfully attending weekly worship.

12. Friends Committee on National Legislation

Bill Jeffries reported on Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). He spoke about FCNL lobbying based on input from Friends on behalf of the voiceless, in many ways following the directives of Isaiah. He encouraged Friends to try to attend the annual meeting of FCNL and provide additional input. He also encouraged us to use the resources of FCNL to learn about legislation and to communicate with legislators about Friends' concerns.

The meeting adjourned, intending to meet again on Fifth Day afternoon at 1:00 p.m.

Fifth day afternoon The Fourteenth of Seventh Month

The meeting convened near the appointed hour.

13. Quaker House (Fayetteville)

Chuck Fager reported on the state of Quaker House in Fayetteville. He told us that what was on his mind was that it has been a busy year, and that it was tough to make the budget, but they made it, with thanks for the support from the yearly meeting and individuals in it. He said that there have been lots of calls to the GI Rights hotline, that they are working hard to find a new director who he hopes to introduce to us next year, and that they held a good conference in first month of this year regarding the military-industrial complex.

What was on his heart was that they see and see, but do not perceive, they hear and hear, but do not understand. The concern that weighs on him (as he described it) is that we live in a police state rather than a constitutional democracy, with torture still authorized, wiretapping going on, and participation in several wars. He feels that we are in great peril and our protests and political action have not been effective. He called on us to pay attention to these trends and develop a new plan to address them.

14. Webpage Committee Report

Barbara Gosney reported on behalf of the webpage committee. Many links to individual monthly meetings are out of date and the email addresses are not working properly. Updates have not been successful. Tommy Gipson, who maintains the webpage, would like to recreate the files and is asking for the most current contact information for the clerk of meetings as well as a secondary contact person, if possible.

To address the concern about what to place on the webpage for inquirers from outside the current yearly meeting geographical area, the webpage committee presented the following proposal:

Feeling a close connection to North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)? We welcome inquiries about individual membership and monthly meeting affiliation. Modern modes of travel and communication make long distances a less formidable obstacle to strong relationships

among Friends than was the case in previous generations. Meaningful membership is possible where the commitment to a strong, healthy relationship is sustained.

Individual Membership: In our yearly meeting, individual membership rests with a monthly meeting, not the yearly meeting. Several monthly meetings have members who live outside their local area, or outside North Carolina. The quality of the relationship between the individual and the meeting is more important than the physical distance that separates them. To begin exploring membership with us, get to know the Friends in one of our monthly meetings. Information about locations, times of worship, etc., are available from the monthly meeting contacts.

Monthly Meeting Affiliation: North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) has a long history of welcoming unaffiliated monthly meetings into the yearly meeting. The most recent of these was Davidson Monthly Meeting in 2009. Monthly meetings interested in exploring affiliation should begin by sending representatives to our yearly meeting sessions, Representative Body meetings, and other events (see the Calendar). If interest continues, a period of intentional intervisitation and dialogue would follow.

Questions? Ask - LloydLeeWilson@gmail.com

Friends approved the proposal as presented, with a request for the webpage committee to report to Representative Body in Tenth Month to get feedback how this appears and functions.

The meeting adjourned, intending to meet Sixth Day morning at 9:00 a.m.

**Sixth Day Morning
The Fifteenth of Seventh Month**

The meeting convened near the appointed hour, after a group photograph was taken with those who happened to be present.

15. Visitors (Part Two)

Visiting Friends introduced themselves, were welcomed and a travel minute for Anne Margaret (Meg) McCormick from Iowa Yearly Meeting was read.

Charlie Miller, Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA;
Lucinda Reichely, Unami Monthly Meeting, Pennsburg, PA,
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting;
Gerald (Jerry) Rudolph, Columbia Friends Meeting,
Columbia, SC, SAYMA;
Nathan Sebens, Mt. Airy Monthly Meeting, Mt. Airy, NC,
NCYM-FUM.

Friends approved that the clerk endorse the minute of travel.

16. Multimedia Records

Friends approved the inclusion of photographs in the minutes book, cost permitting. Friends also approved including the photographs on the yearly meeting website.

Friends approved that audio recordings of the evening speaker sessions be provided on the yearly meeting website.

17. NCYMC Facebook Page

It has been discovered that there is a Facebook page named for our yearly meeting that has not been updated since 2009, but which inquirers are discovering and to which posts are being made. No one present was quite sure of the origins of the page, and we cannot control that page since we are not the owner.

There is a tension between the nature of Facebook posts being an individual's experience, and the fact that ours is an experience of a faith community, not an individual.

We discerned that the owner will be contacted by an ad-hoc committee including Barbara Gosney, Karen Stewart and Rebecca Ruhlen, in order to thank the person and seek

involvement in the caretaking of the Facebook page. We will explore that further as soon as information is obtained.

In addition, Friends are asked to consider what it would mean to be voices for their own experiences within our body, if they feel led to respond to posts on the page. We will revisit this topic at the Representative Body in Tenth Month.

18. Friends World Committee for Consultation

Nancy Craft and Barbara Gosney reported on Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). Because of the timing of the World Conference, the Section of the Americas annual meeting will take place at the World Conference, and is expected to have great participation as a result. In addition, there has been work done to try to have equal representation and communication for all members of the Section of the Americas. Also coming up is the Youth Pilgrimage in Europe next year for those ages 16-18.

Delegates to the World Gathering from our yearly meeting are Deborah Shaw, Kristin Olson-Kennedy and Emily Stewart. There is space at the World Gathering for additional people, and applications can be made via the FWCC website. Money to fund the travel and registration for our delegates is still needed, and monthly meetings are encouraged to consider contributing to that need.

The meeting adjourned, intending to meet Sixth Day Afternoon at 2:20 p.m.

Sixth Day Afternoon The Fifteenth of Seventh Month

The meeting convened near the appointed hour.

19. Visitors (Part Three)

Visiting Friends introduced themselves and were welcomed.

Sharon Frame, Gwynedd Monthly Meeting, Gwynedd, PA,
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting,

Bruce Arnold, Croatan Friends, New Bern, NC, unaffiliated,
Kimberly Day-Lewis, attender at Wilmington Monthly
Meeting, member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.

20. *Epistle from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)*

*An epistle from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) was
read and approved to be included in the minutes:*

7/31/2010

To Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting,
Conservative:

Gathered on the campus of Scattergood Friends School
in our 133rd Annual Session, we heard prayerfully the
reading of the letter from your 2010 yearly meeting. We join
you in the celebration of signs of growth and spiritual life
among Conservative Friends.

At this year's annual sessions we prepare to welcome
next year's Annual Gathering of the Friends General
Conference on the campus of Grinnell College in Iowa. In
our opening session, Iowa Friends related their experiences
of participating in the FGC Annual Gathering. We were
challenged to reflect upon what it means to be Conservative
Friends, and how we relate now to our historic practice of
complete dependence on the Spirit in both worship and
ministry. The spiritual practice of our meeting finds daily
expression in the morning meetings where the business of
the yearly meeting is considered in a prayerful search for
unity.

We find hope as we hear reports from our monthly
meetings, responses to the Advices and Queries, the minutes
from Adult Young Friends, Young Friends and Junior
Yearly Meeting, and reports from 93 delegates and
representatives to Friends' national and international
organizations. In the face of the challenges of war,
environmental degradation, the exploitation of labor, and the
persecution of immigrants at home and abroad, we discern

the ways in which the Spirit is at work in the world today. As the main ministry of the yearly meeting, Scattergood Friends School holds a special place in our hearts, and we search for ways to strengthen and nurture its work under the direction of its new Head. A special joy comes from hearing the annual report of Scattergood Farm, with its growing network of outreach into the broader community. In the early morning, we gather for Bible study in hopes of reading the Bible as early Friends did, and after our evening collection, we gather for song.

Members of our meeting have found spiritual nurture in visiting your annual meeting in the past. Mindful of our common heritage as Conservative Friends committed to waiting worship and ministry under the leadership of the Spirit, we look for the way to open for intervisitation in the future.

In loving Friendship and on behalf of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative),
Deborah Fisch, clerk

21. Epistle from Ohio Yearly Meeting

An epistle from Ohio Yearly Meeting was read and approved to be included in the minutes:

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose light we have gathered for our one hundred ninety-eighth annual session at Stillwater meetinghouse near Barnesville, Ohio.

Our yearly meeting this Eighth Month of 2010 brings us time together for prayer, business sessions and labors

together to discern the Lord's will for us in our lives. It has been blessed by the Lord in many ways, including the attendance of visitors. Among these visitors we appreciate the presence and prayers of Nancy Craft, who is a blessing to us, and continues to help our two yearly meetings stay connected.

The Lord is leading us as we consider many topics through morning sharing sessions, committee meetings, prayer together, and times of fellowship. We are hearing the need for continued and increased nurture for Friends afar and near, for faithfulness, and for walking in a way that befits citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Friends have built one another up through looking at particular "gems" from scripture, both Old and New Testament, reminding each other of our prophetic witness, of the indwelling Christ, the hope within us, sharing time considering ways to reach out to others, testimonies from Friends in their spiritual journeys, and simple acts such as sharing time together at meals, getting to know one another better, and praying together.

We have heard from Friends who appreciated the gathering in Sixth Month held at Stillwater, and who appreciate our efforts to be available through our web site and the internet presence of a number of our meetings and members.

May the Lord continue to bind our yearly meetings together in Christian love and fellowship, and guide us in our work for His Kingdom.

In the light and love of our Lord,
Seth Hinshaw, Clerk
Ohio Yearly Meeting

22. American Friends Service Committee

Ruth Anne Childres reported on American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Previously, due to financial difficulties, AFSC was struggling and downsized the board. They did maintain the size of the corporation to ensure the inclusion of Friends from more backgrounds.

Recently, AFSC has been more upbeat, asking for more input from meetings. They have had conference calls in which they have discussed their traveling art show showing the impact of the war in Afghanistan, and other work to combat Islamophobia. Work is also being done in Indonesia to work for religious tolerance.

23. Friends Historical Collection

Gwen Gosney Erickson reported on the work of the Friends Historical Collection at Guilford College. She gave an overview of the department, which is preserving and providing access not only to the written word, but also images, artifacts and textiles. They are converting older audio into more stable formats. They are continuing an oral history project of former residents of Mary Hobbs Hall at Guilford.

The college is still moving forward with the Ancestry.com partnership to digitize meeting records and make them available online. Also, a digital yearbook project of Guilford College students from 1911-2005 is now online. Finally, the webpage is being updated so that one can check what records are on file by way of the webpage.

Gwen thanked the yearly meeting, Friendship and Davidson Meetings for financial contributions, and noted the deposit of records by Rich Square and Wilmington Meetings. She also noted that they archive newsletters from Durham Friendship and Virginia Beach Monthly Meetings.

24. Quaker Spring

Kristin Olsen-Kennedy reported that she attended Quaker Spring in New Hampshire at the Meeting School in Sixth Month. This was begun five years ago as a less scheduled, more open and relaxed gathering centered on spiritual refreshment. This year about 70 people attended at various times, with Friends from a wide range of yearly meetings. Kristin was the only one from North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative, although there were several Friends from Ohio Yearly Meeting,

and one from Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative. Other Friends came from the various yearly meetings on the east coast.

There was unprogrammed bible reading, meeting for worship, forums led by attenders, swimming, meditative walking, and more, but only one thing happened at a time. Participants were urged to take naps and spend time with each other, and Kristin found the experience very rich and deeply moving.

Forums included eldering, traveling ministries, and living in intentional community. In the evenings a query was read, with responses shared out of the silence. Minutes of exercises are available on the website quakerspring.org. Plans are to hold Quaker Spring next year at the location of previous gatherings, in Barnesville, Ohio.

25. Virginia Beach Friends School

A report from Virginia Beach Friends School was read and Friends approved that it be included in the minutes:

I am pleased to convey greetings to your meeting from the staff and students of Virginia Beach Friends School. Here is a brief overview of the life and growth of our school during the 2010-2011 school year, as well as some future plans.

- The economic downturn is presenting financial challenges to everyone including independent schools throughout the country and we are no exception. Enrollment for the 2010-2011 year was slightly lower than the previous year.
- On a brighter note, our foreign student outreach continued to bring students from a variety of countries and cultures to VBFS including China, Vietnam, Holland and Turkey.
- A group of Upper and Middle School students visited Peru over Spring Break. They had a wonderful and enriching experience and took part in a variety of community projects.

- VBFS hosted the Robert Sergeant Forensics Competition for independent schools in April and several of our students won medals.
- For the first time ever, a small group of Upper School students entered the WHRO Great Computer challenge and walked away with the first place trophy in the editing division! We were very proud.
- We graduated 15 students this June who are all going on to colleges in various parts of the USA.
- T. Ed, our Head of School, went on a leave of absence in March and I acted as head until the end of the school year. He has subsequently moved to a school in Chicago. I will be Head of School for the 2011-2012 school year.
- A new leadership model will be utilized for the upcoming year, bringing on board a leadership team comprising five teachers. Each teacher will share responsibility with the head for one aspect of the day to day operations of the school: human resources, the physical plant, communication, curriculum and student affairs.
- The school is undergoing a significant technology upgrade this summer having received a generous loan which, if matched, will turn into a grant. New computers, an upgraded wireless system and “SMARTBoards” are on order. Training for staff will take place towards the end of August.

Thank you for your interest, and your support of our school as we continue to offer students an enriching and high quality education, steeped in the tenets and values of Quaker tradition.

Linda Serrette, Head of School

*The meeting adjourned, intending to meet Seventh Day morning
at 9:00 a.m.*

**Seventh Day Morning
The Sixteenth of Seventh Month**

The meeting convened near the appointed hour.

26. Visitors (Part Four)

A visiting Friend introduced himself and was welcomed.

Ken Randall, Brigflatts Local Meeting, Kendal and Sedbergh
Monthly Meeting, Britain Yearly Meeting;

27. State of the Society Reports

*State of the Society reports from the monthly meetings
were shared. The reports are included in the minutes below.*

Davidson Monthly Meeting

Questions for consideration in preparing the report were:
Who are we as a meeting? What matters to us? How are we
changing? Where is the Life in the meeting?

Gathering for meeting for worship and for fellowship and
fun have been the strengths of our meeting this year. We have
been reminded of the importance to us of our community as we
have been stretched to respond to the serious illnesses and
problems faced by so many of us. We have also been blessed by
the courage and insights shared with us by some of these friends.

We continue to feel the effects of the decreased numbers of
children coming to meeting and First Day School, but we are
pleased to have a number of Davidson College students who
come and enrich our worship. Our committee structure
continues to evolve as we adapt to changes in persons' lives and
involvement in the meeting. We have fewer committees, but the
work of the meeting and a high level of caring for one another
remain strong.

Our effort to build a meetinghouse has had moments of
bringing unity and focus for us and times when it has felt very
much on the back burner. The Meetinghouse Visioning
Committee, with commitment and joy, has been the ongoing
shepherd of the dream while plans developed and worked their
way slowly through the town planning committee and as efforts

to raise money for the project garnered good support. The need to have a place for a memorial service for the husband of a person in the meeting highlighted how much it will mean to us to have our own space.

We have had a number of special activities this year. The book study group is ongoing. A book on Buddhism and Christianity was studied in the fall, and in the spring Patty Levering's FGC Bible talks. Peace and Social Concerns presented an informative and inspiring panel on poverty issues being addressed by persons in our meeting. Our spiritual lives were enriched by Don Carroll's sharing of his spiritual journey. We had our first ever official meeting retreat. We began in the morning with a work project with our local Habitat for Humanity, with which a member of our meeting is a staff person. In the afternoon we were led by our own Kristin Olson-Kennedy in sharing our spiritual stories, an experience that surprised us with the joys it gave us. We have begun developing a supportive relationship with Foothills Friends in Greenville, SC, and we continue to support people in our meeting active among Friends outside the meeting.

Our meeting has had quite a journey, and in April we will have a chance to reflect on just what that spiritual journey has been. Our story has been touched by connection with the yearly meeting, and the presence of Friends from the yearly meeting will enrich our story-telling.

Durham Monthly Meeting

Durham Monthly Meeting offers two meetings for worship on first days, including a small early worship, and has a small mid-week worship and discussion on fourth days. First Day School meets for ages 3-5, Grades 1-3, and 4-5, 6-8, and high school groups. Infants stay with a caregiver during meeting for worship. Younger children have a singing Sunday once monthly. Middle and high school students conduct Junior Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business monthly.

Other avenues for worship include occasional New Testament Study, an active Adult Education program, Youth programs and fundraisers, and a monthly Quaker Q & A, which

is informal education for newcomers regarding Quaker faith and practice.

We mourn the loss of Fredda Stevenson who departed this life on Third Month 6th, 2011. A memorial meeting for worship was held on Fourth Month 2nd at Durham Friends Meeting.

Many committees and individuals followed leadings that deepened our experience as a whole. Adult Education has been especially active this year, facilitating numerous forums. Topics have encompassed our relationships with the wider Quaker community. Some of our well-attended forums have included: "Great Inspirations from FGC," "The Nativity of Jesus: For Grown Ups," "Theological Diversity Among Liberal Friends: What's Belief Got To Do With It?," "Process Theology," "War Tax Resistance," "Considering God in a Postmodern Context," and "Depth and Distraction: Individual Responsibility and Communal Support for Sanctity in Meeting for Worship." The forum on theological diversity was especially well attended and created an opportunity for Friends with a variety of beliefs and backgrounds to share profound questions and understandings. Minutes from this forum were posted to our newsletter and offer a wonderful opportunity for others to appreciate the thoughtful approach we have taken to this exploration. John Hunter facilitated another successful series of Quaker 101 classes in early 2011.

Robert Fischer led a course on "A Friendly Introduction to the Prophets," A Bible study on the Old Testament prophets with particular attention to how early Quakers used the prophets and how reading the prophets can help us tackle contemporary issues.

Our Youth Ministries program has flourished during the past year in part because of superb leadership from Peter Skillern and John St Clair. In addition, after due deliberation, Durham Friends Meeting hired Jordan Taylor to be our Youth Ministries Administrative Assistant with a maximum of 40 hours per month. That decision has been a great blessing as Jordan has helped the program immeasurably. We have 136 children and young people in our program with 25 adult volunteers. Jordan has initiated improved communication through weekly e-mail newsletters, "alerts" e-mails, social networking tools and

telephone calls. This has improved awareness and participation in various youth ministry activities. Our youth raised over \$500 for farm workers in Newton Grove, NC by making and selling paper cranes over the holidays. Hygiene kits were purchased, assembled and distributed with the funds.

The Space Use Committee has been very active this year. A new floor was installed in the building used by Carolina Friends Early School and our own first day school classes. John Hunter installed a sophisticated assisted listening system for those who have difficulty hearing vocal ministry or announcements. The system employs four microphones that are recessed in unobtrusive locations that allow people with mobile devices to adjust the volume accordingly. Our library space was expanded by installation of additional bookshelves. After nearly a year of thoughtful deliberation, the Space Use Committee presented a comprehensive plan to upgrade the playground area that we share with Carolina Friends Early School and the pathways outside the playground bounded by our property lines. After due deliberation the meeting approved these proposals.

Mike and Marsha Green and Jessica Barnhill and Andrew Wright offered a very meaningful Couples Enrichment Workshop during the fall, 2011.

Peace and Social Concerns took under its care leadings for greater involvement in the Durham community. A faith team continues to meet with a released prisoner in conjunction with the Religious Coalition for Nonviolent Durham. The committee proposed and the meeting endorsed legislation to allow taxpayers to divert their tax payments from going toward the military to going into a separate trust fund. Meeting supported Religious Freedom Peace Tax bill (HR 2085). The committee manned the Peace Booth at the State Fair, Tenth Month 15-24, 2010. Jenny Ratcliffe presented a workshop at the Friends United Meeting sponsored Ecumenical Peace Celebration on November 20 entitled "Peace, Simplicity, Integrity and Earth Care." Durham Friends Meeting co-sponsored with Quaker House an event at Guilford College titled "Military Industrial Complex at 50." A forum, "Laying the Foundation of Peace in Israel and Palestine," with Max and Jane Carter and Will McInerney was very well attended. It created the foundation for participation in a summer

house rebuilding camp in Palestine under the sponsorship of ICAHD (Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions). Amelia O'Rourke-Owens, a young Friend from DFM, will represent the meeting in Palestine to help in this rebuilding project this summer. The meeting raised over \$3,000 to support Amelia's trip.

Our EarthCare committee led a weekend retreat including a local foods dinner, movie, and discussions. They provide monthly education in our newsletter.

While we have consistently adhered to Quaker principles in our management of our finances and property, our Finance Committee and Treasurer brought increased discipline and clarity to our financial information and decision-making. Although we have had significant expenses this year to maintain our facilities, we have managed to stay within our budget and raise more money than we have spent. An Ad Hoc Committee for Discernment of Budget Priorities Process Report provided additional guidance as we move forward.

