




Miami Monthly Meeting

OHIO VALLEY YEARLY MEETING NEWSLETTER

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Seeking an Earth Restored: the Spiritual Path of Stewardship Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions 2006 Epistle

To Friends everywhere,

Greetings to Friends throughout creation, from Friends meeting at Earlham College for the 186th annual session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Both familiar faces and many new faces mingled in love and joy at our sessions. In these perilous and momentous times, we remember the counsel of George Fox: "Sing and rejoice, ye children of the day and of the light; for the Lord is at work in this thick night of darkness that may be felt. And truth doth flourish as the rose, and the lilies do grow among the thorns, and the plants atop of the hills, and upon them the lambs do skip and play. And never heed the tempests nor the storms, floods nor rains, for the seed Christ is over all, and doth reign. And so be of good faith and valiant for the truth." (Epistle 227, Eleventh Month, 1663) We have indeed felt God's presence working strongly among us this week, as we have worshiped together and explored how God is leading us, as we have sought guidance on our most deeply-felt concerns.

The theme of our Yearly Meeting has been "Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path of Stewardship," a theme we have explored in two plenary addresses and in a variety of workshops. We feel a sense of both urgency and hope.

Our two plenary sessions were experienced as powerful trumpet blasts of the Holy Spirit. Doris Fern called us "to commit to radically changed lives but filled with Spirit and universal love, in faith and in hope," as we explore how to bring about a new planetary culture. Doris reminded us that "the earth is not to be used up. Rather, it is a gift to be treasured and to be passed on to our descendants."

Previous generations of our ancestors have planted fruit trees, such as date trees, that matured long after the death of the planter. Let us see where we are called to plant such fruit trees. Instead of looking at ourselves primarily as stewards of our fellow creatures, let us act out of a sense of oneness with the natural world. All creatures belong to God: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." Dear God, "you open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing." (Psalm 24:1-2; Psalm 145:16) Doris reminded us that our despair over global warming and environmental degradation had at last removed the scales from our eyes, allowing us to see that we humans are neither separate from, nor above, the natural world.

Carl Magruder helped us understand the pain and guilt expressed by many Friends during

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 14-15 Joint Quarterly Meeting. Happy Hollow Camp, IN

Oct 18 Westheimer Peace Symposium. Wilmington College, Wilmington, OH

April 27-29, Quaker Genealogy Conference. 2007 Wilmington and Waynesville, OH

June 14-27, Friends Association for Higher Education summer conference. 2007 Earlham College, Richmond, IN

July 25-29, OVYM Annual Sessions. 2007 Earlham College, Richmond, IN

Aug 10-19, FWCC Triennial. Dublin, Ireland 2007

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness, and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying for one another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.

– Isaac Pennington, 1667

Continued from page 1

worship sharing. He said it arises because we are embedded in a system that does not allow us to live in integrity with our beliefs. He urged us not to succumb to a paralyzing sense of inadequacy. If we miss the mark, we must pick up our arrow and let it fly again and again.

Building on Doris' message that we have been called to commit our lives to acts of faith, to live out a new truth, Carl urged us to embark on another leg of the journey that Quakers had endeavored to travel for over 350 years. We must willingly abandon the treasured values of the North American culture: comfort and convenience. We belong to a worldwide community of Friends as well as to local communities. And our communities may be the best green technology we have. These are spiritual edifices far surpassing the grandeur of cathedrals and temples wrought of fine stonework, colored glass, and dazzling mosaic. Our religious communities are built from the very stones the Lord has lifted up to do His work. No matter where we are on Earth, we humans, fashioned by God, stand on holy ground to sing the praises of the Creator and the Creation.

Our workshops included an experiential exploration of expressing earth spirituality through music; examining the Biblical basis of earth care; an examination of the challenges of

"peak oil" production, global warming, and the transition to a low-energy society; gardening as a spiritual path; starting an earth care committee at your local meeting; embracing earth care as a

religious calling; and a look at sustainability in light of the spiritual and moral challenges of declining resources.

Friends in attendance expressed a sense that they were being led by the Spirit or of being uplifted and awed by the Light we experienced as a gathered meeting. We felt blessed by the loving spirit that characterized our business sessions and the absence of contentiousness over problematic issues such as the budget, the proposed revisions of our Faith and Practice, and financial stewardship of the Yearly Meeting.

We heard a variety of prophetic voices. At the beginning of our

sessions, the Nominating Committee's slate had over 30 unfilled positions; the Committee found Friends to fill many of these positions by our sessions' end. We approved a minute urging our government to act to de-escalate hostilities in Lebanon and Israel. We held Mid East Yearly Meeting in the Light upon hearing that their assembly in Lebanon had to be canceled this year. We were disgusted by the erosion of civil liberties illustrated by the arrest of AFSC interns who were distributing counter-recruitment leaflets outside of "a Free Speech Zone" in Chicago on July 7.