Our Care and Support Committee improved meeting-wide involvement in support to meeting members transiting life passages. There were many requests for assistance this year that put additional demands on our Care and Support Committee. These people responded to the challenge with great grace and compassion.

We continued a meeting of committee clerks, numbering approximately 25, in order to enhance communication in our growing meeting. The meeting is held twice a year. We continue to seek other ways to maintain the closeness of our community and acquaint newcomers to our testimonies and practices. We hold Friendly Eights, Durham Friends Meeting Reads program, and various lunches and dinners for fellowship and fundraising.

Many friends are involved in wider Quaker organizations including Quaker House, FCNL and AFSC.

During our last very well attended meeting for worship with attention to business (6/12/11) we explored three queries: 1) What do you think of when you think of Durham Friends Meeting (DFM)? How would you describe DFM to someone else? 2) What do we do really well? 3) What should we be doing

better? The spirited discussion and very thoughtful responses can be found in the answers to the queries for this year.

Ministry and Counsel has proposed a three-month experiment beginning this fall to nurture and support more connection between individuals and families in meeting. If approved by meeting for worship with attention to business, we will embark on a "Community Hour" between early meeting for worship (8:00 to 9:00 am) and meeting for worship (10:30 to 11:30 am). What we do during Community Hour will be for all of us to discover. Possibilities include singing, book club, spiritual formation groups, gardening, Bible study and other intergenerational opportunities. We will advise yearly meeting on the outcome of our experiment next year.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting

In the closing months of 2010 and the first part of 2011, Fayetteville Monthly Meeting has maintained weekly worship, and met regularly for business. Worship is meaningful, and mainly silent. Our attendance continues in the range of four to eight. We regret it to report that a young couple whose newborn son was our main presence of youth left the area at the end of the past year.

We have had no deaths or catastrophic illnesses among our members this year, but the vicissitudes of age and health are recurrently felt, particularly in our older ranks.

Our adult study sessions have continued to be rich and mind stretching experiences. Besides preparing answers to the queries, we finished our consideration of the book, *A Very Short Introduction to Quakerism*, and took up the volume, *If the Church Were Christian*, which we continue to read and discuss to our benefit.

Our continuing concern for us has been the plight of our homeless neighbor and visitor who has been on the sex offender registry, long after completing a prison sentence for his offence and with no repeat offenses. In late 2010 he became eligible to petition the courts for release from the registry and its onerous restrictions. There are several of us of us and others from local churches who wrote letters on his behalf, and local officials have indicated they would not oppose the petition. Thus we had

hopes that it would have been acted on and granted by now. However, pointless delays in the court system have thus far prevented a hearing on the petition and, at this writing, he remains stranded on the doorstep to a more free life.

The economic hard times have touched some of us directly, and concern us all. We hope and pray for improvement in the general conditions of our society.

Friendship Monthly Meeting

It is very difficult attempting to discern and write about the state of a spiritual society in which one is a proud member. With some fear and trembling we dare to say first of all that Truth is indeed prospering at Friendship Meeting. We have had a pleasant mix of meetings for worship in which we stood together on sacred ground the entire time in gathered silence as well as times where Spirit-led vocal ministry reminded us of the power and beauty of the spoken word (sometimes in song!). We feel confident saying that we, as a faith community, are engaged in the daily task of living into and fanning the divine spark, that of God, that is within us all.

Some of the scheduled ongoing activities that have ably supported the spiritual life of the meeting are the monthly (third First Day) Bible study which is moving slowly but surely through the Gospel of John. It has continued through this year providing insights and spiritual profit for folks who have participated in it. From time to time vocal ministry in the regular meeting for worship has had its origins in the pre-meeting Bible ponderings.

The fourth First Day of the month at 9am we have had ongoing sessions titled, "Deepening the Spiritual Life of the Meeting," which has been a series of facilitated worship sharing sessions responding to Queries created by the facilitator. A sampling of some of the queries that were asked follow: Who are you as a Quaker? (Now, not in the past.) What does being Quaker mean to you, to your personal life, your family life, your community life, your professional life, your life as a citizen of a country...? What brought me to Quakerism in the first place, and why have I stayed? If I grew up Quaker, when and how did I realize it was a good fit, and why have I stayed? Why do I come

to meeting for worship? What do I find? What is my experience of God, the Divine, or whatever you want to call it? How do I witness my Quakerism in my life outside of meeting? Who is Jesus, or Christ, to me? How have my thoughts and feelings about Jesus or Christ changed over the course of my life and spiritual development? What blocks have I had, or do I have, to thinking about or talking about Jesus or Christ?

You might easily imagine how interesting and productive some of the discussions we have had around these queries have been for us individually and as a community.

Extended worship - an hour of worship before meeting - continues on those months with a fifth First Day and although the numbers have sometimes been few in attendance it continues to be a sweet time of worship together for those seeking some extra corporate contemplative time.

Materially we continue to prosper or at least certainly have the capability of meeting our bills with funds left over to help sustain various Quaker organizations we have historically supported. Our House and Grounds committee has been outstandingly industrious through the year in resolving ongoing landscaping problems to the benefit of those who volunteer to mow. They have worked faithfully to maintain that which needed repairing and recently the committee has ambitiously taken on the tearing down and reconstruction of our back porch area deck which has been long needed. It is a wonderful thing to have a sound material body as the dwelling place for our corporate spirit.

The bone and sinew of a Quaker meeting could be seen as the committees and the work that goes on in and through them. Friendship Meeting is blessed with Spirit-led, capable committees which tend to the work and ministries of the meeting. Our Peace and Social Concerns committee continues as our largest ongoing committee and exemplifies our desire to be of service in the community beyond the meeting

The heartbeat of any Quaker meeting is the meeting for worship with a concern for business. Although we as individuals may differ in our opinions as to whether we might consider ours to be well attended, our sense of the business meetings is that we strive to have our intelligence guided by that Spirit which the

Religious Society of Friends has typically believed is within each one of us. We have had differences on issues and the right course to follow while remaining engaged in that struggle to arrive at the sense of the meeting that is Divine will for us corporately in respect for each individual contribution among us. Our annual meeting retreat focused on business meeting and enriched our understandings of what it means to be responsive to the Holy Spirit and to one another as we engage in this form of worship and discernment. Our keynote speaker emphasized the importance of responsibility and commitment in our business meetings with a quote from John Adams, "There are only two creatures of value, those who make the commitment and those who require the commitment."

A couple of issues continue to challenge and sometimes baffle us. One, which we know is a luxury problem but even so at times can be vexatious, is the renovation of our meeting space. We have had many members labor and pour many hours of their time into the devising and revising of plans that would be appropriate for the space we have and the numbers we hope to serve. Currently we are struggling with how to begin and carry out the raising of funds sufficient to accomplish our plans. Any meeting which has tried to purchase, build or renovate a meeting space can appreciate the irritation and joy of this ambition. We trust that since we felt led by the Spirit to create a plan, we shall find the means to carry it out.

The second issue of perhaps deeper and certainly more sensitive importance is answering how to meet the spiritual needs of our children through childcare and religious education. There are some who have stepped up, spent a lot of time and have done an amazing job with the resources available to look out for our youngest members/attenders recognizing there is no more important issue to the ongoing life of the meeting than trying to meet the needs of our children who are just beginning their spiritual journeys within a faith community. This has been a perennial issue at Friendship Meeting and a number of persons have carried the torch over the years as we have sought to have and maintain that which we know we cannot do without.

In the past year we have had more than the usual amount of young Friends in attendance from Guilford College two of whom

have moved their membership to Friendship and who have enhanced the life of our meeting with their involvement and creative energies on our committees. We are grateful for their presence.

At the same time we are richly blessed with a goodly number of elder friends who in their attendance with us bring decades of experience in many matters great and small. Their years of faithful practice in sitting in and centering down in meeting for worship or business bring a wealth of dignity and a gravity which cannot be measured in earthly terms. A line from a John Burroughs poem "Waiting" brings to mind the effect brought about by our elder friends. "The waters know their own, and draw the brook that springs in yonder height; so flows the good with equal law unto the soul of pure delight."

Greenville Monthly Meeting

Our meeting has experienced an increase in vocal ministry this year and we have seen our efforts to nurture this ministry rewarded by its continuing and deepening as the year progressed. Attender Carol Cannon has become progressively more involved in meeting and we have welcomed her into membership. Carol's daughter, Kelly Self, is a regular attender now as well. Kelly gave birth to her son Ethan on July 1 and we are excitedly anticipating the first appearance of Ethan Self at meeting.

Our young people continue to thrive. Rachel Miller retains her membership in Greenville Friends because she is clear about Conservative traditions, even though she is active in the meeting at Cambridge. Mark Miller is entering his third year at Guilford and continues in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. He attends meeting for worship with Friendship Meeting. Jo Holden's granddaughter enjoys her visits to meeting for worship. We will enjoy having the new baby Ethan with us as well.

We continued to host 5th Sunday meetings for worship whenever possible. Tuesday evening dinners continue at the Miller home, where all are made welcome and well fed. Our monthly discussion group has been fruitful.

Our meeting community continues to care for one another. Half of our membership has been hospitalized briefly over the past year for injuries and illness. Health challenges have left us

feeling stretched a little thin. We have supported one member as her son fought liver cancer and received a liver transplant. We have had to cancel or curtail some of our activities. We have not been able to visit Core Sound Meeting which is under our care or Wilmington as often as we feel is needed. We have had to cancel the last two 5th Sunday gatherings. But supporting each other as best we can has deepened our sense of tenderness and mutual concern for each other and has made the meeting stronger.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting

This has been a year of continuing diminishment for Rich Square Monthly meeting. Attendance at meetings for worship and business in Woodland now averages about six persons, while five to eight members and attenders are in regular attendance at Salem-Black River Allowed Meeting. The Fourth Day evening meals before mid-week worship, reported last year, were allowed to lapse.

No new persons have joined our meeting this year. We lost two active members by transfer to West Grove Meeting, two distant members by transfer to Maury River Meeting in Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and one distant member by resignation. James Edgar Parker, 90, a member from birth, died in Roanoke Rapids, NC on First Day, Eighth Month 8, 2010. One sojourning member, Anne Lilley Lippincott, 86, of Scotland Neck, NC died on First Day, Eighth Month 15, 2010. She was a sojourning member of Cedar Grove Friends Meeting, Rich Square Monthly Meeting and one of the founding members of Virginia Beach Friends Meeting. Two friends of the meeting moved from Woodland to Florida.

Despite our small numbers, we continue to be involved in the local community through membership in community groups, financial donations, and offering space in the meetinghouse to deserving organizations. Rich Square Friends are also active in the wider body of Friends through the yearly meeting, FWCC, School of the Spirit, and travel in the ministry. We have issued more certificates or travel minutes for ministry this year than we have regular attenders at meeting for worship.

Proper upkeep of our aging physical plant has been a growing concern. Almost 60% of our annual expenses go to Building and Grounds: almost \$100/week to provide meeting space for a half-dozen people for three hours. Seven of the eight persons most likely to be present on First Day morning are retired, with limitations on their financial resources and physical stamina. We are fortunate to have some reserve funds provided by earlier generations, but we know that whatever we spend will not be easily replaced.

Necessary care and upkeep on the meeting cemetery has depleted the reserve fund set aside for that purpose. A transfer of general reserves to the cemetery fund has put that problem off for the present, but expenses are still greater than fund income. Fuel oil leaking from an abandoned underground tank on meeting property this year cost over \$22,000 to ameliorate. Intermittent leaks in the meetinghouse roof will have to be tracked down and repaired.

This spring the meeting for business asked for a meeting with our trustees to explore a new arrangement for caring for our physical plant that more closely reflects our current circumstances. Exploration for such an arrangement has begun.

Like Ezekiel we look out over a valley of dry bones and ponder the question, "Can these bones live?" Like Ezekiel we answer, "You know, O Lord." What the future holds for Rich Square Monthly Meeting, after 251 years, is hidden from us. We sit and wait, individually and collectively, for the perceptible guidance of the Holy Spirit that will show us what our part is in that future, step by step and day by day.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting

This last year began with our meeting working to discern where we were being led. We met weekly for nearly two months in worship sharing while we focused on the query "where does meeting feel led and what is the Light of this meeting?" We eventually united in a response stating that we feel led to remain in our current location and over the past year, the School has decided to put their plans for moving on hold for now. The Virginia Beach Friends School, with whom we have close ties, has a new Head of School this year, Linda Serette. A weekly

meeting for worship was instituted by the school to encourage parents to join in and Paula Justice offered a one-time class, "An Introduction to Quakerism" for these parents. Also, the school held the first annual Founder's Day Celebration honoring Louise Wilson on her 90th birthday.

Ministry and Oversight worked to bring opportunities to meeting members and attenders to deepen our understanding of Quakerism so we have had two potluck discussions on the Pendle Hill pamphlet, "The Mind of Christ" to promote better understanding of the process of meeting for worship with attention to business. M&O also had a committee retreat when we met with an old friend of the meeting, Miriam Burke, who was able to join with us again for discussion and sharing of food. We continue meeting monthly in Adult First Day School where we are enjoying working our way through various Pendle Hill pamphlets as they provide us with fertile ground for thought and discussion. Several members have begun meeting "in Three's" as suggested by Louise Wilson and they are discussing John Woolman's *Journal*, and it is hopeful that other members may take up this idea so that we have small groups meeting around our region. This is a wonderful way to get to know one another on a deeper level.

Several Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) projects have taken place on both meeting and school property this year and have effected some changes in the landscaping as they have torn up part of the properties and put them back together again. There are more changes ahead as the city has other projects in the works that may affect us but no details are available currently.

Building and Grounds committee keeps us organized as we continue to make repairs to our meetinghouse property inside and out. We have had several well attended Clean-Up days and the Hospitality committee, which is growing, continues to faithfully bring in food and encourage conversation during our social time each week at the rise of meeting.

Peace and Social Justice committee has been looking for ways to expand our commitment to raise money for Virginia Lockett, one of our members, who lives in Vietnam with her family where she runs a non-profit group, Steady Footsteps,

which provides physical and occupational training to those who are physically handicapped or brain injured. We have participated in the annual Fair Trade festival for the past several years, selling fair trade items from Palestine along with items made by artists in Vietnam just for this purpose. We collect change in a "penny jar" and thanks to the regular emptying of pockets into the jar we have raised over \$200 for Steady Footsteps from the jar alone. Also, the meeting collects food for the food pantry at the Lutheran church next door. Peace and Justice committee has been sponsoring a series of workshops at meeting on the topic of "Finding Our Way Through Conflict." We have had four workshops this year, all offered by meeting members, including Paula Justice's "Exploring Our Personal Choices in Conflict", Patricia Swan's "Helping Conflict Feel Safe: Creating Conflict Norms", Rebecca Mani's "I Am Peace" and ending the year with Andy Young's presentation on "Restorative Practices." One of our most visible outreach projects this year has been our weekly silent peace vigil as members stand silently outside the meetinghouse each week for 30 minutes holding our "War is Not the Answer" signs or signs that members have written themselves. We have stood now for nearly a year and our responses from the public have been varied but encouraging overall. The committee has many members who are also active in a variety of community peace and justice activities such as the One Love festival, Empower Hampton Roads, the Season for Non-violence. We sponsored a one-day Basketball Camp and a picnic in an effort to bring parents and children from our surrounding neighborhood to join us. We have also sent letters of outreach to our neighboring Lutheran church and to other local Friends meetings and we are hopeful that a way will open for greater communication.

Meeting has new clerks beginning this month. Judith Stevens will be Clerk of meeting with Patricia Swan as Recording Clerk and Dave French as Treasurer. We continue to meet the challenges before us one day at a time and hope to keep attending to movement of the Spirit.

West Grove Monthly Meeting

West Grove continues to experience growth in the membership and attendance of the meeting although, as is typically the case, participation in meeting for worship is more sporadic as we move into the late spring and summer months. With this growth has come an increase in the contributions and guidance of seasoned Friends. At the same time, we have begun to seek ways in which the life of the meeting can benefit from the shared efforts of individual members. In this regard, we have shared the responsibility among our members for convening and recording our consideration of the Queries contained in our Book of Discipline. We find that this practice helps to develop a sense of discernment in all who participate and thus strengthens the meeting as a whole.

West Grove has been engaged in several modest forms of outreach to Friends and others. This has included work with Jamestown Friends (FUM) as they explored the history and nature of Friends Peace Testimony, and it has led to enhancement of West Grove's own internet web site (<http://westgrovefriendsnc.org>), which now houses important historical information about the monthly meeting, as well as relevant current information for prospective visitors and attenders. We were again blessed by the attendance of so many treasured Friends from the other monthly meetings when we hosted Representative Body in Fourth Month.

As a symbol of the meeting itself, our meetinghouse has shown signs of wanting attention, and Friends have shown unity in their desire to preserve and protect the meetinghouse as an important financial priority. Fortunately, our funds have continued to be sufficient to meet the modest needs of the meeting, we hope that this will continue to be the case with the additional work needed to repair and restore the meetinghouse. A storage building has been erected as an Eagle Scout project by one of our young attenders, Brian Owens. Previous improvements, the woodpecker houses built and installed by West Grove's young Friends, appear to meet with the approval of those with whom we share the land, as several of them are now occupied by wood ducks.

One unifying concern that has emerged from our discussions is for the importance of community, both the “family” that is West Grove, and the greater community of which West Grove is a part. We recognize that the food we eat and from where and how it comes to us affects not only our health but the health of our community. While not all members and attenders are engaged in farming pursuits, the weekly exchange of milk and eggs on First Day brings home these daily concerns and is a way that we have grown in community. Friends appreciate the locally-produced goods that are available to us, both from among our own members and from the small-scale farms that appear to be increasing in number and viability in our area.

During this past year, we have restored the arrangement of the benches in the worship side of the meetinghouse to its original configuration from one that was more circular, or center-facing. Some Friends have expressed a preference for the newer configuration, while others preferred the more traditional arrangement. It became evident in these discussions that something more than the physical arrangement of furniture was of concern to Friends generally. What emerged was a tender shared concern for the integrity of the Conservative character of the meeting, even while Friends might not hold identical views of what this requires of us. With the assistance of learned Friends, we have been reminded of and are again turning our attention to what we are called to do by the Faith and Practice laid out in the *Book of Discipline* of the NCYM(C).

Our accomplishments and progress this year have not been without difficulty or struggle. As the meeting grows, so does it face the potential for change. We find ourselves confronted by occasional upwellings of concern that the Christ-centered and Scriptural elements of our faith and practice will be lost or compromised as the composition and spiritual backgrounds of our membership evolve. We are reminded that ours is a living faith and that in our expectant worship we must be open to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, wherever those leadings may take us. And so, dear Friends, we must have faith that the spiritual life of the meeting will benefit and be improved by the earnest and truly shared consideration of these leadings, and “let go and let God.”

Wilmington Monthly Meeting

The past year has been one of steady growth and firmer commitment for members and attenders of Wilmington Friends Meeting. Our financial picture has stabilized and we continue to see First Day attendance over the last year hold steady at a weekly average of between twelve to fifteen members and attenders. In addition to our increase in numbers, we've been witness to an uptick in commitment to and active participation in endeavors central to Quaker tradition. In particular, we've been heartened to see our new Friends and attenders continue to worship, as well as having ongoing discussions on second and fourth First Days on topics ranging from pacifism, conflict resolution, Quaker history and poverty, all thoughtfully researched and arranged by Asa Janney.

Though small in numbers, our members and attenders contribute in many ways to our human community. Individually, we volunteer for many local, regional and international organizations. The Southport/Oak Island Animal Rescue Shelter, Wrightsville Beach Turtle Watch, New Hanover County Arboretum, Communities in Schools, Habitat for Humanity, The American Red Cross, the Bellamy Mansion, Amnesty International, Doshier Hospital, Friends School of Wilmington, Quaker House, Tileston Clinic, a free clinic providing quality medical care to those with no health insurance, and our local Department of Social Services are all organizations that have benefited from the pricks of our conscience. Besides our individual efforts, WFM continues to come together to provide space for a local Buddhist group several times a month and, on a daily basis, for Voces Latinos, an outreach organization that provides legal, educational and support services to members of our local Hispanic community. We continue to volunteer at Good Shepherd, a local homeless shelter, where in the past year we have helped by serving dinner on the first Monday of each month. Our dedicated knitting group contributes baby blankets and hats for premature newborns in the Neonatal Unit of New Hanover County Medical Center (NHCMC), and to mothers participating in Voces Latinos' prenatal classes. Finally, some Friends provide tutoring, mentoring and assistance with daily

tasks to a Myanmar refugee family through Interfaith Refugee Ministries.

We are grateful for our steadfast growth and for our tenuous financial stability, even considering the cost of repairs to our roof this year. It has been a pleasure and a reassurance to see old and new Friends come together in a unity that reaffirms the past and recommends the future. Though we are far from perfect in our corporate sense of purpose and, though we struggle not just to tolerate but embrace, everyone's search for spiritual truth, we continue to come together in the everyday belief that we can be better people and more faithful in the Friend's tradition that continues to inform and inspire us all.

28. Foothills Friends Worship Group

A letter from Foothills Friends Worship Group was read, and Friends approved that it be included in the minutes:

Dear Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting,

We bring you warm greetings from Foothills Friends Worship Group in Greenville, South Carolina. It is hard to believe it's been a year since attending last year's Sessions at Guilford College.

Last October, we moved from the Christian retreat center we were meeting at to the Triune Mercy Center, also located in Greenville, SC. We were excited at moving closer to those whom we serve. We have continued buying food and cooking once a month at Triune -- serving meals to about 75 homeless people on average.

We average from two to four people each meeting for worship, even with the loss of one of our long standing attenders. We have regular visits from members of Davidson Monthly Meeting and are nurtured by their support of our small group. In August of last year, Mark Wutka and his late wife, Ceal, visited our group and spent time worshipping with us. They also donated several volumes of Quaker journals to our growing library. We will surely miss her loving spirit.

We regret that we will not be able to attend Yearly Sessions this year for various reasons but continue to find strength from the Spirit as we strive to grow deeper in Christ's love. God willing, we will worship with Friends at the next Representative Body Meeting.

In Love and peace,
Don Shabkie
Clerk -- Foothills Friends Worship Group
Alan Rochussen
Recording Clerk -- Foothills Friends Worship Group

29. Hospitality Report Update

Deborah Shaw shared the description of a recently constructed apartment building on the UNCW campus that several Friends toured. While this building would seem to suit our needs better than the current dorm space, inviting a return to the campus in the future, the costs of using this space are not known at this time.

30. Nominating Committee Report

Jennifer Ginsberg reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. The report was approved and will appear in the minutes in the appendices. Some specific nominations need to be reviewed at Tenth Month representative body.

31. Trustees Annual Report

Ray Treadway read the report provided by the trustees of the Trust Fund for Travel in the Ministry and this will be included in the minutes. Friends are encouraged to donate to this fund and to use this fund.

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Balance on Hand (07-01-2010) | \$4,713.23 |
| Disbursements for the Year | None |
| Receipts for the Year: | |
| Interest (Annual) | \$ 2.36 |
| Balance on Hand (06-30-2011) | \$4,715.59 |

Although there have been no payments for Travel in the Ministry for the year, the yearly meeting needs to continue to search for other avenues of income to support this important commitment.

Funds are presently held in a Business High Performance Money Market Account with Wachovia Bank.

Friends are encouraged to make special contributions in support of "Travel in the Ministry".

Submitted by:

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| W. Carey Reece, Jr. | Trustee |
| Walter J. Brown III | Trustee |
| John Parker | Trustee |

32. Finance Committee Report

Treasurer Dora Owens presented the Finance Committee Report for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2011 which was accepted and will be included in the minutes.

The Finance Committee of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) met for Business on 15th Seventh Month, 2011. Representatives from Friendship, Greenville, Wilmington, Virginia Beach, Rich Square, and West Grove Monthly Meetings were in attendance.

The yearly meeting is in good financial condition at the end of the 2010-11 fiscal year. Most monthly meetings were able to contribute the amounts budgeted and individual contributions exceeded budgeted amounts. The Finance Committee noted that, even while the general economy remains unfavorable, our constituent monthly meetings have maintained their financial support of the yearly meeting. We are grateful to Friends for their steadfast generosity. Interest income continues to be well below the expected amount. The yearly meeting had enough money available to meet all expected outlays and 100% of budgeted payments to organizations were made during the year. The Scholarship and Travel allowances are currently underutilized; Friends

are asked to remind the monthly meetings that these funds are available. In addition, operating expenses were well under budget. In all, the yearly meeting showed \$2,510.78 greater receipts than expenditures for the general budget.

The net cost of the 2010 yearly meeting annual sessions was (\$128.28), an absorbable loss for the yearly meeting. We are grateful to the yearly meeting Planning Committee for their continued careful fiscal planning.

Total Cash Assets are \$37,918.60 as of 06/30/2011, an increase of \$2,267.55 over the prior fiscal year.

In consideration of the previously approved support for delegates to attend the FWCC World Conference, \$4000 will be transferred from the General Fund to the FWCC Conference fund in this fiscal year. The original plan was to transfer \$2000 for each of three fiscal years for this purpose, but the Committee realizes that funds for this event will need to be disbursed by the end of this calendar year, so the transfer process is being accelerated.

The FWCC Conference Fund is one of several restricted funds the yearly meeting has in its care. Individuals are encouraged to contribute to any of these funds, and can indicate their preference by noting on their contribution the name of the fund. The current balance in each of the funds is shown in a table following this report.

Respectfully submitted,
Dora Owens, Treasurer

| <u>Changes of Funds in Checking Account</u> | <u>Beginning Balance</u> | <u>Ending Balance</u> | <u>Change</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| General Operating Fund | \$ 10,518.68 | \$ 15,175.01 | \$ 4,656.33 |
| Yearly Meeting 08 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 09 Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Yearly Meeting 10 Reserve *** | \$ 13,342.19 | \$ (799.91) | \$ (14,142.10) |
| Yearly Meeting 11 Reserve | \$ - | \$ 12,772.52 | \$ 12,772.52 |
| Youth Activities | \$ 282.50 | \$ - | \$ (282.50) |
| Journal Fund | \$ 134.09 | \$ 134.09 | \$ - |
| Disciplines | \$ 2,152.00 | \$ 2,157.00 | \$ 5.00 |
| Travel | \$ 63.40 | \$ 63.40 | \$ - |
| YM Assistance Fund | \$ 474.14 | \$ - | \$ (474.14) |
| Memorial Funds | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Hearing Assistance Device Fund | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| FWCC Conference Fund | \$ - | \$ 1,081.99 | \$ 1,081.99 |
| Jamaica Fund -- FWCC | \$ 1,921.20 | \$ 571.20 | \$ (1,350.00) |
| <i>total</i> | <u>\$ 28,888.20</u> | <u>\$ 31,155.30</u> | <u>\$ 2,267.10</u> |

Account Balances

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Wachovia Checking | \$ 28,888.20 | \$ 31,155.30 | \$ 2,267.10 |
| Petty Cash | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Calvert Fund | \$ 6,762.85 | \$ 6,763.30 | \$ 0.45 |
| Total | <u>\$ 35,651.05</u> | <u>\$ 37,918.60</u> | <u>\$ 2,267.55</u> |

***Sales tax refund received in Seventh Month, 2011

33. Treasurer's Report

Dora Owens presented the Treasurer's Report which will be included in the minutes. Friends approved the report as presented and the budget as amended.

| <u>Account</u> | <u>2010-11 Budget</u> | <u>Actual 2010-11</u> | <u>2011-12 Budget</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>General Fund Income:</u> | | | |
| <u>Monthly Meeting Contributions</u> | | | |
| Davidson ^^ | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ - | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Durham | \$ 3,500.00 | \$ 3,500.00 | \$ 3,500.00 |
| Fayetteville | \$ 500.00 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| Friendship | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Greenville** | \$ 1,240.00 | \$ 1,240.00 | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Rich Square | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Virginia Beach | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 |
| West Grove | \$ 750.00 | \$ 750.00 | \$ 750.00 |
| Wilmington | \$ 400.00 | \$ 800.00 | \$ 800.00 |
| Subtotal | \$ 15,890.00 | \$ 15,290.00 | \$ 16,050.00 |
| <u>Other Income:</u> | | | |
| Individual Contributions | \$ 150.00 | \$ 499.00 | \$ 150.00 |
| Interest -- Calvert Fund | \$ 10.00 | \$ 0.45 | \$ - |
| Interest -- Checking | \$ 100.00 | \$ 12.55 | \$ - |
| Subtotal | \$ 260.00 | \$ 512.00 | \$ 150.00 |
| Transfer From Other Funds | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Total Receipts | \$ 16,150.00 | \$ 15,802.00 | \$ 16,200.00 |
| <u>General Fund Expenses:</u> | | | |
| <u>Administrative Expenses</u> | | | |
| Operating Expenses | \$ 600.00 | \$ 96.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| Website Costs | \$ 240.00 | \$ 255.00 | \$ 240.00 |
| Publication of Minutes | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 940.22 | \$ 1,200.00 |
| Subtotal | \$ 1,840.00 | \$ 1,291.22 | \$ 1,740.00 |
| <u>Donations to Organizations</u> | | | |
| <u>Peace & Social Concerns:</u> | | | |
| AFSC | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 |
| Assoc Comm of Friends Indian Affairs | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| FCNL | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 |
| Quaker Earthcare Witness | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| Quaker House of Fayetteville | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Right Sharing of World Resources | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| Subtotal | \$ 3,800.00 | \$ 3,800.00 | \$ 3,800.00 |

****Greenville's contribution is a one-time only amount. Future years will be significantly less.**

^^Davidson's contribution was received in error by NCYM(FUM); we are working with NCYM(FUM) to correct this.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Quaker History & Support:</i> | | | |
| Friends Center -- Guilford Coll | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 |
| Friends Historical Collection -- GC | \$ 400.00 | \$ 400.00 | \$ 400.00 |
| FWCC | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 | \$ 700.00 |
| NC Friends Historical Society | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 |
| Pendle Hill | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | \$ 1,900.00 | \$ 1,900.00 | \$ 1,900.00 |
| <i>Education:</i> | | | |
| Friends Assoc on Higher Education | \$ 200.00 | \$ 200.00 | \$ 200.00 |
| Friends Council on Education | \$ 200.00 | \$ 200.00 | \$ 200.00 |
| Carolina Friends School | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 |
| Guilford College | \$ 600.00 | \$ 600.00 | \$ 600.00 |
| New Garden Friends School | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 |
| School of the Spirit | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 | \$ 250.00 |
| Virginia Beach Friends School | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 | \$ 850.00 |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | \$ 3,800.00 | \$ 3,800.00 | \$ 3,800.00 |
| Total Contributions to Organization | \$ 9,500.00 | \$ 9,500.00 | \$ 9,500.00 |
| <i>Other Expenses</i> | | | |
| Internships/Scholarships | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Travel | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Transfer to FWCC Fund | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 4,000.00 |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | \$ 6,500.00 | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 7,500.00 |
| Total General Fund Expenses | \$ 17,840.00 | \$ 13,291.22 | \$ 18,740.00 |
| Receipts Over Expenditures | \$ (1,690.00) | \$ 2,510.78 | \$ 2,540.00 |

Friends approved that Robert Cooper would look into the yearly meeting acquiring additional hearing assistance devices for use during sessions.

The gathered body expresses its deep appreciation to Treasurer Dora Owens for all of her work for nearly three years. She has spent many hours working with the accounts, consulting with the Finance Committee on policies and procedures, dealing with the North Carolina Department of Revenue, and making sure that the financial reports are accurate and easy to understand. We are most grateful for how she has taken on this work as her ministry among us.

The meeting adjourned, intending to meet Seventh Day afternoon at 2:20 p.m.

**Seventh Day Afternoon
The Sixteenth of Seventh Month**

The meeting convened near the appointed hour.

34. Other Visiting Friends

Friends approved that the presence and participation of the following friends at many of our sessions this year be noted in our minutes:

Peter Buck, Asheville Monthly Meeting, Asheville, NC, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association;

Jason Jolley, Foothills Friends Worship Group, Greenville, SC, unaffiliated;

Meg Zulick, Salem Meeting, Winston-Salem, NC, Piedmont Friends Fellowship.

35. Additional Information Regarding the Facebook Page

Barbara Gosney reported that the Facebook page was set up by a member of our yearly meeting, with several other members as administrators, but it has been inactive since that time.

Scott Holmes and Rebecca Ruhlen have been added to the webpage committee in particular to help discern how best to address this Facebook page as well as other forms of electronic communication. The committee is aware of being sensitive to privacy concerns, and it does not want to put anything on Facebook that would make anyone in the yearly meeting uncomfortable, while still wanting to share about our faith community.

Friends approved that the committee continue to work on this and report back in Tenth Month. It was also approved that the committee proceed with placing information already approved by the yearly meeting for dissemination on that Facebook page, and to try other work with the medium.

36. Youth Report

An initial report from our young Friends on their activities was shared by Genevieve Elise (Jenna) Wilgen.

We started off the week with bowling and even though everyone's a winner, Micah Annan Barnhill-Wright scored a 90 beating out all other competitors young and old on his game. The majority of the young adult meeting enjoyed going to the beach every morning. We enjoyed building castles with Sandi and boogie-boarding. We also very much enjoyed turning Micah Annan Barnhill-Wright into a mermaid by covering him with sand. We waited in line for a very long time at the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Hospital, but then we saw some really amazing sea turtles. Grandma Claire told us a story about a shrew. After that we went on a peaceful nature walk in the forest. When we were walking to the intergenerational bible study we had an accidental baptism. The bible study wasn't that bad – we got to role-play the Parable of the Sower. Afterward, Emily Stewart taught us about meeting with attention to business. She took us into the adult business meeting, where some of us could stay awake. We then had our own business meeting, which was a lot more fun. Micah Annan Barnhill-Wright is the Presiding Clerk, Jenna Elise Wilgen is the Recording Clerk, and Michael Ralph Lozada is the Reading Clerk. We had a lot of fun playing games in our spare time and we also wrote a play together. Miriam lost a tooth this week, which was an added excitement. Altogether, it was really awesome!

37. Youth Planning Committee Report

Cheryl Fetterman gave the Youth Planning Committee Report, and it was approved to be included in the minutes:

There are 15 young Friends attending Yearly meeting this year. Their ages range from 5 months to 18 years. Goldie Walton is our 24/7 youth program leader. Young Friends are learning professional sand sculpting techniques at the beach, and visiting the turtle hospital at Topsail Island,

among other fun activities. Emily Stewart will be helping young Friends learn how the adult meeting for worship with attention to business works and how they might participate. Many other Friends are volunteering, including several visitors, to make our youth program successful.

It is becoming apparent that the size of our adult group attending yearly meeting is stretched to meet the needs of the youth program. Several Friends have said they need a break from participating in youth activities this year. Our program leans heavily on very young Friends' parents. Bill O'Connor and Goldie Walton have been 24/7 volunteers for several years running now and surely will need a break at some point. I would like to ask you to think about what you would like to have for a young Friends program and think about how this will be executed. It would have been nice to hire a childcare person for the whole four days for Friends between 2 and 6 years old this year because most of the children are between 9 and 13 years old and we don't have a second Goldie. Expansion. Do we expand our efforts? Do we continue on as in past? How are Friends feeling about the expenses of the program? I'm asking for your input to know how to move forward with plans for future years.

Submitted by,
Cheryl Fetterman, Youth Committee convenor

It was approved that the committee should use funds as they see fit and hire paid staff as needed, and we will find the money. Friends were clear that a longer-term, standing committee with three year terms is needed to consider promotional, logistical and financial planning. This is meant as a new definition for the Youth Planning Committee and the work during yearly meeting would not necessarily be done by these people. Nominating Committee is charged with revisiting who is led to serve on this committee to do this newly described work by First Day morning.

It was noted that knowing the business session agendas in advance would help participation by adults with the youth. It

was also noted that there is a special fund to which donations may be made for special use for youth activities.

We express incredible appreciation to Cheryl, Goldie, Bill and the parents of the children for the gift they give our yearly meeting with the presence and life of the children.

38. Concern for Support for Singing Activities at Annual Sessions

Kristin Olson-Kennedy and Marguerite Dingman expressed concern that while intergenerational singing has been on the schedule for several years, it has not been well executed. They would like to discuss how to plan this better, and provide better resources to encourage more participation. Friends are encouraged to speak with Kristin and Margie over the next year to express what they would like out of the experience. The body approved that Kristin and Margie pursue this work.

39. Annual Sessions Location 2013

Friends approved planning to hold yearly meeting annual sessions at University of North Carolina at Wilmington in Wilmington, North Carolina, in Seventh Month, 2013. This was understood to be conditional on improving our housing facilities and clearness on the part of Wilmington Friends to host. Cheryl reported that the work was distributed well this year, and this made a major difference.

40. Calendar and Sites of Future Meetings

The planned dates (if in keeping with Divine Will) for the Representative Bodies and next annual sessions were announced:

- *Fall Representative Body will be held Tenth Month 22, 2011, at Greenville Monthly Meeting in Greenville, North Carolina;*
- *Spring Representative Body will be held Fourth Month 28, 2012, at a place to be determined;*

- *Annual Sessions will be held Seventh Month 11-15, 2012, at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina.*

41. Contacts with NCYM-FUM Concerning the Peace Testimony

Les Fleming reported that he is meeting regularly with a group at Jamestown Monthly Meeting (North Carolina Yearly Meeting-FUM) regarding peace concerns. The group is interested in encouraging the growth of the peace testimony among their own monthly meetings. Les feels that they have the potential to be a catalyst for peace among many denominations. They are planning another peace conference with workshops on Tenth Month 22, 2011, at Guilford Methodist Church in Greensboro, NC, entitled "Reclaiming the Prince of Peace."

Les would like to hear from those with experience connecting pastoral Friends with unprogrammed Friends, and those with an interest in peace work during the afternoon interest groups. He will also carry back to those in Jamestown that their planned conference date unfortunately conflicts with our fall representative body.

42. Letter to Absent Friends

Friends approved the Letter to Absent Friends, which will be included in the minutes, and which will be sent with a copy of the Summary of Exercises.

Dear Friends,

We send you our heartfelt greetings and want you to know that you have been dearly missed at the 314th session of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). You have been remembered, we have felt your presence among us.

This year we met on the beautiful campus of University of North Carolina at Wilmington and our time started out with a 102 degree day but as the days went on the temperatures came down to normal summertime at the beach warmth and the evenings have been cool, breezy and pleasant, illuminated by an amazing full moon.

This year's theme of *Living the Faith: Becoming the Beloved Community* has been spoken to through all our activities together. From our first greetings of old and new Friends as we arrived, through morning and afternoon Bible study, evening sessions, while sailing between buildings in the expertly driven golf (or is that go?) carts, in the vibrant youth program and at our gatherings at the end of each day, over delicious homemade goodies and juicy fresh peaches and sweet conversations, we have explored the joys and challenges of living our faith within our various beloved communities.

In and through all these activities we have been blessed with the sense of God's Presence. We include the Summary of Exercises so that you may have a fuller sense of our time together. It is our fervent hope and prayer that if it is in accordance with Divine Will, you might be present with us at next year's sessions which are planned to be held Seventh Month 11-15, 2012, at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina.

On behalf of the yearly meeting and in Christ's tender love,

Richard Miller, clerk
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

43. Southern State Worship Group

Bill Geary shared the condition of the Southern State Worship Group, a prison worship group meeting every Fourth Day evening in Delmont, New Jersey, since 1987. Roshan Dinshaw is the co-convenor, and the group has had a 16 year relationship with this yearly meeting because this community has listened and cared.

Bill described the experiences of prisoners. With the worship group, they experience peace in the face of fear, including fear of extreme violence by guards. He told us that many previous participants in that beloved community never see prison again. Several letters were read aloud, sent from a new group of prisoners, since most current participants have been in

the prison less than a year. Also included was a group letter that was approved to be included in the minutes. Friends approved that the clerk would write a letter back to the group.

Greetings and warm wishes to the yearly meeting from the Southern State Quaker Worship Group in Delmont, New Jersey. In our meeting this evening, we are all filled with a great deal of gratitude for the relationship our group is blessed to have with the yearly meeting. We are profoundly blessed even though you do not personally know us – yet you care. What is more, there are (unlike most of the world) no criteria for acceptance. In most of our personal relationships the important question is, “What will you do for me?” You ask nothing of us up front . . . you do not stand in judgment of us. One of our members marveled as to how a person – mostly unknown to our current group – would ask to hold us in the Light and “not ask us to pay half the light bill!” We are, indeed, grateful for your constancy in caring, always encouraging. In a broader sense, we are thankful that in our Quaker worship group the spiritually hungry are treated just like we are Christ – yet given our status, our sins are abundantly obvious.

We are blessed to be in a Christian fellowship that encourages us not to hold a lot of negativity inside. It is in our worship that we find peace and that programmed groups are not as uplifting. In our group we each find a level of appreciation of our gifts which acts to build us up, as opposed to many encounters in prison where others wait for us to stumble and thus provide them with a moment of laughter. For all of us, the feeling of the Spirit of Christ is strong. Sometimes we find ourselves sharing the spirit in the rain and never give it a thought to “take it inside.” We find in prayer that we rarely get an answer in the form we expect and the schedule is not in “our time” but on His time. We have found prayer an important part in our efforts to quit our addictions and to keep us on track in an AA participation. We are profoundly aware that we often get blessings that we did not ask for and sometimes the response from God is, “Put some effort in and we’ll talk later!”