Minute calling for peace between Israel and Lebanon:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting affirms the 340-year-old testimony of the Religious Society of Friends against war. We seek to live in that Spirit that takes away the occasion for war.

The recent warfare in Israel and Lebanon breaks our hearts. We are particularly concerned that the great majority of the killed and wounded on both sides have been civilians. We are praying for the safety of all persons in these nations.

We believe that our own nation can do more to end this conflict. We call on our government to work for an immediate ceasefire. We support our government's call for an end to arms shipments to Hezbollah, but also call for our government to attempt to limit Israel's use of U.S.-supplied-and-funded weapons.

We further call on our government to support multilateral efforts, particularly working through the United Nations, to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict. We urge our government to pursue a more balanced policy whose goal is sustainable and secure states in Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel.

These voices were accompanied by voices that reminded us repeatedly that discouragement and despair were not part of the Spirit of God. In a variety of settings Friends expressed a sense that there is no time to waste and a desire for concerted community action. But we must also have patience to wait in the Spirit for way to open.

"I must be the song I sing about," sang Carl Magruder. Then, in conclusion, he proclaimed, "There is a symphony to be played, and I am longing to hear that music."

We call for Friends everywhere to dedicate themselves in order to put the needs of the natural world first. We believe there will be no end to war, and no end to poverty, and no end to injustice, unless we create a new web of allegiance with the earth.

Children's Epistle

Seventeen children ages one to ten met at the 186th session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting in at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, from July 26-30, 2006, to consider the theme "Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path to Stewardship." The peaceful and beautiful campus of a historic Quaker college was the background for a time of fellowship and deep spiritual sharing. Our speakers taught us about nature and the earth. We learned that children don't go out in nature to play much anymore. We learned about recycling food. We experienced many fun activities. We discussed what we feel about nature and the earth. We made musical instruments and costumes and sang about our favorite things in nature. We are concerned that people waste things and cut down too many trees. We hope to find a way to recycle everything and a way to energize cars with electricity and solar power. We presented a query to the business meeting and sent a message to you all that we care about the earth.

Middle Youth Epistle

Greetings from the 2006 Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Middle Youth, who met at Earlham College from July 26, 2006 to July 30, 2006. The theme of this session was "Seeking an Earth Restored," and our service project connected to this idea. We bicycled to the Cope Environmental Center to learn more about solar power, wind power, composting, and other sustainable eco-friendly alternatives. While we were there, we tackled and removed a number of invasive plants such as: Russian olive, honeysuckle, grapevine, and multi-flora rose. Invasive plants crowd out the native plants, they don't provide food or home for wildlife, and in general they take more than they give. This reminded us of another species. We realized as humans we use a lot of resources that we don't replace. People should help each other to be more life-giving than life-taking. Using more sustainable resources instead of disposable resources will help us accomplish this goal.

Not only do we need to hold each other in the Light, we need to hold up our solar panels, too.

Teens' Epistle

Love and greetings to Friends around the world!

Thirteen Quaker youth (ages 14-19) met at the 186th annual sessions of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, from July 26 to 30, 2006, to consider the theme of "Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path of Stewardship." The elegant and serene campus of a traditional Friends college was the backdrop for this year's spiritual retreat. It was a time of self-realization, bonding with our fellow Friends, deep spiritual growth, and learning from others' experiences.

We learned that despite age differences, we can relate to adults and appreciate the wisdom they have to share. In the words of one of our dedicated leaders, Tahnea Jafari, "What you fear you attract; what you resist persists. You

create your own reality." The truth we've learned from this is that by conquering our fears we overcome obstacles.

We realize that one obstacle we face every day and will soon inherit fully is the responsibility for our planet's ecological future. We discussed this concern with plenary speaker Carl Magruder. We discovered that although each of us carries different concerns within our hearts they all lead back to a central root, which is a deep human concern for God's creation. We sincerely hope you share our concerns, because we are the future, and we can't do it alone.

We shall overcome. The future is uncertain, but one thing is certain:

WE ARE QUAKERS.

Clerk's Page

Virginia Wood

The opening pages of this issue of the Quill contain the epistles from our most recent session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. As those words reflect, the experience was a rich blessing, a blessing I receive over and over again when I gather with Friends. Join us at our next opportunity to meet for business, worship, and play which will be Joint Quarterly Meeting to be held October 14-15 at Happy Hollow Camp outside Nashville, Indiana.