Recently, two insights have been revealed to our group. First, the value of prayer for healing. One of our group accidentally injured another inmate (who he did not know well) while playing handball. Jimmy asked our group to pray for John's healing. The next week John came to our group to thank us and the Lord for that moment of prayer. John reported that it was at 9 p.m. the previous Wednesday evening that he was overcome by an assurance that his eye would be healed. At that time, John was in a facility many miles away receiving care for his damaged eye. Today his eye is back to normal.

The other insight involved denial of appeal by the parole board for Jimmy. Jimmy said that in previous times he would have been bitter, sad and outraged. But now while he does disagree with the decision, he accepts it as God's will and knows that God has a positive plan for his life. Jimmy credits the worship group in helping to shape his response and the Inward Light of Christ in giving him the strength to carry on in a loving and accepting spirit.

Most of us have known life as one train wreck after another. We have learned that while we may sometimes fall short, we are all God's children. Thus, if we do our part and stay focused spiritually, we can all make a difference. We realize that many of us have missed out in seeing our sons and our daughters grow up. We know now that we need to stay on message with God. The Spirit will continue to open our eyes and we will continue to share the Gospel with everyone.

Finally, thank you North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) for giving us renewed strength, just knowing that you are there for us. We are therefore filled with courage and hope.

Yours in the Light of Christ,
Jimmy, John, Izzy, Robert, David, Bill and Roshan

44. Nominating Committee Report Addendum

On First Day morning, the nominating committee report was presented with revisions, primarily regarding the Youth Planning Committee, and was approved as revised.

45. Gratitude and Thanks

As always, we have been blessed by the participation of many wonderful Friends from outside our yearly meeting.

Gratitude was also expressed to UNCW and Wilmington Meeting for hosting our sessions.

46. Concluding Minute

The beloved community was incarnate among us during these annual sessions, and, we hope, beyond them. Our intergenerational bible study has been joyous, loving and full, and we have been grateful for our intergenerational play. Our speakers have shared deeply with us, and we have shared deeply with each other in worship, while addressing business, during meals and in fellowship time. We are resolved to continue to live the faith that the living spirit of Christ Jesus is most present for us in expectant waiting worship and in our other cherished practices. The yearly meeting adjourned, intending to meet again, if in keeping with Divine Will, Seventh Month 11, 2012 at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina.

47. Epistle to All Friends Everywhere

Friends approved the Epistle to All Friends Everywhere, which will be included in the minutes.

To Friends Everywhere –

How can we become the blessed community that we aspire to be? In these 314th yearly meeting sessions we have lived into some of the answers to this question which has been our theme. In our query responses, state of the meeting reports, and times of worship we have shared experiences of all the facets and phases of life. We have held each other as we have mourned, struggled, and grieved together. We have

celebrated new life, rejoiced in success, renewed old friendships and discovered ever growing love among us. We have found ourselves held in the hands of God, protecting us, healing us, and knitting us together into the blessed community.

We have learned from our children as they are tender with each other, as they enjoy and play well with each other. We watch as our children rejoice in the mystery and wonder of the present moment. Playing at the beach with Young Friends is like swimming in an ocean of light. One Friend noticed that even the salt in the water works to lift us up together. The elements have conspired, along with the laughter and play of our children, to lead us toward the blessed community.

We are aware of our dependence upon God's support, because we see evil around and within us. We are mired in it up to our ears. We have witnessed decades of war, and we see violence in our communities – and we feel the effects of both in our own lives. We watch with sadness as our way of producing, consuming, and working destroys the life giving capacity of our earth. Our economy is driving greater and greater inequality between the richest and poorest people of our world community. These things stand against our deeply held beliefs, and yet we find them both within us and infused in our way of living. What little we do to change the world often seems small and ineffectual, and we sometimes feel paralyzed by discouragement. We recognize that this discouragement itself is a symptom and part of the evil we oppose. At times the effort to sustain our belief in God's power for good is the largest part of our struggle. Yet God is with us, even in these troubled times. We remember that Friends in our history faced systems of enslavement and an economy of radical inequality that seemed just as intractable as our present systems of domination. In their simple and peaceful ways, these Friends found new ways of being in the world that moved beyond what seemed impossible.

In our Bible studies this week we have been reminded that there is still good soil for God's seed, and that seed can yield a hundred-fold harvest. God is very much with us,

caring for our welfare and intervening on behalf of the widow, orphan and alien in a strange land. The women of the Exodus story – Shiphrah and Puah, Moses’ mother and sister, and even Pharaoh’s daughter – model for us the courage to risk faithful acts in dark times. Over and over, we see that God gives us the tools, the strength, and the courage, at the right time, to do what must be done to advance the Kingdom of God in the face of the evil that opposes it. And so we send you, dear Friends, a message of hope in these dark times. The Kingdom is here – already here among us.

On behalf of the yearly meeting,
Richard Miller, Clerk
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

48. *Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)*

Friends approved the Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) which will be included in the minutes.

To Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) -

It is a joy to renew the bonds of fellowship between our yearly meetings through this epistle. Iowa Conservative Friends have been a support to us in North Carolina through the years, and we are appreciative of your faithful witness and testimony to the reality of the perceptible inward divine guidance. Together we cherish a way of being Christian that is more about the concrete experience of the living Word, than about any particular words. We taste the Truth of words, without dependence upon any creed or doctrine.

The ties between our yearly meeting communities have been strengthened by the presence of Anne Margaret McCormick during our annual sessions. We thank you for sending her to us and for the continuing friendship she represents. We have been reminded during these sessions of the vital importance of personal travel and fellowship, and hope to engage in an increased intervisitation with Iowa Conservative Friends in coming months and years.

How can we become the blessed community that we aspire to be? In these 314th yearly meeting sessions we have lived into some of the answers to this question which has been our theme. In our query responses, state of the meeting reports, and times of worship we have shared experiences of all the facets and phases of life. We have held each other as we have mourned, struggled, and grieved together. We have celebrated new life, rejoiced in success, renewed old friendships and discovered ever growing love among us. We have found ourselves held in the hands of God, protecting us, healing us, and knitting us together into the blessed community.

We have learned from our children as they are tender with each other, as they enjoy and play well with each other. We watch as our children rejoice in the mystery and wonder of the present moment. Playing at the beach with Young Friends is like swimming in an ocean of light. One Friend noticed that even the salt in the water works to lift us up together. The elements have conspired, along with the laughter and play of our children, to lead us toward the blessed community.

We are aware of our dependence upon God's support, because we see evil around and within us. We are mired in it up to our ears. We have witnessed decades of war, and we see violence in our communities – and we feel the effects of both in our own lives. We watch with sadness as our way of producing, consuming, and working destroys the life giving capacity of our earth. Our economy is driving greater and greater inequality between the richest and poorest people of our world community. These things stand against our deeply held beliefs, and yet we find them both within us and infused in our way of living. What little we do to change the world often seems small and ineffectual, and we sometimes feel paralyzed by discouragement. We recognize that this discouragement itself is a symptom and part of the evil we oppose. At times the effort to sustain our belief in God's power for good is the largest part of our struggle. Yet God is with us, even in these troubled times. We remember that Friends in our history faced systems of enslavement and an

economy of radical inequality that seemed just as intractable as our present systems of domination. In their simple and peaceful ways, these Friends found new ways of being in the world that moved beyond what seemed impossible.

In our Bible studies this week we have been reminded that there is still good soil for God's seed, and that seed can yield a hundred-fold harvest. God is very much with us, caring for our welfare and intervening on behalf of the widow, orphan and alien in a strange land. The women of the Exodus story – Shiphrah and Puah, Moses' mother and sister, and even Pharaoh's daughter – model for us the courage to risk faithful acts in dark times. Over and over, we see that God gives us the tools, the strength, and the courage, at the right time, to do what must be done to advance the Kingdom of God in the face of the evil that opposes it. And so we send you, dear Friends, a message of hope in these dark times. The Kingdom is here – already here among us.

On behalf of the yearly meeting,
Richard Miller, Clerk
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

49. Epistle to Ohio Yearly Meeting

Friends approved the Epistle to Ohio Yearly Meeting which will be included in the minutes.

To Ohio Yearly Meeting –

North Carolina Conservative Friends have been blessed with the opportunity to gather once again for our annual sessions, and the blessing includes our knowledge that the faithful witness and community of Ohio Yearly Meeting also continue another year. Together we cherish a way of being Christian that is more about the concrete experience of the living Word than about any particular words. We taste the Truth of words, without dependence upon any creed or doctrine.

The ties between our meetings have been strengthened during these sessions by the presence of David Eley and Micah Bales. They remind us of the importance of continuing the fellowship between our yearly meetings. We have been reminded during these sessions of the vital importance of personal travel and fellowship, and hope to engage in an increased intervisitation with Conservative Friends in Ohio Yearly Meeting in coming years.

How can we become the blessed community that we aspire to be? In these 314th yearly meeting sessions we have lived into some of the answers to this question which has been our theme. In our query responses, state of the meeting reports, and times of worship we have shared experiences of all the facets and phases of life. We have held each other as we have mourned, struggled, and grieved together. We have celebrated new life, rejoiced in success, renewed old friendships and discovered ever growing love among us. We have found ourselves held in the hands of God, protecting us, healing us, and knitting us together into the blessed community.

We have learned from our children as they are tender with each other, as they enjoy and play well with each other. We watch as our children rejoice in the mystery and wonder of the present moment. Playing at the beach with Young Friends is like swimming in an ocean of light. One Friend noticed that even the salt in the water works to lift us up together. The elements have conspired, along with the laughter and play of our children, to lead us toward the blessed community.

We are aware of our dependence upon God's support, because we see evil around and within us. We are mired in it up to our ears. We have witnessed decades of war, and we see violence in our communities – and we feel the effects of both in our own lives. We watch with sadness as our way of producing, consuming, and working destroys the life giving capacity of our earth. Our economy is driving greater and greater inequality between the richest and poorest people of our world community. These things stand against our deeply held beliefs, and yet we find them both within us and infused

in our way of living. What little we do to change the world often seems small and ineffectual, and we sometimes feel paralyzed by discouragement. We recognize that this discouragement itself is a symptom and part of the evil we oppose. At times the effort to sustain our belief in God's power for good is the largest part of our struggle. Yet God is with us, even in these troubled times. We remember that Friends in our history faced systems of enslavement and an economy of radical inequality that seemed just as intractable as our present systems of domination. In their simple and peaceful ways, these Friends found new ways of being in the world that moved beyond what seemed impossible.

In our Bible studies this week we have been reminded that there is still good soil for God's seed, and that seed can yield a hundred-fold harvest. God is very much with us, caring for our welfare and intervening on behalf of the widow, orphan and alien in a strange land. The women of the Exodus story – Shiphrah and Puah, Moses' mother and sister, and even Pharaoh's daughter – model for us the courage to risk faithful acts in dark times. Over and over, we see that God gives us the tools, the strength, and the courage, at the right time, to do what must be done to advance the Kingdom of God in the face of the evil that opposes it. And so we send you, dear Friends, a message of hope in these dark times. The Kingdom is here – already here among us.

On behalf of the yearly meeting,
Richard Miller, Clerk
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

50. Youth Program Epistle to Friends Everywhere

Friends accepted the Youth Program Epistle, which was read after meeting for worship on First Day by Genevieve Elise (Jenna) Wilgen. The youth also presented two posters on the theme "Save the Turtles" which they had prepared, and which were greatly appreciated by the assembled body. The epistle follows:

This year's gathering took place at University of North Carolina at Wilmington. We had a lot of fun at the beach and going bowling. The intergenerational work was also fun, and we accidentally got in touch with nature, turtles and mermaids.

Though we had a lot of activities planned for us, we decided to create and produce our own play about Quakerism (sort of). Nobody who was over the age of 18 contributed to the creation of the play. The adults really enjoyed watching us.

We attended two intergenerational Bible studies. In the first one a boy named Julian enjoyed being pretend-choked by a man named Sid. Later, Saturday evening, we again enjoyed an activity with the adults, led by a man named Peter. We thought it was fun to interact with the adults in an amusing way. The hardest part of being a young person is that we are treated like children but are expected to act like adults. However, interacting with older Friends made us feel like respected equals.

Another thing that we came to appreciate this week was a greater connection to nature. We went to Karen Beasley's Sea Turtle Hospital. We stood in line for an hour but finally got to see some injured turtles who were being cared for so that they could be released again. An exception was a Kemp's Ridley turtle called Lenny who is blind. We enjoyed walking on a peaceful nature walk, but the ultimate nature was swimming in the ocean almost every day. One day at the beach we covered a boy named Micah in sand and turned him into a beautiful mermaid. Our concern for turtles led us to make "save the turtle" posters to protect these precious species.

The cafeteria food that amazing and the pastry chef made awesome cookies which Micah really enjoyed. We had an inspiring week. Thank you to everyone who made this week possible, especially Ms. Peggy, the pastry chef. We look forward to coming again next year.

51. Summary of Exercises

Friends approved the Summary of Exercises, which was read after meeting for worship on First Day. The Summary of Exercises follows:

The 314th annual gathering of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative), met on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington from Fourth day 13 to First day 17, 2011. We convened in a memorable heat wave (which soon abated) but spent most of our time indoors in air-conditioned buildings. We slept in Cornerstone Hall, ate in Wagoner Hall, and met in plenary sessions in Cameron Hall and the Cornerstone living room.

We are blessed with many children in the yearly meeting, fifteen of whom (ages 5 months to 18 years) attended at this gathering. Those children had many activities of their own including: learning and practicing sand sculpture, visiting a sea turtle hospital, learning recorder tunes, and bowling and other lawn games. Taking bowling as an example, we find each child has his or her own way of getting the ball down the lane: Throwing, dropping, and rolling it between the legs, or off a ramp. All these methods serve the same goal: to knock down as many of those blanky-blank pins as possible.

Our children also joined with adults in several intergenerational activities including a lively, even boisterous, intergenerational Bible study, and InterPlay. (InterPlay is a simple-looking set of movement, voice, and storytelling activities. These activities are designed to gently free up creativity, facilitate listening to mind-body-spirit, build community, and have fun.)

Jenna Wilgen gave the young Friends report on their experience of the gathering (in addition to writing an epistle). That report is included in the minutes.

Andrew Wright opened our mornings with Biblical Study directed to the theme of our conference, Living the Faith: Becoming the Beloved Community. This study gave us a Biblical witness of the covenant between God and people. We began with the life-giving and life-transforming

promises of God to us as individuals and as a people - as we become the beloved community. We then considered the reciprocal promises that individuals and faith communities commit to, mind, body, heart, and soul, so that our lives become an expression of gratitude and a response to God's love.

At lunch dedicated listeners held whatever bubbled up from the worshipful silence of the Bible study.

Themes that arose in the gathering included: discovering and being who we are both as individuals and as a body of Conservative Friends. The last concern was especially evident in the time we took considering whether to write and send a single epistle to other Conservative yearly meetings and to other Friends bodies [and the world at large]. It was also evident in the lengthy consideration of how best to respond to the discovery of the existence of a Facebook page with the name of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

Another major concern was that of our care for our youth, which was reflected in:

- 1) An extensive discussion of how to respond to a need for more help with the youth program at the yearly meeting gathering,
- 2) The readiness in which the meeting pledged any funds necessary for the youth program,
- 3) The readiness of the meeting to take prompt action in response to the need to regularize the appointment of a Youth Planning Committee.

A visitor observed that at this yearly meeting Friends use the term, "heart" is used to mean something like that of God/ the eternal Christ/ the Inward teacher within us, rather than meaning specifically our emotional center, as does popular culture.

Folks who had completed the School of the Spirit shared how the experience made them more connected with each other, their spiritual communities, and where they lived. They also shared how the spiritual learning community of the School helped them become more fully who they are meant to be and more integrated. We could

feel the power of integrity in the way they shared how they are more fully present in themselves and in their communities thanks to the School of the Spirit.

Speakers at an evening panel shared stories of the Spirit at work in their lives. These rich and powerful stories were profoundly humbling and inspiring. We heard from one friend who left the religious community in which she was raised because of the fundamentalist beliefs, fear and intolerance preached there. She said she “wasn’t sure if she wanted to spend eternity with these people,” and “decided to take her chances elsewhere.” She found her way to Quakers, and received the life-changing message that “God is love.” Quakerism has become the perfect container for everything she believes and how she wants to be in the world. For years she experienced that of God within as a small flame. More recently she has come to feel that uranium is a better metaphor for the divine: A source of great power that irradiates every cell of our being.

Our Conservative way is leading the life of being led by this fundamental power.

Another friend shared life changing events and described the way the Spirit was at work in these events over the course of his life: the meeting of his wife, the birth of his son with severe inherited illness, and the eventual death of that son from a secondary condition. To preserve the confidentiality requested by that son, the speaker’s meeting did not have knowledge of the speaker’s needs for care until after the son’s death. He then shared what it was like to adopt and raise a racially mixed child during the racial turmoil of the late 1960s. He has found the love of our beloved community to be a life sustaining force in the life of his family.

Another friend shared to story of a young person running away from home, showing up on the doorstep of her farm. This young person might have appeared threatening, but the Friend saw Christ at her door. She learned from this situation that the important parts of following the leadings of the Spirit are:

- 1) To listen, and hear the knock at the door,

- 2) To trust God when you open the door to the unknown,
- 3) To recognize Christ on the other side.

Another Friend shared the story of moving from his work as an architect to work as a farmer on a sustainable farm. He found hope in our ability as Friends to vehemently disagree with each other, and then embrace each other – and be sincere in both. God is available everywhere, at all times, to all people. Quakers practice and live in recognition of this divine reality. The gathering was blessed by these extraordinary, ordinary people.

Evelyn Jadin gave us a keynote address on Sixth Day evening that connected in unplanned ways with previous offerings at the gathering, including her use of two Bible passages that were among the very ones we had considered in Bible study and in intergenerational Bible study. She spoke on doing what we can do with the gifts we have been given in the face of much evil and difficulty in the world.

The sharing of responses to the Queries and the State of the Society reports helped us to understand our diversity as well as many of the joys and sorrows monthly meetings have experienced since our last coming together.

Later in the gathering we had interest groups on Pendle Hill activities, a compilation of intergenerational activities and on Friends worship groups in prison.

Young friends spontaneously prepared, rehearsed, and performed a play for the adults. The play raised questions of the criminalization of poverty, and involved a couple of beggars jailed for refusing to leave a parking space. The story loosely evolved into a dramatic courtroom scene and ended in a fiasco with a babysitter and an orange.

Pairs of monthly meetings provided us with a variety of creative, healthful, and yummy snacks in the evenings.

We are thankful for the blessing of each other's company and that the Spirit incarnate in our midst enabled us to experience the yearly meeting as the Blessed Community.

52. Answers to the Queries

The answers to the Queries from the monthly meetings were read. (As is our custom, although answers are read during several different sessions, for continuity, all answers will be grouped together when included in the minutes.)

Query # 1: *Do we faithfully uphold our testimony for worship which is based on silent waiting, and for a free and unprogrammed ministry that may be shared by all? Is there a living silence in which we feel drawn together by the Light of Christ, the power of God in our midst; and is this inspiration carried over into our daily lives? Do we come to meeting with hearts and minds open and ready to worship in silence or in vocal ministry or prayer as the Holy Spirit leads us? Does our meeting encourage those who may have a gift in the spoken ministry?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: We uphold our testimony for worship based on silent waiting and unprogrammed ministry. At times, the silence in which we feel drawn together seems more alive than at other times. We seek to come with hearts and minds open. Considering this query opened a deep and rich conversation about worship and vocal ministry within our meetings for worship that can not be contained inside these few words.

Durham Monthly Meeting: Durham Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We wait for guidance from the Holy Spirit during our silent, unprogrammed worship. Sometimes this guidance is slow in coming or not immediately clear to us. We come to meeting with hearts and minds open to the extent that we are able. We often pray for others who are in need, and we encourage those who have a gift for vocal ministry. Drawing together silently in the Light of Christ is the foundation of our Quaker worship.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Our worship is based on silent waiting. Friends testify to a palpable sense of connection and oneness among those in attendance at our meetings for worship. Spoken prayer is not common in our meeting, but prayer requests are often heard and honored in the silence. We do support and encourage those led to vocal ministry. We have also established a convention of offering everyone an opportunity to share thoughts that didn't quite rise to vocal ministry as they introduce themselves and share announcements immediately after the rise of meeting. We find that this enriches our worship while still allowing us to share thoughts and experiences with each other. After our time of worship, there is strong spiritual, emotional, and social connection among Friends.

The practice of expectant waiting worship makes it easier to be open, mindful, and attentive to others in daily life. The ongoing commitments that each of us makes to live out our light in our daily lives contribute to the strength of our worship. It follows that our corporate worship serves to fuel the ministry that each of us undertakes in our individual lives.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We increasingly feel the power of God in our midst during worship. And there has been a corresponding growth in the quality of the vocal ministry which is offered out of the silence.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We feel we can answer yes to this query. The form of our worship is consistent with all the headings of it. We come to worship anticipating that we will be gathered in the living silence - open to the Light of Christ, the power of God in our midst. We are aware of that Divine presence some times more than others. We endeavor to carry this inspiration into our daily lives.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: Our collective silent meeting for worship is the heart of what it means to be a Quaker, and it is this Centering which creates our faith and our ability to return to the world and live out our beliefs. Many may subscribe to Quaker values and principles, but do not necessarily realize the significance of meeting for worship in sustaining this way of

life. Our own meeting reflects this awareness. Not all of us agree on the language we may use to identify the divine Spirit though all feel the gathering in this Spirit, a Living Silence we all participate in. Our vocal ministry always speaks to someone's condition. We are mindful that we are responsible for helping our tender members and attenders to nurture their desire and patience in speaking in meeting.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We feel that we are generally clear on this query. West Grove as a meeting feeds our worship together whether it is led in silence or in vocal ministry.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Silent worship with openness to the leading of the Spirit seems to be a good outward description of our meeting. Some Friends, though, feel a reluctance to share thoughts and leadings due to the fear of embarrassment or an inability to state clearly and eloquently what is on their minds. Some have experienced being in meetings where challenges to comments made have hampered their willingness to speak openly. But it is noted that self imposed silence and self censoring tend to impede more than assist group dynamics.

At times when there is a good deal of spoken ministry it is remarkable to see the connection and common thread of thought that runs through spoken messages. It is also noted that self discipline is required to understand the difference between speaking the spontaneous leading of the Spirit and engaging in contentious debate. We struggle to carry over into the secular week the sense of community and centeredness that comes from being drawn into the Light of God during first day. We all strive to take time to remember the power of silence and to stay grounded with our individual routines and practices of faith.

Query # 2: *Are we faithful in our attendance at meetings for worship and are we careful not to disturb the spirit of the meeting by our late arrival? Is our behavior therein that of open submission to God in silent communion?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Monthly Meeting: An evening meeting for worship with attention to business was held on 12th day of Sixth month. The following queries were substituted:

1) What do you think of when you think of Durham Friends Meeting (DFM)? How would you describe DFM to someone else?

A spiritual community that meets in silent worship to experience the divine. A large, family-friendly, joyful congregation with an awesome youth program and awesome youth. A theologically diverse meeting that is connected to the family of Quakerdom. A vibrant and thoughtful community that is rooted in love and unafraid of controversy. A meeting that is inclusive and accepting of all people and all ages and sensitive to their needs. A community that reaches out through individual engagement in the wider community and corporate concern for justice, peace and care of the earth.

2) What do we do really well?

We nurture and educate our children. We exercise patience and tolerance and see the light in each other. We are open to a range of vocal ministry and we listen in tongues. Our silent worship is deep and grounded in our spiritual life. We take our testimonies seriously and find practical applications for the inner light. We welcome new members and provide support and care for members in difficulty. We find joy in our fellowship, celebrations, potlucks, baby welcomings, and other community activities. Our older men and women act as mentors and we have an active adult education program. We practice corporate discernment through attention to Quaker process.

3) What should we be doing better?

We should welcome new members and attenders with greater care and attention by following up with new inquirers and people who are no longer attending. We could embrace a corporate sense of our outreach in the world and our local community, thus defining the mission and overriding vision of the meeting. We could step out of our comfort zones and take risks for our faith. The work of the meeting could be shared

more equitably. Meeting could make it more possible for children of the meeting to attend Carolina Friends School. We could articulate the roots of our Quaker faith and how it connects with our action and prophetic depths of Quakerism. We could live up to our testimony as a peace church. We could evangelize better about the joy of finding God in silence together and having all members act as “clergy.” We could harness the power we might have in the world by all moving together in one direction on a single issue. We could be more intentional and more methodical in the education of our children by developing a unified curriculum and we could provide better support of our first day school teachers. We could encourage other adults in teaching First Day School, not just parents. We could learn to deepen our interior silence and our corporate silent worship. We could be more grounded in addressing big issues in the Durham community through explorations of restorative justice. We could strengthen our intergenerational relationship and encourage spiritual development and ministry.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We are mostly faithful in our attendance at meetings for worship. Some of us occasionally arrive late but try not to disturb others when we do. In silent communion, we do our best to submit ourselves to the presence of God in ourselves and in others.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Our meeting tends to have few late arrivals, with many people already in worship prior to the appointed time for worship. The greeter helps to welcome the late-comers and helps them transition to the silence. While it may be difficult to evidence our open submission to God, we observe that the messages shared from the silence appear to be inspired, not prepared prior to meeting for worship. It is also observed that the worship has improved over the past years. If one compares the number of people on our membership rolls with actual attendance at meeting for worship, then it seems clear that many of us are not faithful with weekly attendance. We are mindful that there are times in people’s lives when attendance to meeting for worship does not happen.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: Members of this meeting are generally faithful in attendance at meeting for worship as health and circumstances allow. We are flexible about the precise time at which worship begins as we find it helpful to briefly ask each other about our state of health and general well-being prior to worship. This expression of love and concern for each other seems to us more important than punctuality. Since meeting does not start at precisely the same minute each week there are occasional late arrivals but these do not disturb the course of worship.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We are clear under the first two headings of this query. Our corporate outward behavior is in open submission to God in silent communion. Open submission to God is our intent, yet we as individuals sometimes are less centered and fall short.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: Many do not understand what Friends are really “doing” as we center in the Silence. Our experience feeds and energizes us for actual work and service in the world. A core of faithful members and attenders are present each week, and there seem to be fewer latecomers recently. As a result, a powerful gathered Silence may be experienced by those present each First Day.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: Our members’ attendance is not perfect, but we do attend regularly and coming in late is not an issue for us. While we recognize that submission to God is something we can only answer individually and not as a group, we feel the atmosphere at West Grove is one that makes us aware of the presence of God and our communion therein encourages our obedience to Him.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Friends feel that members and attenders of WFM are generally respectful about arriving on time and/or being careful not to disturb others as they settle into the silence. Some Friends express gratitude that the punctuality of members and attenders makes coming to meeting an enjoyable experience. We acknowledge that differences among all

members and attenders challenge us to make our meeting a place where all feel welcome. Faithful attendance is maintained by most members and attenders while some struggle more with a consistent commitment to attendance. We are grateful for all who attend and especially for those who faithfully come together to seek God's presence.

Query # 3: *Do we follow the teachings of Jesus and seek the inspiration of His Holy Spirit in our daily lives? Are love and unity maintained among us? Do we cultivate a forgiving spirit, and do we avoid and discourage needless and destructive criticism of others? When differences arise, do we endeavor promptly to resolve them in a spirit of love, honesty, and humility?*

Core Sound Friends Worship Group: The clerk opened the discussion by telling each attendee she loved him/her. This prompted several of the members to respond with each of his/her interpretation of the query and in some instances the definition of "love." Both topics varied with each person. The ideas and feelings ranged from the capacity to love in a thoughtful and/or emotional sense to the love of individual or the love of mankind. The group considered the teachings of Buddha as well as Jesus. Acts of kindness to strangers were considered as the awareness of the spiritual light and love as well as sympathy for those known and unknown. The discussion included the concept regarding love of individual and the love of humankind.

The group appeared interested in and comfortable with discussion of love and unity in the larger world. The conversation took that direction. The focus of the query was discussed towards the end of the discussion and it was concluded the query was addressing love and unity among "ourselves" (members and attendees of the meeting). It was suggested that the meeting as a family share family love-sometimes complex. It also was suggested that the English language single word for love may create confusion and that there are different words for different kinds of love in most languages.

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Monthly Meeting: Friends are pleased that the emphasis of the query is on what we do in following the teachings of Jesus rather than on what we say or on the fine points of theology. The teachings of Jesus were passed around orally for many years before being written down. How remarkable that they have endured and that we can find them so pertinent today.

In our meeting we strive to resolve differences promptly in a spirit of love, honesty, and humility. A recent challenging example was given involving several groups of people with apparently disparate interests, yet unity was reached. We are grateful for the faithfulness of the Friends involved and for the outcome.

At Durham Friends Meeting, in our yearly meeting, and in the wider world of Friends we are grateful to experience communities that are following the teachings of Jesus in the spirit of love. This does not mean that we always agree. Integrity demands that we be willing to allow tensions to exist, not requiring a premature semblance of unity. In humbly and honestly honoring our differences, we allow space for creativity and new life to arise. The key point is to stay in touch with the spirit of love throughout the process.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We do our best to follow the teachings of Jesus, as we understand them. Many of us remember to ask the Holy Spirit to guide us on a daily basis. We maintain love and unity among ourselves. Several of our members have been ill recently and this has helped us value the spirit of love and community we share. When we give each other suggestion for improvement, we do so in a constructive manner, and the comments are received in that spirit. Our conscience hurts us if we do feel judgmental or slow to forgive. We have not been greatly tested in the past year by having sharp differences arise among us.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: In the Bible when Jesus is asked, "What is the most important commandment?" he responds (Matthew 22: 37-40 RSV) ... *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.*" From our discussion came at least one simple guideline: If a volunteer is doing the best she/he can, don't fuss (criticize/scold) at that person unless you are willing to take that volunteer's place. We noted that fussing or criticism in a positive and productive form can be a means of motivating and supporting someone without being destructive. We feel confident in our ability within the Friendship Meeting community to meet conflict with love as we understand the teachings of Jesus. We are aware that historically when issues have arisen that would affect our entire community we would have endeavored to seek information, to talk with one another in formal and informal settings, and to seek unity with the Spirit, as well as with each other, in our deliberations, before formulating and following a course of action.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: This year we have been aware of differences of opinion among us and have felt the truth of the fact that we do not have to agree about everything to be in unity. It is love that creates unity not agreement.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We do seek to follow the teachings of Jesus and seek the inspiration of His Holy Spirit in our daily lives. We, who meet together regularly and answer these queries, are significantly diminished in number and increasing in age. This situation brings on a kind of grief as we see valued members move elsewhere or pass away. We also realize this situation sometimes produces stress as we consider the direction for the future of the meeting. We wonder what is the relationship of distant members to Rich Square Monthly Meeting as the meeting diminishes? What does Christ ask of the five to seven local members? Does The Religious Society of Friends in Northampton County have only a past? We ask these questions in a spirit of love, honesty and humility. Despite these

stresses, we do feel a sense of love and unity among those of us who meet for worship here.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: We feel this is an important query that touches us deeply. While we care for each other, we also recognize that issues arise, and that change presents a challenge to our fulfilling our goal of following Jesus' teaching. Strong attendance at our recent Conflict Management seminar shows that we recognize the importance of creating unity, and that while we see we are far from perfect, we aim to fulfill the query's goals.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We seek to reach a level of truth in our relationships that surpasses cordial interaction. If this Truth is shared in a manner of love and caring Truth can be received in a positive light. Our ability to show love and concern is reflected in honest, focused listening to one another, and with our hard work of love and reconciliation, this has been very helpful to the meeting. We feel in the last year we have become more able to deal directly with our conflicts and we are easy with the progress we have made.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Friends believe that if we are forgiven, we must forgive, especially ourselves. Our awareness of our own measure of being forgiven makes it easier for us to offer forgiveness to those who may have trespassed against us. Being forgiven and offering forgiveness means, for many of us, that the forgiven is held accountable for actions that may have, however inadvertently, affected others. There is a fine line to be considered in the letting go of hard feelings and grudges in order to heal, and the upholding of standards of moral and ethical behavior. The complex process of forgiveness requires empathy, humility and openness to and acceptance of others perceptions.

Query # 4. *Do we assume our rightful share of the expenses of the meeting? Do we regard our time, our talents, and our possessions as given us in trust, and do we use them freely for the needs of others?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Friends Meeting: It is very reassuring to hear in the treasurer's report that we are nearly on schedule with donations in spite of the poor economy. And we are pleased that nominating committee has had success getting people to fill roles. When we give to Friends organizations, it is amazing, empowering, and humbling to see the waves that are generated by our pebble. Over the years there has always been a strong sense that meeting looks outward as well as inward with its financial outreach. In the Old Testament, there is the admonition to give back everything we get – as with the 50 year Jubilee. What a difference that would make! We need to see our possessions as being entrusted to us and not really ours, though that is a high and noble bar to set for ourselves. The Native Americans paid homage to the creator as being the only real owner. Few people have a fortune with which to be philanthropists, but we do have talents, and as Quakers, have special gifts to share.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We do regard our time, talents, and possessions as given to us in trust. We gladly share our various gifts for the needs of others. We are thankful for all we receive when we give generously. Yet, especially in the sharing of our time, we realize that we need to take care of ourselves as well. As an outgrowth of our unity, we are happy to share the expenses of the meeting, as we are able.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: While less than half of our members contribute financially to the meeting, we are aware that some of these do not have sufficient funds to do so. Relatively few of our members attend business meeting, but we realize that many who are absent are not able to attend physically. On the other hand, as a meeting community, we can answer easily and positively. Our contributions to the meeting nearly meet our budget each year. We always pay our bills, support local and Quaker organizations, and keep the meetinghouse in relatively

good repair. We do have difficulty in supporting some of our special funds. Members of the Nominating Committee are grateful for the willingness of meeting members and active attenders to respond to appointments to committees, although it is hard to fill a few positions. We have responded to community needs as we joyfully prepare sandwiches for a homeless shelter once a month, contribute goods and money to organizations, help refugees and the Newcomers School, and assist persons and families in need.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: Our expenses are minimal so no problems are likely to arise over right sharing of meeting expenses. Members of meeting share their time, talents and resources with others in an open giving spirit.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We rise to meet the expenses of the meeting and, because of our smaller numbers, we are in the process of reviewing what is really needed. We welcome opportunities to share our time, talents and possessions.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: As a small meeting we are very active in contributing our time, talents, and money to meeting needs and activities. This is a very personal choice for each member of our community. In the past, as a group we have adopted and sponsored larger tasks such as Friendship Village and Park Place Friends Home. We trust that Way will open for our support of other future projects in the community. We continue to be joyfully partnered in mission and responsibility with Va. Beach Friends School. The School remains a source of Quaker Light in the larger world. We also support wider Quaker organizations, such as AFSC and FCNL, who do our work in the national and international community. About one half of our annual budget is dedicated to outreach organizations and projects. Perhaps we can also examine how we share our meetinghouse and personal possessions with others.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We recognize that more than money is needed. We are blessed in not having great financial needs, both because our expenses are few and those who have

come before us have provided well for the meetinghouse itself. Work days are generally well attended, but more could be scheduled. We recognize our presence here and the exercise of our talents is for the benefit of our children and for the future of the meeting. Making time for the meetinghouse and our children can be a challenge. We are joyful for the blessings of our children. We recognize that this meeting feeds us in many ways and are aware of our responsibilities in this regard.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: The meeting acknowledges the importance of financial contributions, and budgets are developed on a needs basis, “pay as you go.” It was reported that there was an overwhelming positive response to money requested as needs arose, including those over and above the budget, this past year. The meeting’s acceptance of financial responsibilities frees up space for our other financial issues. The influx of new members has eased the financial burden on the established few. Funds for the purchased building have replaced funds once earmarked in the budget for people to use as needed. We feel that guilt or sadness is not necessary if one cannot give financially as they would wish. There are so many other ways to give, especially through time and talents.

The meeting feels that over the past year there has been a stronger reaching out to the broader community with our time and talents. Examples include assisting a refugee family, participating in Wilmington Cleanup Day at the Friends School, donating food to Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard, working at a local shelter, etc. We also reach out to those families/persons no longer attending meeting through annual notes, calls and in person. We invite them to join, to participate. “The door is open and we miss you.”

We trust that there is a balance of sharing financial, time, talent and possessions. We feel that our possessions are given in trust, and we support recycling as a way to support our earth while helping others. There is a meeting history of generosity.

Query # 5. *Do we regularly attend our meetings for business, and are they held in a spirit of love, understanding, and forbearance? Do we seek the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth and in the patient search for a sense of unity under Divine guidance?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Monthly Meeting: We do strive to seek the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth and acknowledge a concrete example of that process in our deliberations today. We find that the practice of forbearance, sitting with disparate facts, feelings and opinions until they make a whole, is valuable both in meeting for worship with attention to business and beyond that, as a reminder to refocus and seek discernment in our everyday lives. One member noted that this is his first meeting for business and it will not be his last. Appreciation was expressed for the Clerk's preparation for the process of clerking and for the support that others have offered the Clerk.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We usually have very good attendance at meetings for business. We search for the balance between following good order and showing forbearance. We earnestly seek the right course of action and a sense of unity under Divine guidance.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Our meeting as a whole does not attend meeting for business regularly. However, those who attend, attend regularly. Eight of our members attended yearly meeting Representative Body in Fourth Month 2011. There is a sense that those who do not attend trust the leadership and guidance of the core business attenders. However, we still feel our work would be enhanced by larger attendance, and by attendance of a broader age range, most specifically those under 60 years. Our wish to include more of the meeting in business meeting reflects our desire to create community and connect better with one another.

We identified two issues that could inhibit attendance: Lack of childcare and the time of business meeting. The provision of child care at our meeting's retreat and the concurrent high attendance indicate that childcare for every meeting function would enable more people of a wider range of ages to attend. Though for families with young children, First Day afternoons may provide precious family time. The difficulty of the time of meeting for business was highlighted as a concern at the meeting's retreat. Specifically, midday first day conflicts with the First Day lunches at Friends' Home, a weekly highlight for many residents. Though it may be tight to do both, it does seem possible to attend the First Day lunches and come back for business meeting if residents wish. Moreover we remain open to how we could include those who are interested.

We continue to seek the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth and in the patient search for sense of unity under Divine Guidance. Our Annual All-Meeting Retreat's theme this year was "Meeting for worship with a concern for business: responsibility, commitment and spiritual grounding" and was well attended. Our keynote speaker, Bob Gosney, especially focused on commitment and responsibility in our relationships to one another. A number of good insights regarding well led communications came to light in our discussions.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We find that our love and affection for one another deepens as a result of our mutual attention to matters of business.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: Our business meetings are held in good order. Attendance in meetings for business has declined as the number of members living nearby has declined. Items of business we face appear to be issues that call for prudence rather than wisdom and discernment. We are not often presented with items for business that necessitate our being called into deep worship to arrive at the sense of the meeting.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: A faithful core group of members and attenders are present at meeting for business each

month, and we do seek to conduct affairs under Divine guidance. We look forward to other members joining us for future meetings. At times, we need to be reminded to come to meeting for business in a spirit of worship. This is the sphere in which Quakers can constructively address their differences of perspective and opinion and honestly seek unity in that Divine Spirit. We are encouraged to leave our personal agendas at the door and enter this experience with an open heart and mind, seeking God's will for our meeting.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We are reminded that above all these are meetings for worship and that we are called on to attend to matters of business within the spirit of worship, as well as to be mindful to the integrity of Friends' process and to give time for worshipful consideration and threshing of concerns. When we conduct ourselves in humble submission to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, this can lead to the growth of the meeting as a whole. Sometimes, though, we admit that our attention can wander during these meetings, especially when the meeting runs long. When we approach certain matters with humor, this can lead to concerns that we are treating the meeting for business too lightly. However, humor does not by itself mean a lack of submission so long as it acknowledges the worshipful purpose of the meeting. We do well to remember that light hearts bear burdens more easily than heavy ones.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Friends appreciate the Quaker practice of seeking unity in consensus. Yet, while we honor the tradition, it is acknowledged that it is a difficult position to find. And while some Friends faithfully attend meeting for worship with attention to business, for others this is a difficult commitment. Collectively we are reluctant to declare an action or perspective as indicative of the "Truth," due to our appreciation of the complexities of seeking truth in all its forms. Seeking the "courage of our contradictions" seems to be a more probable path. We strive to conduct our business in a spirit of love, forbearance, and patience, and while seeking divine guidance is worthwhile goal, we are mindful of how our own egos and personal agendas interfere with this process.

Query # 6. *Do we endeavor by example and precept to cultivate in our children a sense of openness and expectancy about life, and to aid them in their growth in spiritual understanding and moral discernment? Do we share with them the faith that guides the practice of Friends, while encouraging them to develop their religious insights as the Spirit of God may lead them?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Monthly Meeting: We acknowledge the importance of our youth ministry as part of the life of the meeting. It is one of the ways we support our children in their growth of spiritual understanding and moral discernment. As a meeting we are blessed with many enthusiastic, energetic people who cultivate the spiritual gifts of our children. At last count we had thirty-two volunteers who work with our youth. We also devote a significant portion of our budget to youth programs. In fact our youth program is one of the chief attractions of our meeting. At the same time that we cultivate our children's spiritual insight, they cultivate spiritual openness and understanding in us. There are so many children whom we watch grow up over the years, who then maintain an association with our meeting even when they leave it. They also seek out Quaker meetings wherever they go or start ones if none exist. We hope they will also continue to live fully into the challenges of the peace testimony and other social justice concerns. We continue to search for new ways to engage parents of young children both spiritually and materially in the life of the meeting.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We agree with the spirit of this query. We regret that we have had only one child, an infant, in the meeting in the past year and that family has now moved away.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: The meeting is blessed with an increasing number of children who participate in the life of the meeting. They join with us and experience our worship at the beginning and at the end of our First-Day meeting. The

Religious Education Committee has done a heroic job of providing a balance of educational, creative, and fun activities for our children. We appreciate the care and concern of our regular student helper and of the volunteers who help out frequently and faithfully. These Friends bring their special gifts and demonstrate examples of Quaker practice as they interact with the children. More volunteers willing to help with child care are needed.

We acknowledge valuable and loving interaction between the adults and the children during the times of conversation after worship is over, meals, game nights, and special events. At these times, we show that we respect our children as valued participants in the life of the meeting.

The goal of the meeting is to provide grounding in Quaker faith and practice and to nurture the religious lives of our children, with the expectation that they will develop their own spiritual paths and understanding of the Divine as they mature.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: While we have no regularly attending children, when we do have a child in attendance we enjoy the opportunity to provide care for her. Nearly all of our members have grown children at this point in our lives and are aware that now that they are adults new and different opportunities arise to share our faith with them.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: At this time we have no children under our care. That Spirit to do what the query says remains with us. We strive to live up to this query as occasions may arise.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: When children attend our meeting activities, they are involved and engaged. Several Friends School students and their families have visited us recently. We are always pleased to have children in our midst and are welcoming to all. At present few young people attend our worship services. Many in meeting, however, are actively involved in the lives of our Friends School students and consistently guide them in Quaker principles. Those of us who are parents, grandparents, and other caretakers of our children

hold them in the Light and hope to be examples for them to follow of the spirit of Friends in the world.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: When we consider the call to serve by example and precept, we are asked whether we are the people we want our children to learn from and spend time with. We are in fact all the children of God and find that the meeting helps to nurture the child in each of us. We find, too, that it is often our children who cultivate in us the spirit of openness and expectancy about life and they can reflect and bring important moral insights back to us. For this reason, we recognize how important it is to provide them with the room for experimentation and growth. As we consider this query, the music of their voices in the adjoining room tells us we may be on the right track.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Friends' actions as adults give love, set an example for children. Since our Friends meeting does not currently have an active First Day school, Friends addressed this query in a broader context.

Quakers lead with their faith, a credence of putting "words" into "works," that which flows with us into our lives outside meeting. Friends belief as a Christian sect is to witness Christ - be a living experience of Christ in our daily practice.

Friends present in meeting shared a variety of experiences illustrating how Quaker faith has been or can be put into practice.

Query # 7. *Do we endeavor to live in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all war, seeking to do our part in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations? Do we faithfully maintain our testimony against nuclear and all other military preparations, the bearing of arms, and all participation in war?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Davidson Friends did not consider this query in this past year.

Durham Monthly Meeting: As we think about this query, our interconnectedness is both a source of deep concern and optimism. The interdependence of many complex issues such as the environment, human rights and global peace and security expands the significance of the peace testimony today: We are humbled by the enormity of these issues and their implications. We are also aware that our very high cost of living and lifestyle may be an important cause of conflict that continues to escalate. On a much smaller scale, we daily witness hundreds of micro-aggressions that we commit against one another, often unknowingly, a manifestation of universal human fear and vulnerability. In the face of all of this, sometimes engaging in peace work of any kind seems futile.

A more radical approach and viewpoint, however, is looking at our own lives and how they influence the systems that support war and daily standing in the power that is deeper and broader than ourselves. We recognize the power of taking risks and stepping into the unknown, recognizing what love can do over the long term. We are not concerned with short-term success, but in being right. Moment to moment we move from separation into connection and into the light of the love of God.

We are grateful to our meeting in so many ways. We serve as a force of consciousness raising for each other about the peace testimony and its implications for our lives and the planet. And through our meeting there are many opportunities to engage in peace work including opportunities for our youth to participate.

As we leave this friendly place

Love give light to every face.

May the kindness that we learn

Light our hearts till we return.

(Words from hymn sung at close of meeting at Joe Graedon's childhood meeting.)

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: Being for peace rather than against war guides us to live in the power that takes away the occasion of all war. As peace activists, we can rest in the realization that the outcome of our work is not up to us. We maintain our testimony against war by the way we live and by making our testimony known to others.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Friendship Friends does endeavor to live in that life and power that takes away the occasion of all war, attempting to carry into the week the peace and grounding found in our corporate worship. As a meeting we support various Friends organizations that work for peace and reconciliation in our community, our nation, and the world. Some individuals in the meeting engage in the work of reconciliation through service, others carry the message of mediation and reconciliation into their paid work, and all attempt to witness to peaceful and equitable solutions in our daily converse and commerce. We do maintain our testimony against nuclear and all other military preparations and the bearing of arms. As a large portion of our taxes go to war, we cannot answer that we are free of all participation in war, yet we do strive to bear witness to the way of peace.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We have had long conversation about the peace testimony and frank and open discussion reveals that we are in different places with regard to this. Some of us fully accept the complete rejection of all war with no qualifications but others, while they are generally opposed to war, feel that it might be warranted under some circumstances. The peace testimony is not a dogma or even a doctrine. It is a lived experience and each of us will experience it in a uniquely personal way.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We face many challenges, yet we do strive to live in that life and power to be at peace with all people.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: As a meeting we have recently committed to a weekly silent vigil held in front of our meetinghouse protesting the use of violence and war in resolving conflicts. We have also recently participated in two workshops on interpersonal conflict management skills as part of an ongoing series of programs focused on improving our personal choices in conflict sponsored by our Peace and Social Justice Committee. As individuals and as a meeting, we politically and

financially support those Quaker organizations such as FCNL and AFSC who work for world peace and against social injustice, which we see as a cause for violence and war. We are also actively involved in community activities which move us toward peace, including Friends School, the Season for Nonviolence, the One Love Peace Festival and others. In the past we have had more visible individuals who were peace activists and can use them as examples to follow in our own personal peace testimonies.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We feel that our members strive to live in that Life and power that takes away the occasion of all war, but we must admit feelings of powerlessness in the face of the militarism around us. We are grateful for our two members/attenders who are on the board of the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Some of our members have been active in efforts to strengthen the peace testimony among the larger community of those who bear the name of Friends in North Carolina.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Friends recognize that all peace begins in individual hearts and minds. We also recognize that economic injustice leads many to the perceived need for armed conflict. Our efforts to alleviate human suffering by relieving poverty and hunger and our commitment to cutting down on the material things we consume, particularly oil, are important steps we take to indirectly eradicate the need for war.

Some Friends are more comfortable with and encourage a more activist role in standing up to the devastation of armed conflict. Protesting war in public venues, providing classes for youth in conflict resolution and mediation, educating the public about the option of conscientious objection, and promoting a peace essay contest in our public schools and writing letters in political prisoners are all ways we strive to contribute to a worldwide community of peace.

We humbly recognize too that all our efforts fall short of the call to do everything we can to promote a peaceful and just world.

Query # 8. *Do we observe simplicity and honesty in our manner of living? Are we careful to live within the bounds of our circumstances, punctual in keeping promises, prompt in the payment of debts, and just in all our dealings? Do we choose those activities which will strengthen our physical, mental, and spiritual life; and do we avoid those harmful to ourselves and others?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: We have a sense of being directed to avoid all of those activities of life, those toxic people, and more, that are harmful to ourselves and others. However, we recognize that we are not able to meet all of the expectations of the query all of the time, and need to be gentle with ourselves and others around these challenges. Meeting itself helps to maintain physical, mental and spiritual health, creating opportunities to truly be open with one's feelings. We recognize a need to reserve time for fun, which isn't directly addressed by the query. The query also brings up concerns for how to work together for the well-being of all people, including addressing the difficulty of paying off certain debts. There is a sense that more gentle input from the faith community might possibly be helpful in addressing this query as individuals. It is hard to keep priorities consistent outside of meeting for worship.

Durham Monthly Meeting: This query speaks to something found in many mystical traditions around the world: cultivating moment-to-moment awareness of reality as it is and as it passes. By cultivating that kind of awareness, we come to understand the world in its wholeness with human beings a part of, rather than separate from, the natural world. The query is also an example of early Quaker public witness, a way of being in the world. For example, John Woolman strived to live "a life without cumber" by living faithfully to the truth underlying his life, which in turn led to a materially simple life.

Today, perhaps even more, action in the world needs to come out of a ground of contemplation. We, too, need to live in the simplicity of the truth underlying our lives as an organizing principle for our lives rather than adopting a reactive stance. We recognize that simplicity is not "easy", but life is more solid,

more real when we follow our hearts.

We are also aware how much doing there is in the meeting, even though much of it is very good. Is an hour together in silent worship once a week enough to hold the center of the meeting? We also struggle with maintaining the proper balance between action and contemplation in our personal lives in a culture addicted to doing and avoidant of contemplation and reflection.

It is very important that we revisit this query often, both individually and collectively.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: As followers of Friends' traditions and beliefs, we are able to observe honesty and simplicity more easily in our personal lives than in our professional worlds. Workplace practices do not always match our individual standards of being honest and just in our dealings.

Some of us could use additional assistance in choosing activities that strengthen us holistically. Some of us have to struggle. Some of us find simplicity to be the most complicated of Friends' testimony.

Both individually and as a meeting, we continue to work toward living more fully up to this query.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: As a corporate body, we meet and worship in a plain building, which is furnished simply. Our meeting operates within our budget each year, paying our bills promptly and sending the amounts as promised to the organizations we support, although we sometime need to delay these payments due to cash flow problems. We try to be accurate and honest in our dealings with others. Individually, our members similarly report expectations, in the words of the yearly meeting advices, of maintaining integrity in transactions in trade and the mode of acquiring wealth. We find that sometimes our manner of living can seem strange to others and it is hoped that the way we live our lives may speak to the world today. The traditional understanding of simplicity may not mean the same as it did in the past, with plain dress and avoidance of superfluities, but it does carry a meaning which underlies how we make decisions. We generally choose the activities which will strengthen our physical and spiritual lives, but we are aware of

the difficulties and temptations we face in choosing which television shows and which public entertainment will engage us.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We feel clear that we are honest in our dealing with others. We are mindful of the extent to which so called “white lies,” half-truths and exaggerations distort so much of ordinary life and we make conscious efforts to resist going along with this.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We believe we are clear under all headings of this query. There are times when each of us needs to be more mindful of how we use our time to strengthen our physical, mental and spiritual life. We believe we avoid activities harmful to ourselves and others. As a meeting and as individuals we are trying to un-clutter our lives that we may have space to grow into the spirit of this query.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: It is difficult to respond to this query as a meeting since it speaks to individual lifestyles. However, as a group, we have a commitment to conserving our natural world and to living a healthful lifestyle rather than giving in to consumerism. We are honest and prompt in our financial dealings as a meeting as well.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: Our concerned members are generally clear under the various heads of this query. Even as we struggle with being mindful to avoid distractions and to remain single-minded, our intention is to allow this query to inform our daily commitment to being a living testament.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Historically we lived within our means by forgoing homes and other purchases until we saved enough money. Our current level of consumption creates debt and waste. Our youth, both rich and poor, have lifestyles and expectations (home and car ownership by age 20, retirement by age 50) built on a sense of entitlement. Advertising and other media messages encourage materialism and perpetuate behavior based on the acquisition of more stuff.

Corporations measure success by the amount of increase in

quarterly profits. This increase is necessary to pay increasingly larger salaries and benefits, especially for those at the highest earning levels. The difference in salary between a CEO and an average worker is obscene.

The world economy is in crisis. China appears to be doing well; but is still recovering from the collapse of basic infrastructure (resulting from the earthquake) and much of the population is poor without basic needs. There is rioting in England, Greece and Portugal. What economic system can replace capitalism or communism? In the case of private sector collapse, who will pay for public sector services? What would happen to both the American and to the global economy if we all lived within our means? Can I do with less?

The 4 gospels can be the basis of a world economy. Now, how do we get everyone on board with that?

The economic focus has been on better production or efficiencies, coupled with the attitude of “me” first. The new emphasis is on finding a balance within local, regional and global economies. When we can't afford to manufacture things locally or regionally because the level of wages is too high, maybe neighborhoods and individuals will respond with workable solutions based upon innovation vs. greed. Globally, there is a need for just and fair distribution of burden between the economy of North America and that of South America and Africa.

To bring our Query discussion from global to personal:

The Query describes a sane way to live and is about choices and your sense of self.

Economic collapse is the result of moral collapse. People can be self correcting and will behaviors in response to economic forces. Although it will take time, people will justify their behavior changes with changes in morals. An economic victim is powerless; but accepting blame for your choices puts you in charge. We must pay our debts promptly. We must not allow our wants to become our needs. We must let go of things no longer useful or necessary. We must teach values to our children.

Query # 9. *Are we mindful of Friends testimonies against alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and other harmful drugs; and do we refrain from using them or dealing in them, realizing that abstinence is the clearest witness against overindulgence? Do we seek to avoid all kinds of gambling and places of diversion that tend to be demoralizing? Do we keep in mind how diverse and widespread are the temptations to grow richer at the expense of others? Are we faithful to our testimony against taking oaths?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: Many of the concerns raised in this query spoke to our condition or raised awareness for us. We want to be careful of investments that they are not done at the expense of others. We value the option of being allowed to affirm rather than swear oaths, and we wondered how we are to handle others when we are in the position of asking someone to swear an oath about a legal document. We are very mindful of the dangers of alcohol. We have those who have chosen abstinence as the best way to avoid injuring others. Others use alcohol in moderation or tobacco and are reminded of the importance of doing so mindfully. We recognize the danger of gambling and other distractions that interfere with our experience of the Divine. We want to be mindful of the joy that can come from living open to God.

Durham Monthly Meeting: The spirit of this query, with its many dimensions, addresses mindlessness and addictive behavior and the harm they can cause to ourselves and others. The repercussions of mindlessness and its effect on others is far ranging. Before the end of slavery Friends used the query to counsel against the wearing of cotton made through slave labor. Today in our complex and highly interconnected world it is often hard to know and control the indirect harm we do to others due to our actions: for example, we often buy clothes without knowing the conditions under which they were made. In the recent financial crisis we have seen dramatic evidence of an elite few growing rich at the expense of others.

Today we have a better understanding of the mechanisms of addiction. As a result we need to struggle whether abstinence is

the only response to this query. Given the special nature of our personal and professional responsibilities, each one of us must decide if and when consuming alcohol, even in moderation, compromises our ability to be available and fully present as a powerful form of Quaker witness.

Speaking Truth in all situations, another current of this query, is also central to the life and witness of Friends. Some of us have welcomed the support of Friends as we have declined to take oaths or observe needless deference despite censure.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We are all clear of tobacco and other harmful drugs. Some of us use alcohol in moderation, believing it can be used responsibly as a beverage. Others abstain from alcohol and strongly affirm that abstinence is the clearest witness against overindulgence. We all realize that alcohol and drug abuse are serious problems in our society. We are clear of gambling. We seek to avoid demoralizing diversions, realizing how pervasive sex and violence are in our society's entertainments. We are not consciously growing richer at the expense of others. Contemporary life confronts us with many dilemmas in this area. We are faithful to our testimony against taking oaths.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: This query serves as a guideline for our interactions as a community, and a set of standards as we go into our individual lives. The Pendle Hill Pamphlet Friends and Alcohol shows a historical perspective on how Friends once regarded slavery, war, and alcohol as similarly weighted concerns, but that does not seem to be the same for modern Friends. Are we available as a community to those who need help with any of these concerns?

This query moved us to consider how worldly dependencies distract us from close attention to our communities and open submission to God. Growing richer at the expense of others is a very subtle temptation; Simple mechanisms of economics, such as charging interest, can be exploited in this way.

Are we careful about the words we use? What do we mean by mindful? Our testimony on oaths is biblically based, and Friends have made great sacrifices to defend this testimony.

When we uphold our testimony against oaths, we sometimes stand out; our testimony may lose some of its impact when it is considered more ordinary (as when courts ask us to swear or affirm).

Some Friends feel that this query lumps disparate topics into one. Our meeting has previously attempted to revise this Query, but the yearly meeting hasn't felt prepared for the prospect of revising the queries.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We are mindful of the dangers of drugs and alcohol and drink only in moderation or not at all. Precious time and energy can also be poorly spent on excessive use of television, videogames and other electronic devices. We also need to be mindful of this and to encourage others, particularly young people, to use their time well.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: As we listen to this query we hear challenges to living faithfully in our complex world. Although we may not purchase tobacco, lottery tickets or alcohol at a particular business we wonder if we indirectly support such activities because the pervasiveness of such sales in our culture makes it difficult to find a grocery store or gas station that does not make money from selling these items. Considering this query calls us to attend to our daily walk with Christ. When we lose our focus on the Light of Christ we risk becoming our own source of a diversion that could be demoralizing. As we are faithful, the immediate and perceptible guidance of the Holy Spirit enables us to make choices consistent both with our practice of our faith and with Divine Will.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: These are powerful words, “to reverence that of God in every human being,” and we are always growing into that ideal. Overcoming prejudice and cultural fears of those who are different from us is a multi-generational task. Hopefully our children and grandchildren are more open and accepting than we are to seeing that of God in all. As a meeting we are active in organizations in our community which challenge and rectify social injustice, including the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center, Empower Hampton Roads, and

Hampton Roads Network for Nonviolence. We now more than ever see the need to join with like-minded groups already active in this work in order to have greater impact. As individuals we are also committed in our jobs and volunteer work to help the less fortunate and disenfranchised in our community.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: We are mindful of Friends testimonies against alcoholic beverages, tobacco and other harmful drugs acknowledging that abstinence is the best witness. We do seek to avoid all kinds of gambling and places of diversion while knowing that is difficult to not support these activities as they are hawked in mainstream businesses whose products or services are needed by our families. Friends consciously work to not take advantage of others in our personal and community transactions. We are not at ease when placed in a position to swear to tell the truth by our legal system. We work to be truthful at all times. “Affirm” is only a word substitution for swearing.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: In the Philadelphia meeting, “abstinence” has been softened to “moderation,” suggesting mindfulness vs. avoidance of sin, which by its very nature is very alluring. Rather than instructing a person to avoid something “fun,” a more effective approach may be to talk about the harm it can do.

In addition to Faith and Practice and oral tradition, where do we find the testimony against alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and other harmful drugs? This is an interesting question, and worthy of research. Tobacco can probably be found in testimony against slavery. “Harmful drugs” was a later addition to this query and may refer to substances that alter one’s natural state or may cause problems with health, relationships, etc.

Typically, Friends avoid gambling, however, friends sometimes participate in “group bets,” especially to blend into the workplace culture. Donation of winnings to a worthwhile cause can take the sting out of gambling. However, the temptation to keep a highly desirable prize makes this difficult. Some lotteries give back part of the proceeds to the elderly or

other causes. Because lottery winners are often residents of poor communities, this perpetuates the participation among the poor.

The rich often get richer at the expense of others. Earlier wealthy Quakers were usually careful in how they invested and became stewards of what we have today. Modern examples of exploiting others for financial gain include trafficking in people, including sex workers, charging the poor exorbitant fees for cashing checks or acting as loan sharks and charging high interest rates. The latter are legal because they incorporate as national organizations (usury are state, not federal, laws) or in Delaware (no usury laws). Some tax preparation firms charge a large percentage to provide an immediate refund. Persons without monetary reserves are at the mercy of predators whose business plans include preying on the poor. Also guilty are convenience stores which gouge their customers. Never mind that some of the poor want to purchase such goods and resent the suggestion, nay requirement, that they only buy more nutritious (less processed) and cheaper foods. Some credit card companies target young people and others who may be ignorant of interest rates and credit scores. Debt forces more students to drop out of college than poor grades. Financial education is imperative to combat exploitation of the ignorant.

Financial bullying sometimes may increase with age, and allows the perpetrator to look better by making others look worse. Modern society judges what you are by what you buy. This forces one to make a conscious decision not to purchase items that “fall off the back of a truck.”

Friends avoid the use of titles, yet what is a friend to do when addressing a judge? One can avoid “your honor” by not addressing the judge directly or by explaining that one is Quaker and does not use titles. Many friends will accept the title “Miss” as a regional custom in deference to southern culture. However, Friends universally agree that they do not take oaths.

Query # 10. *Do we endeavor to live in harmony with nature? Are we careful in our stewardship of the world’s irreplaceable resources?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: As a meeting, we are choosing as a whole and through our committees, to make decisions to be sustainable, to reuse and recycle, and we also make efforts on a broader scale with letters at the national level and support of local environmental agencies. We are aware that more can be done. As we build our meetinghouse, we recognize the tension between what we want to do and can afford to do with regards to sustainability and environmental impact. We are grateful for our members who are active in these areas, and the models they provide for us.

Durham Monthly Meeting: The words “stewardship” and “resources” were troubling to some of us. We felt that the spirit of this query was living in right relationship to nature: Do we know that we are part of this sacred system called nature? Are we in right relationship with nature? In this same spirit, some of us recalled favorably a revision to the query proposed by the meeting’s Junior High Friends in 1991 printed in full below.

The query presents a huge dilemma for us as Americans given our very high standard of living relative to the rest of the world. We also acknowledge the limitations of human power and intelligence to right our relationship to nature, since power and intelligence brought us to our current state of imbalance with nature. Instead we need to open ourselves to the power available to us all to live in a way that honors and preserves all life.

The archaic language of the query challenges us to look below the words to the deeper intention of the query in order to live in a vibrant relationship with it.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We try to live in harmony with nature. We realize that we are interconnected with nature; when we take care of nature we take care of ourselves. If we really shared what we have, there would be less hunger in the world. We find it difficult to truly live simply and sacrificially share our abundance. We do many small things as individuals and as a community to conserve our resources, but we don’t do enough. We realize we need to grow in our stewardship of the earth’s resources.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Friends united in the following response: Although these questions are simply stated, the more we learn about the origins and uses of the world's irreplaceable resources, the more complex these questions become. A starting place can be difficult to pinpoint. Practically from our beginning, we have considered ourselves dominant over creation, or at best stewards. We are only now beginning to understand what stewardship might truly mean. Our challenge is to love creation as ourselves. Friends do try for this ideal, but we too are only human. The people who lived in this country before we arrived lived very closely to the earth and had a lot of things right that we have gotten wrong. We feel the need to allow our children to pay attention to nature. It is less a matter of attending to and caring for a separate entity called nature, and more a sense of vulnerability and subjection to a larger system of which we are an integral part. A great deal of thought and effort has gone into trying to articulate practically what to do about our environmental impact: how to make our society more sustainable; yet clear conclusions remain elusive. When we observe the natural world, how aware are we of what we observe? Moreover, how aware are we of the ways in which our observations and assumptions about nature give rise to our societal construct? Peace and Social Concerns committee is focusing on practical strategies for stewardship of our natural resources.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We discussed the various things we do to live more in harmony with nature. We recycle, eat less meat, use locally grown produce and replace some car trips by walking or cycling. Since our relationship with nature affects almost everything we do we agreed to be mindful and ask ourselves "What am I doing to act in the Christlike way?"

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: As a meeting and individuals we engage the issues of the query and incorporate them into our lives. Sometimes there are possibilities that are out of our reach but we continue to ask ourselves, "What can we do?" We are open to changes which would bring us closer to harmony with nature.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: Our country is currently going through a transition in determining how best to use our natural resources and how to produce and conserve energy. Our global consciousness is also changing in an attempt to understand our relationship with our planet. This is a complex issue which involves our grass roots behavior in consumption and recycling as well as corporate responsibility in using resources. As individuals we are charged with becoming more mindful of our daily behavior in energy and product use. We have seen some progress and positive change, but we have far to go. As Quakers we can take it upon ourselves to help clean up our wider community as well as our meeting and school grounds.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: As a meeting, we strive to be conscious of our actions and the effects they have on nature. Our meetinghouse and grounds have remained simple, without air conditioning or indoor plumbing. Several of our families are pursuing sustainable agriculture out of religious conviction, and many of us purchase eggs and milk at the meetinghouse each First Day. We take pleasure in the sense of harmony we feel here, while acknowledging that this harmony is more difficult to attain in other areas of our lives.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Do we endeavor to live in harmony with nature? Are we careful in our stewardship of the world's irreplaceable resources? The short answer is "NO".

There are those who make a conscious effort to bike everywhere, cook on solar stoves, consume locally grown products and live with tremendous conviction. They are great role models, especially when they do so without being dogmatic or self righteous. The rest of us fall short, however, we can and must strive to do our best from day-to-day.

This can range from picking up litter to recognizing that the Wilmington area is a unique habitat (ex. the Venus fly trap lives within 60 miles of Wilmington and nowhere else) to actively following the Port proposed for Southport and its accompanying impacts on nature.

We must support nature and co-exist with nature. To do so will require that we educate ourselves and change our standard of living. A long range goal is to curb population growth and control human consumption of the world's irreplaceable resources.

Query # 11. *Do we reverence that of God in every human being with concern for the needs of each individual? Are we seeking to rectify existing social injustice and racial discrimination in our local communities and in the world at large?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: We see in our meeting – through donations, volunteering, our writings and projects – some efforts to address social injustice while recognizing that these efforts are limited and multilayered. We acknowledge the difficulty of addressing racism and social class differences in current culture and see this query as a challenge to look deeper as individuals and a meeting. We also see the challenge of living out seeing that of God in others consistently.

Durham Monthly Meeting: Quakers have a long tradition of service to people in prisons and mental health systems. Many of us deal with these issues daily in our work. We see suffering and despair and can become discouraged ourselves, yet we also know that our contributions are critical for those who need the social, medical and mental health services we provide.

Today Friends heard about a critically ill young man who lives in the urban woods and is afraid to go to the homeless shelter. He gets medical care yet has to go to McDonald's every day for a cup of ice to keep his insulin cold. He and hundreds like him need our prayers. They need *us* to experience the power of the love of God to move our society on their behalf. The line between our poverty and their destitution is very thin and the more we get to know them personally, we learn that on a deeper level there is no line at all: they are us and we are them; we are one.

Some Friends in our meeting have been profoundly affected by being part of a Reconciliation and Re-entry Faith Team

working with a man released from prison. It has moved those Friends beyond theory and knowledge about social issues to personal experience within a context of faith. They have gotten to know and love someone who has committed serious crimes and in so doing they have been changed by experiencing both the Light and the darkness in that person's life.

Often our fear of pain and darkness holds us at arm's length from people, but facing that pain and allowing ourselves to love an actual human being deepens our own experience of love and our commitment to carry it out into the broader world. The personal connection helps move us beyond the exhaustion of grappling with all the problems of the world and helps us experience the power and sufficiency of God's love. Our challenge is to support each other in doing this as individuals and as a meeting community. Public policy is not changed by statistics but by love, and love is transmitted by stories that move and connect people. We must find ways to tell these stories so that they are heard.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We find this query easier to observe in the general than in the specific. We believe there is that of God in everyone, though we sometimes fail to act that way. It helps if we look for the gifts that others have to offer us and if we look for what others have to teach us. We seek to rectify social injustice and all kinds of discrimination both as individuals and as a meeting.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Sometimes it is easier to recognize that of God in each individual than it is to recognize an individual's needs. Some of us are concerned that in our caring for the world we may overlook the needs of individuals.

There is generally strong support among us for organizations, such as QUNO, FCNL, and AFSC, which work toward eliminating injustice on the national and global scale, though the lack of attention that many of our political leaders pay to these issues continues to be troubling. Sometimes our focus on these larger issues can draw our attention away from the more immediate concerns of individuals in our lives. Our Care and Counsel committee is faithful in maintaining contact

with absent friends as well as seeking ways to be supportive emotionally and materially of present members. Our Peace and Social Concerns committee works hard to contribute to alleviating the misery caused by social injustice in the community in which we live.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: Greenville Friends did not have a response to this query in this past year.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: We do reverence that of God in each individual and strive to be aware of their needs. We are mindful that we can address that of God in individuals we meet. As a meeting with small membership we are not able to address the social justice concerns larger meetings may refer to committees. We do support individuals in the meeting who actively work toward addressing issues mentioned in the query. The meeting offers material support to Village in Action in Woodland. One member serves on the board of that organization and other members serve as advisers and volunteers.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: These are powerful words, “to reverence that of God in every human being,” and we are always growing into that ideal. Overcoming prejudice and cultural fears of those who are different from us is a multi-generational task. Hopefully our children and grandchildren are more open and accepting than we are to seeing that of God in all. As a meeting we are active in organizations in our community which challenge and rectify social injustice, including the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center, Empower Hampton Roads, and Hampton Roads Network for Nonviolence. We now more than ever see the need to join with like-minded groups already active in this work in order to have greater impact. As individuals we are also committed in our jobs and volunteer work to help the less fortunate and disenfranchised in our community.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: In community, as we come to know one another, we continue to work to see and reverence that of God within each individual. God sometimes calls us to hard things. Inner barriers may make it difficult to reach out to others.

As we recognize the needs of each individual, including ourselves, we are better able to be generous sharers of God's love in the world. In the memory of those present, this meeting has noted and sought to rectify inequities in the world.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: There is a bill in Congress which proposes to balance the budget on the backs of the poor and the children. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Jim Wallace's group supports fasting as a symbol of Christian faith, as a means of clarifying concerns and as a powerful way to make a statement. The food editor of the NY Times has joined the movement to protest and writes about how it feels not have enough food. Fasting is both a personal and public action. Fasting heightens one's awareness of food. Money that would be spent on a day's food could be used towards something else.

Is American Friend's Service Committee doing any letter writing on this subject? It is difficult to discuss this topic without delving into the politics of the day. Our government is in dire straits, but to balance the budget on the backs of the poor is ultimately to undermine the nation's security. We see throughout the Middle East, how the poor and disadvantaged are not willing to take it any more.

In a local public high school, racial discrimination is an interesting and complex issue. Blacks feel disenfranchised, although such feelings may not always be justified. For example, when a Black student is disciplined, it may be for inappropriate behavior, not racial discrimination. However, the student may use racial discrimination as a fall back for not accepting responsibility. In some instances, to the astonishment of some, Asians find themselves on a low rung of the racial discrimination ladder. In one example, which bears further investigation, a pediatrician recommended drastic measures such as moving from the region to avoid such discrimination.

Black students sometimes refer to each other as "nigger," as in, we may use this word, but you, the white person, may not. Blacks "own" the word and claim it has a different meaning from when it is used by whites. This word is used by teenagers to make adults uncomfortable, and after all, it's a teenager's job to

make adults uncomfortable. Words are just words, but words can push buttons.

Young children have no concept of race, yet by 5th or 6th grade, black kids sit together in the cafeteria. Maybe they sit together for comfort and security. Prejudice is a taught response. TV and movies portray black and white characters differently. An example of latent racism: would a white person be willing to sip from the same cup as a black person (that is, assuming that one would be willing to do so from the same cup used by another person). Whites are “racist” because all whites have benefited by being white.

Discrimination, racial or otherwise, is often based upon economic class. In the book, *Nickled and Dimed in America*, the author takes jobs paying minimum wage and decides that it is impossible to make a living on such a salary. However, the middle class persist in the belief that the poor are lazy. A letter to the editor of the Star News notes that the writer is rich and therefore hard working and a provider of jobs, etc. So why should he pay more taxes? This person felt entitled to everything and that the lazy poor are not. This mentality is pervasive in our government and our country.

Part of this query should include examination of what each of us can do. We have to acknowledge that we are prejudiced and force ourselves to act as if we weren't. For example, a person who hates hospitals may force himself to volunteer there twice a week. In like fashion, we should “stretch” beyond our comfort level. (Tongue-in-cheek, if you hate the rich, you should make friends with a rich person). We need to try harder, and take as well as make opportunities to reach out to others. Of course, at some point we have all been on the receiving end of such good intentions and wonder “why are they inflicting themselves on me?”

An example of making an opportunity is looking at a homeless person who requests a handout and engaging him in conversation in order to learn about him and his situation.

Consider: “Quakers came to the new world to do good and they did well,” or “the Lord comforts the troubled and troubles the comfortable.” We have to ask ourselves, “what would Jesus do,” or “what would Rufus Jones do?”

We need to teach our children not to look for prejudice, that sometimes people just don't like them. People should stop seeing color. We may not be pure in soul, but we must try to be the best that we can be.

Query # 12. *Do we welcome newcomers and non-members to our meetings? Are they encouraged to share in meeting activities and to consider membership when they are in agreement with the principles and practices of Friends? Are our younger members appointed to committees and encouraged to share in other responsibilities of the meeting? Do we visit one another frequently, remembering those who may be lonely? Does this visitation and caring extend beyond the members of our own meeting?*

Davidson Monthly Meeting: We reflected on ways that we can engage our young people, especially the college students. Ideas included new ways to communicate the presence of the meeting and issue particular invitations to activities, and the potential of our future meetinghouse as a welcoming place. Members also found the query an important reminder of ways we are called to be with others. We have a sense there is outreach to members and non-members and we are encouraged to look deeper and find new ways.

Durham Monthly Meeting: This query addresses the importance of engagement in meeting and its cohesiveness. We have been blessed in recent years by growth in those attending meeting as well as new members. For the most part we have done a good job welcoming these new Friends. With growth has come an increasing number of ways to contribute to the meeting; we are pleased at the number of people that are volunteering to serve on committees, especially younger Friends. We have also used newer technologies to stay in touch with those who have moved away. Finally, engagement with our community, other parts of the world, and the wider world of Friends enriches the life of the meeting.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting: We actively involve all our members in the business of the meeting. We now have a procedure for welcoming newcomers and guests. All attenders are encouraged to join in our congregational activities. We are considering advertising our second-hour study sessions in the newspaper. We have visited one another occasionally and stay in touch via email and telephone within our meeting. Our caring extends beyond the members of our meeting.

Friendship Monthly Meeting: Friends united in the following response: One Friend recalled that his mother had been moved by her warm reception as a visitor and endorsed how well our meeting handles visitors. Staying in contact with absent and sick members has been a special point of emphasis for Care and Council. It was also observed that we consistently invite younger members and attenders to involve themselves in the life and work of the meeting. Despite these positive points, it was also observed that there is always the possibility for an individual to be overlooked. It is harder to assess how well we extend our network of care to include those outside of the meeting, but many of our members are actively engaged in the care and support of persons in the wider community regardless of affiliation.

Greenville Monthly Meeting: We reach out to people outside our meeting in a number of small ways. We hold our meetings for worship in a retirement home. This has led to some residents of the community to find us and begin worshipping with us. We hold Bible study/reading group at individual homes and have invited nonmembers to participate with us. Also the clerk and his wife hold weekly dinners to which both members of meeting and others are invited.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting: Our hearts are ready, but we have few opportunities to welcome newcomers and nonmembers. We have regular email contact and personal correspondence among members. Most members live outside the immediate surroundings of Northampton County, as well as

some outside North Carolina and overseas. Distance makes frequent visitation difficult.

As a small meeting we do not delegate matters to committees, but encourage everyone to participate in the life of the meeting.

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting: Recently, we have made a concerted effort to welcome newcomers to our meeting. We do reach out into our community in a number of ways. With the advent of our meeting email, we are more aware of members' illnesses and personal needs and can respond promptly with our support through calls, visits, cards, and daily help. We also support all members and attenders in their individual endeavors. We are not an evangelical faith and do not actively seek new members but wait until they are drawn to us. We hope to find new ways to bring young people into our midst. We are not a perfect body and always seek for way to open in our meeting and our hearts to include visitors, neighbors, and friends.

West Grove Monthly Meeting: West Grove Friends are generally clear under the various parts of this query. Specifically, we welcome attenders and have three new members. We are grateful for the presence of our young Friends and seek to consider ways both to include them in the meeting's life and to show our appreciation for their support. We are improving in the area of visiting one another although we sense a need to do more.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting: Some members and attendees of meeting feel very welcome. Others are aware of differences within the meeting and feel some tension although they feel that the energy of the meeting has improved leading to a greater sense of welcome. Our meeting is transitioning from a period in which finances formed a major focus. Concerns such as the roof took much attention. We are now able to redirect our focus. One attendee felt a call to come back to meeting to give vocal ministry.

We attract attendees that participate in the meeting for a short period of time. Although we have only a few younger

members/attendees, they have contributed much to the processes and missions of the meeting. There are no children in this meeting and the general population in this region is of a transient nature.

Many members and attendees live a great distance from the meetinghouse. Our social gatherings after silent worship and group activities such as work days and gatherings for meals after meeting allow us avenues to get to know each other a little better. Maybe we want to do more of this and learn more about each other.

Particular concern was expressed for former Clerks and their absence after they fulfill their roles. Do we expect too much from our Clerks? After all, our Clerks bear the burden as well as the blessings of the meeting. Because our meeting is so small, we do not have a Ministry and Counsel Committee, so who takes on that role?

We must care for our members/attendees and non-members by encouraging warmth and caring and providing uplift for each other.

53. *Minutes of the Yearly Meeting of Ministers, Elders and Overseers*

As is our practice, the minutes of the yearly meeting of Ministers, Elders and Overseers and query responses are included with the 2011 yearly meeting minutes.

**Gathering of Ministry, Elders and Overseers
314th Session of
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)**

Seventh Month 13, 2011

Janis Ansell: clerk

Nan Bowles: recording clerk

Ministers, Elders and Overseers of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) gathered near the appointed time on the inviting campus of the University of North Carolina in Wilmington. The shade of the cool green trees welcomed us all.

Each of the monthly meetings in our Yearly Meeting was represented by members. Twenty seven members of NCYMC were present for the meeting.

The following visitors were introduced: Mark Wutka, Atlanta Friends Meeting (SAYMA); David Eley, Keystone Fellowship Monthly Meeting (Ohio Yearly Meeting); Anne Margaret “Meg” McCormick, Yahara Monthly Meeting (Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative); Cassandra Fralix, Columbia Friends Meeting (SAYMA); Gerald “Jerry” Rudolph, Columbia Friends Meeting (SAYMA); Alice M. Wald, Columbia Friends Meeting (SAYMA); Ken Randall, Kendal and Sedbergh Monthly Meeting (Britain Yearly Meeting; Pat Bradbury, Kendal & Sedbergh Monthly Meeting (Britain Yearly Meeting); William Geary, Mullica Hill Monthly Meeting (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) and Southern State Worship Group; Micah Bales, Rockingham Monthly Meeting (Ohio Yearly Meeting) and Capitol Hill Friends in Washington, DC; Evelyn Jadin, Jamestown Friends Meeting (NCYM-FUM).

The minutes of the called meeting of Ministers, Elders, Overseers of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, held Eleventh Month, 2010, were read and approved to be included in the yearly meeting minutes.

Minutes of North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative
Ministry and Oversight Called Meeting
20th Eleventh month, 2010

The called meeting of representatives from the monthly meetings to the yearly meeting’s Ministry and Oversight gathered near the appointed hour at West Grove Meeting. Those present:

| Name | Monthly Meeting |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Charlie Ansell | Rich Square |
| Jeff Ginsburg | West Grove |
| Eric Ginsburg | West Grove |
| Haven Kimmel | West Grove |

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Dixie Newlin | West Grove |
| Kristin Olson-Kennedy | Davidson |
| Carole Treadway | Friendship |
| Cheryl Fetterman | Wilmington |
| Robert Gosney | Rich Square |
| Barbara Gosney | Rich Square |
| Nancy Craft | Virginia Beach |
| Dave MacInnes | Friendship |
| Richard Miller | Greenville |
| Mary Miller | Greenville |
| Janis Ansell, Clerk | Rich Square |
| Nan Bowles, Recording Clerk | Friendship |

The following query was asked: “How can we, as a body of ministers, elders and overseers of the yearly meeting, serve to nurture our monthly meetings?” Out of worshipful silence the immediate need to take up the call to inter-visitation between monthly meetings emerged. To facilitate this action, representatives of Ministers, Elders and Overseers will contact the clerk with information of meeting activities open to all visitors, as well as each representative’s availability for visitation and desired dates.

In the midst of autumn sunshine, falling leaves and Divine love, a fruitful discussion took place. We closed with meeting for worship and plan to gather next as the clerk is led by Divine guidance.

Respectfully,
Recording clerk Nan Bowles

Monthly meeting reports were read. The following changes were noted. In Greenville Monthly Meeting JoAnne Holden was appointed elder. Charles Ansell is no longer recorded as an elder in Rich Square as he has transferred his membership to West Grove Monthly Meeting. The monthly meeting reports were approved to be included in the minutes.

The responses to the third and seventh Queries for Meeting of Ministry and Oversight were read and all responses to queries were approved to be included in the Yearly Meeting minutes.

Friends were invited to share stories about what it was like to be visited by yearly meeting members and to be a yearly meeting visitor to one of our monthly meetings.

Inter-visitation between monthly meetings and yearly meeting members face to face is still vital to our spiritual growth even in this day and age of electronic communication. We were reminded that when we responded to letters from the prisoners we are also visiting the Southern State Worship Group. We also need to be open to visiting Quakers outside our yearly meeting to let others know who we are as conservative Friends.

When Durham Friends Ministry and Counsel Committee had some business come up that needed to be addressed they discerned it was in right order to format the business into two queries. This format created a pathway for the Durham Ministry and Counsel Committee to face their issues as a whole meeting not just as sharing of personal experiences. They found this to be very helpful. These two queries and the responses will be included in the yearly meeting minutes as follows:

Query: “Have we as a committee progressed as Quakers during this year? Have we led our meeting in and towards the light?”

Response: Early on in the year our meeting times as a committee felt rushed. We worked on this as a group and found a rhythm and time that felt more centered. The retreat was also a great way that we strengthened the Quaker understanding of folks who attended.

Meeting for worship – the year has been quite positive in terms of gathered meetings and balance between vocal ministry and silent worship. It has felt deeper and more gathered in the sense of the relevance to the meeting as a whole, not just reflections of personal life being shared. The committee’s attention and lifting up of this area of concern has helped this, along with the input of many other people and committees in the meeting.

There is still a need for a regular process of assessment. Maybe a state of the meeting annual retreat would be helpful? A special area of concern is the meeting-wide budgeting process, as it seems that committees submit their requests and the budget is quickly approved all at once. Are we looking as a meeting at our values and how we prioritize our spending/commitments? Some feel a tension between intentionality and the free movement of the Spirit. How do we plan, and foster awareness and openness to the movement of the spirit.

Would it be possible to create some kind of minimal structure that would facilitate more intentionality? Some groups have planning retreats. As the meeting gets larger more intentionality is needed on the part of leadership to be attentive to our values and how they are being lived out in the life of our meeting.

As a committee we have wrestled with concerns that we felt were impacting the life of the meeting and meeting for worship in particular. Early in the year we had concerns around the amount of sharing during Joys and Concerns. We offered a solution others in the meeting felt uncomfortable with. Adjustments were made and a greater sense of unity was experienced.

Query: “We seek to focus attention on our community's need for both practical and spiritual support in times of need. Background: Care & Support has been overwhelmed lately and we wonder how to address needs for pastoral care (ex. through requesting a care committee) How much can we expect to do? This seems to be a constant struggle for our community.”

Response: We can help the overwhelming demands on C&S by clearly defining what the expectations of the committee are. We can work to figure out how to better support the spiritual life of the community: example, create opportunities for affinity groups, address need for pastoral care. We can make what is already happening, possible, and working for some to be known by more. Social media may help (at least some) and some of this is happening. Action:

Think about how to share these concerns and ideas more widely. Share concerns with incoming clerk.

After a period of waiting worship the clerk, Janis Ansell, shared with us that she feels clear that her service to God through this body as clerk of Ministers, Overseers and Elders has come to a close. Way is now open for us to listen in our hearts as the name of another is lifted up. Friends expressed appreciation for the service Janis has been led to offer us as clerk.

We closed with a period of waiting worship.

Report from Davidson Monthly Meeting

Report of Ministry and Counsel of Davidson Friends Meeting:

We have read and considered all of the yearly meeting Queries for Ministry and Oversight. Responses to the queries are attached.

Our meeting's representatives to NCYMC Ministry and Oversight are Patty Levering and Kristin Olson-Kennedy. Our representatives at this yearly meeting session will be Patty Levering and Kristin Olson-Kennedy and others who are able to attend.

Davidson Friends has faithfully sent visitors to worship with and give spiritual nurture to Foothills Friends Worship Group in Greenville, SC. Over the year they have moved meeting locations and more recently have moved to meeting only two Sundays a month. We have invited them to join with our meeting in various activities and to go with those of us attending Yearly Meeting events or occasions related to the Yearly Meeting. At this point nothing more formal has seemed appropriate.

Our meeting very much appreciated and enjoyed the visit of Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight members and others at our Fourth Month 17 celebration of the spiritual journey of our meeting.

In our committee we have begun preliminary discussions about spiritual gifts, the roles of elder and minister, and the practice of recording gifts.

Patty Levering, clerk

Report from Fayetteville Meeting

Fayetteville does not have a standing committee for Ministry and Nurture to submit a report. Robert Cooper represented Fayetteville at the meeting.

Report from Rich Square Monthly Meeting

Our Meeting appointed the following as representatives to the coming annual meeting of the Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Oversight, and to continue for the next year as representatives to that body: Lloyd Lee Wilson, Edward Pearce, Barbara Gosney, and Robert Gosney.

During the year since our last annual meeting there have been no changes in ministers or elders in Rich Square Monthly Meeting, except that of the transfer of membership of our elder, Charles Ansell, from Rich Square Monthly Meeting to West Grove Monthly Meeting.

Report from Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting

The following were named to represent us at the coming annual session of the yearly meeting of Ministry and Oversight: Nancy Craft and Keith Williamson.

There have been no changes in the names of those recorded as ministers and elders.

The Queries for the meeting of Ministry and Oversight were read. Written responses are below.

There are no changes in the names of those previously forwarded in response to the request of the yearly meeting of Ministry and Oversight to appoint representatives to a continuing body of Ministry and Oversight for the purpose of considering concerns as they arise from monthly meetings. Those named are: Gayle Cameron, Nancy Craft, Paula Justice, Rebecca Mani, Nancy Nixon, Judith Stevens, Louise Wilson, Keith Williamson, Andrew Young and Patricia Phelan Young.

During the past year, Nancy Craft was able to visit Wilmington Friends.

Nancy Craft, M&O Clerk

Report from West Grove Monthly Meeting

Taken from the minutes of the West Grove Meeting of Ministers, Elders, and Overseers (MEO), held Seventh Month 5th, 2011, at which Elder Dixie Newlin and Overseers Charles Newlin, Les Fleming and Clerk of MEO Eric Ginsburg were present. Mike Arnold also attended.

The Advices to Ministry and Oversight were read. The Queries for Ministry and Oversight were also read and answered as reproduced below. The answers were accepted as nearly representing our present condition, and the clerk is directed to forward the answers to our approaching yearly meeting. The clerk, as well as any member of this meeting who may be able to attend, will represent us.

Eric Ginsburg, Clerk

Report from Wilmington Friends Meeting

In Wilmington Cheryl Fetterman is the sole member of Ministry and Worship at present. We have had a year of seasoning with no additions. A meeting committee for discussion hour programming has done a very nice job of scheduling and carrying out a plan that would have previously been initiated through Ministry and Worship. A meeting care and concern committee has been set up to take on some of the Ministry and Worship activity from previous years although this committee has not been active. Members have been asked to speak with Cheryl or the clerk of meeting if they feel they need a clearness committee or have other concerns that they would have previously taken to Ministry and Worship. I have read and considered, but have not written responses, to the Ministry and Oversight queries this year. My feeling is that the year of seasoning could continue as long as needed.

Submitted by Cheryl Fetterman

Query #1: *Are we aware of our duties as ministers, elders, and overseers; and do we conduct ourselves in a manner commensurate with our responsibility?*

Davidson Meeting: We do understand the work of the committee. We carry our responsibility both seriously and lightly, not trying to control the Meeting, but loving and listening to the Meeting. It is helpful to pay attention regularly to the state of the meeting for worship. To be a member of Ministry and Counsel is to take on a responsibility to do what one can to ground and deepen worship and spiritual community.

Friendship Meeting: Friendship Friends Meeting has two committees and the duties of ministers, elders and overseers are still divided between Care & Counsel and Worship & Ministry. The two committees meet jointly four times a year and have an annual retreat. We do understand that our responsibilities are part of an ongoing process, one that takes us deep into the Inward Life.

Rich Square Meeting: Our meeting is small and a significant number of active members are not residing locally. These factors influence the opportunities we have for exercising our responsibilities as ministers, elders and overseers. We, at times, feel challenged by these circumstances and question whether or not we are fully meeting our responsibilities. We trust we will remain aware of potential opportunities to exercise our responsibilities, whatever the circumstances.

Virginia Beach Meeting: We believe we are faithful in attendance and aware of our duties. A desire was expressed for further exploration of our roles and responsibilities to each other and to the Meeting.

West Grove Meeting: As our discussions within the body of MEO indicate, we do seem well aware of our duties. Our conduct is perhaps too tentative and the meeting would be well-served by our more active involvement in the life of the meeting.

Query #2: *Do we attend regularly meetings for all ministers, elders and overseers? Are we faithful in attending all other meetings for worship and business, taking our families with us when appropriate?*

Davidson Meeting: We focused on the value of attending regularly meetings for worship and for business and for Ministry and Counsel. We see that we can't be mindful of the wellbeing of the community if we aren't present to listen. To fail to be part of the faith community is to diminish one's faith. Attendance of meeting for worship and for worship with attendance to business is what makes one a Quaker. Each monthly meeting is unique; to visit different ones has value. Attendance of the same meeting over time and with regularity allows for personal deepening, as one First Day experience feeds into the next. Our understanding deepens, from the silence and the prayer and the ministry. We also are drawn together as community in the deep spiritual place. Relationships of a special kind are developed.

Durham Meeting: We do not have groups that fill all these roles. The group does respect their role on M&C and attend regularly. We are challenged by lack of attendance at business meetings. Is there anything that M&C can do to create broader attendance at business meeting? Change time? But there is no other time that we think will work better. Perhaps we should have one or two business meetings tied to a lunch potluck that have a particular focus that would appeal more broadly. Sounds like a good idea. Joe will take this to Business Meeting as a clerk's minute.

Friendship Meeting: Friends are faithful to attend committee meetings and meeting for worship when we are not kept away by outside obligations or other personal issues such as health concerns. Out of concern for attendance at Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, we chose to focus our annual all-meeting retreat on responsibility, commitment, and spiritual grounding in relation to Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. We have made a more conscious effort to provide childcare so that Friends can bring their families to meeting events.

Rich Square Meeting: We do attend regularly all meetings as we are able.

Virginia Beach Meeting: We believe we are faithful. Querying ourselves led to much introspection: We asked, "Where is the line between business and worship?" We

reminded ourselves to take time to choose our words carefully as we conduct our business. As guardians of the spiritual life of the meeting, our actions speak louder than our words.

West Grove Meeting: We do not meet often as a body, but members are faithful in their attendance. This body is also consistent in participation in Meetings for Worship and Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business. We and the other members of the meeting are conscientious in involving our families in all aspects of the life of the meeting, and we participate in other meetings as we are able.

Query #3: *Do we seek to wait for and to move under Divine inspiration in the exercise of our gifts?*

Davidson Meeting: We wish to wait for and to move under Divine inspiration in the exercise of all of our gifts, which are expressed in all kinds of service to the Meeting and outside the Meeting. We are particularly aware of the need for discernment and guidance in knowing how to approach people when they are ill or at the end of their lives. People are unique, and our responses need to reflect sensitivity to personal differences. The query speaks to us as a committee and how we work as a committee, but also to us as individuals with gifts. It is easy to skip discernment and waiting in favor of quick, get-things-done kinds of responses. We also noted that ongoing regular spiritual practices in our own lives can help us be more prepared to move under Divine inspiration whenever opportunities to exercise our gifts show up in the ordinary run of our lives.

Durham Meeting: This is related to our query last time, and resonates with the messages in Meeting for Worship today. Our practice of gathering in silence before we begin our work helps us approach the work seeking Divine guidance. The waiting is active in that it is an opening of the heart and seeking the rightness of God's will. In seeking this discernment one Friend sometimes asks: Is this a movement of love? And if it is, am I ready to let myself act on it? If not, why not? Being inspired and then hesitating can be a false sense of doubting, or it can be fear, or humility. Sharing among the group can help clarify what is working in our hearts.

Friends felt that once a decision has been made to move under Divine inspiration it is important to be able to let go of the outcome or to hold loosely to the outcome, not knowing the fullness of God's plan.

Friendship Meeting: Committee members are indeed aware of the need to move under Divine inspiration and at times of need return to the silent worship desiring to have our vocal ministry mediated by that spirit. We recognize that it is out of this centeredness that our gifts are illuminated.

Rich Square Meeting: Yes, we do seek to wait for and to move under Divine inspiration in the exercise of our gifts. We do so aware of our own limits but trusting that God is to be relied on.

Virginia Beach Meeting: Those who speak more often need the trust and encouragement of our fellows. We can also spend time on reexamination of our gifts? This is sometimes hard to discern within the busyness of our lives. Taking the risk to exercise them will help ourselves and others to grow in grace.

West Grove Meeting: We are aware of the balance that this query seeks, not moving too hastily, but neither hesitating too long when moved to act. We believe we generally do maintain this balance.

Query #4: *Does our ministry promote the spiritual growth of our members, building it up in the faith that is in Jesus Christ? Are we all kept aware of the basic principles of Friends faith and worship? Do we strive to make our lives blameless before God and man?*

Davidson Meeting: The word "blameless" caught our attention. We think of it in its sense of whole or faithful rather than in any punitive sense. It does ask us to take how we live seriously, to hold ourselves accountable to each other and to care for one another spiritually. The serious illnesses of quite a few people in our meeting have invited us to deepen spiritually as we have had opportunity to reflect on difficult issues. Our vocal ministers have deepened us as a meeting. Oftentimes the ministry is grounded in scripture and connected to Jesus Christ, about whom we have a broad and inclusive understanding. We

appreciate that among Quakers there are fresh and varied ways of understanding Christianity. Still, there are those in our meeting who would not use that language. We think it would be helpful to do more sharing of our faith journeys. We have had book groups and social gatherings. We consider the possibility of working with Quaker Quest. We think there would be value in learning more about the ground our testimonies come from.

Durham Meeting: Seems to tie to messages from meeting for worship. Relationship between perfection/blameless. Blameless is a difficult word. Sometimes we need to get out of the way to let God do the work. Meeting establishes a place of grace where we know our weakness is accepted, but can be changed. We have God's perfection built into us. Query is about accountability, leaders need to embrace this role. Summary: We feel that we do strive to fill the challenging intent of this query while we also know that we will falter and need the support of God's love to proceed.

Friendship Meeting: As a committee we endeavor to promote the spiritual growth of the membership, helping to build up the faith that is in Jesus Christ. There is an extended worship that is held once a quarter, as well as an annual All Meeting Retreat. We feel there is still the need for a series of adult education classes dealing with basic Quakerism to better enable membership/attenders the opportunity to learn more in depth about Friends faith and practice.

Rich Square Meeting: After considering some of the ways we have been engaged with the matters raised in this query, we feel we can answer affirmatively to these three questions.

Virginia Beach Meeting: The Spirit is in the quiet. We seem to be moving in the power of the Spirit of Christ within. We are considering expanding our pamphlet of introduction for our meeting to include more about our tenets and basic principles of our faith and our history. We do strive to be blameless.

West Grove Meeting: We have enjoyed more spoken ministry in our Meetings for Worship, which draw from both Scripture and Friends' writings. However, we have not been as conscientious as we had hoped in promoting regular religious discussions. We are encouraged by recent discussions within the meeting and suggestions for relevant activities and see these as

offering opportunities for greater service to God. We do endeavor to make our lives blameless before God.

Query #5: *Are we in unity one with another and with the Meeting to which we belong?*

Davidson Meeting: We believe that we on the committee are in unity with one another. We do not have ugly arguments. We are in the same Spirit. We also believe we are in unity as a committee with our Meeting, even though everyone does not agree on everything. Unity is built in community by respect, kindness, and living out of a set of beliefs. Disagreements are healthy as long as they are handled by looking to the guidance of the Spirit and with respect for each other. There is no disconnect between us as a committee and the character of the Meeting. We share core understandings about the Spirit in our lives. Sometimes our committee members are more intentional about things of the Spirit than others in the Meeting, but that simply allows us to serve the Meeting. The unity that we experience is about a shared sense of listening for God's will, not necessarily intellectual agreement. The most magnificent moments of unity happen where there is intellectual and emotional disagreement but a shared sense of Guidance.

Durham Meeting: Among the comments that we shared came a great sense of gratitude for the Meeting's unity of spirit, considering the wide diversity of theological viewpoints and beliefs as evidenced in the recent forum led by Adult Ed on the topic of Theological Diversity. The recent forum involving youth from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and DFM youths also confirmed that this "unity in diversity of our theological beliefs" is a core reality of our community.

Friendship Meeting: We strive to be in unity one with another and with the Meeting. The joint meetings between Care & Counsel and Worship & Ministry help us work towards our common purpose. Our commitment to ministering to the Meeting community helps strengthen the unity between individuals and the body of the Meeting.

Rich Square Meeting: We believe we, as all members of the one body of Christ, are in unity with one another and with the Meeting to which we belong.

Virginia Beach Meeting: Part of the unity is waiting. As we wait, we pray and listen. This can bring us to the unity god is asking of us.

West Grove Meeting: Friends are generally clear under the heads of this query and seek to maintain love and unity among us.

Query #6: *Are we careful not to become involved in the business and activities of everyday life to the impairment of our religious lives and the service to our meeting?*

Davidson Meeting: We find this query challenging. Our religious values do not match the values of our impatient culture, which prizes accomplishments achieved quickly. We often face competing, often insistent demands that discourage reflection and time devoted to the religious life, making it very hard to keep things in their proper perspective. Furthermore, no longer do we have a separate Quaker culture or anything that automatically brings us back to remembering our center, the divine. We may begin the day prayerfully, but we lose that attitude quickly because of the demands that rush in. We find it easier to be doing things than to be being mindful, but there are habits and ways of simplicity that help us counter secular culture. We find simplification of our lives to be freeing and liberating. We are aware that we do make choices about priorities and the balance in our lives and that if we don't make being in community a priority the community will not work. This query asks us to make our Quaker community a priority.

Durham Meeting: Everyday life has a tendency to pull us away from our spiritual life and participation in the community. Finding balance in the current environment is a constant challenge.

Friendship Meeting: We seek to bring our daily lives into alignment with our spiritual lives, as they are not separate. We always strive not to lose ourselves to the overwhelming stress and busy-ness that can fill our lives. We try to remain spiritually

focused and remember the rejuvenation that the Meeting can bring.

Rich Square Meeting: We feel we do take care to avoid the impairment of our religious life and service to the Meeting through the effects of the busyness of life.

West Grove Meeting: We note many occasions when the demands of work and providing for our families can pose time conflicts. At the same time, these constraints need not detract from our religious lives or faithful attention to the meeting. We strive to be conscious of this distinction and not set aside our religious obligations out of convenience.

Query #7: *Do we watch over one another for good? When asked for counsel, do we consider carefully what may be truly needed, being especially attentive to the young and inexperienced?*

Davidson Meeting: We as a committee have more sense of watching over the meeting for good since we have taken on what the former clerk of Care and Hospitality used to do. We often report on people in the meeting for whom we have concerns or joys. We also have lifted up the value of sending cards to people in the meeting. We tend to do more for people with illness, job loss, etc., but may do less for sporadic attenders. It is difficult to know where needs might be if we are often absent from meeting for worship. Whether we are dealing with friends, family, or people in the meeting, we can come up against challenges such as dealing with neediness, knowing what people are asking for, when and how to respond with more than listening, how we can help and what our limits are.

Durham Meeting: It can be a challenge to provide care for those who need it. We must be careful to discern what people really need, what it is appropriate for the meeting to provide and listen to whether we need to plan new opportunities for pastoral / spiritual support. We are mindful and thankful that we have a Meeting for Worship that seems to provide strong spiritual support to attenders.

Friendship Meeting: As a committee our first response is that we are good at watching over one another needs and

concerns, although we are aware that these concerns seem to be from those who are up front about their needs and concerns. We could at times do a better job at observing and watching for those who need support, yet are shy about asking, while being aware to not be too aggressive.

Rich Square Meeting: We believe our conduct this year has been consistent with the expectations implied by this query. We are mindful that at times the counsel which may be truly needed is often more of the nature of support than of advice or direction.

Virginia Beach Meeting: We feel we're growing watching over one another for good, learning that this can sometimes be done in silence. We find we get back what we give to others, even though no words are exchanged. This may be because improved email communication within the Meeting seems to have drawn us closer together recently.

West Grove Meeting: We do watch over one another for good and are generally attentive to one another's challenges and needs. Good counsel calls perhaps for more careful listening than for learned guidance, and we pray to be good listeners.

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**The 315th Session of the
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
will be held at Guilford College
Greensboro, North Carolina
Seventh Month 11-15, 2012**

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