When I first came to OVYM forty years ago, we were not holding joint quarterly meetings. Over ten years ago, Friends felt the desire to provide more opportunities by which we might meet our scattered family of Friends. Joint Quarterly Meeting was one of those ideas suggested and has prevailed throughout the years. Also remaining with us are workshop days sponsored by various committees. The Religious Education Committee will be offering their fall workshop day as part of the program for Joint Quarterly Meeting, but also conducts another workshop day in the spring. Likewise the Advancement and Nurture Committee sponsors a workshop day each spring. Peace and Social

Concerns Committee has started to sponsor workdays each spring and fall. Be watching for the announcement of these activities.

These opportunities are important in that they call us to be present for and with one another in spiritual community. To call one another to live more consciously and with more commitment to our gifts and their implications is to invite one another into more abundant life. I feel that is what we mean by the statement 'rich blessing.' Those who were in attendance at Yearly Meeting sessions were strengthened, renewed, challenged, comforted, and changed in some manner. To sustain these nudges of growth, many will look forward to the next opportunity to gather and feel the immediacy of Divine Guidance speaking through others. I am grateful to those Friends within our Yearly Meeting who are providing these opportunities for us. Many are new this year to these responsibilities. They need your support, participation, and encouragement. By so doing we all may live into those special gifts that have been given us and when brought together in Love create God's kingdom.

Middle Youth Adventures

— Nancy Long, *Bloomington Monthly Meeting*

You are not the only Quaker middle-youth person on the planet -- come meet more of us! Our middle youth are excited and energized after Yearly Meeting, where they enjoyed each other's fellowship and had a great deal of fun together. They want other middle youth who weren't able to attend YM to know that they would love to have more friends to share with. From theater games to service projects and time spent outside canoeing, biking, and having fun, OVYM Middle Youth Group is a GREAT place to meet friends and enjoy yourself.

As a new Middle Youth committee member, I look forward to the upcoming year of fresh activities, deepening friendships, and well-rounded growth for our middle youth. It has been a long time since I was around middle youth of my own - both of my youths are now in their late twenties. But I remember how special, how important, this short season of middle youth is -- it was apparent at Yearly Meeting, where the energy of our middle youth was contagious and compelling. Their skit at the Talent Show revealed their creativity, individuality, and intelligence. Our middle youth are such a treasure! I am grateful have been asked to serve on this significant committee.

Religious Ed Committee:

— Donna Bisset, *Louisville Meeting*

We have received 5 responses from our resources Questionnaire. They contain many suggestions and list many publications used for both children's and adult religious education classes. One source for great and varied topics, quick reading and rich material that invites lively discussion is the Pendle Hill Pamphlet collection. Each pamphlet can be read in one sitting. Authors speak from personal journeys concerning spiritual life, faith and witness.

Pamphlets written years ago are still pertinent to today's trends and focuses. The first pamphlets were printed in 1934. Just perusing the index whets one's appetite. Every Pendle Hill Pamphlet ever printed is available from the Pendle Hill Bookstore. A complete index is available as a free download. Some older pamphlets are also available for free downloading. Just go to www.pendlehill.org/bookstore/subscriptions.php

Our committee stands ready to help monthly meetings seeking help or information on topics concerning adult and children's religious education needs. Contact Diann Herzog at Ldiann@yahoo.com or phone 765.778.7143 for more information.

OVYM Web Site

The Ohio Valley web site address is <http://quaker.org/ovym>. Here you will find lists of yearly meeting and quarterly meeting officers, times and locations for each monthly meeting and worship group, a calendar of recurring events in the yearly meeting, descriptions of the current and past annual sessions, the entire book of discipline, all issues of the newsletter (*Quaker Quill*), links to the various OVYM ministries, and more. It's a treasure trove of helpful OVYM information. It even has a link to the Publication Coordinator's email on almost every page so that you can make suggestions for additions to the site.

Now the web site also includes even more information from the annual sessions just concluded. You will find there the official minutes recorded at the sessions, the budget that was adopted for Fiscal Year 2007, the complete list of nominations approved by the body in session, and the statistical report for the past year. All this information is easy to find. Just point your browser to <http://quaker.org/ovym>. You'll find Annual Sessions and much more in the menu on the left.

MONTHLY MEETING NEWS

Bloomington Meeting

Terry Reynolds, correspondent

Healing ourselves, our community, and our earth has been on the minds and in the hearts of Bloomington Friends in recent months.

Because some members are dealing with serious illnesses, we once again hold monthly meetings for healing. It was with gratitude that we accepted a healing library, donated by one of our members.

We held a marriage workshop that was attended by Friends and by members of the Bloomington Unitarian Universalist Church.

At a recent forum, we learned of some positive changes being made at the Monroe County Jail, and some Friends were moved to consider how they might use their gifts to help those housed there.

We registered as a supporting congregation for Faithful Call to Justice sponsored by the National Black Justice Coalition.

Much work has been done on the path to make our burial ground more accessible. This work included the planting of native grasses and wild flowers. Native plants have also found a home in the bed in the front of our meetinghouse.

At our last meeting for business, we approved a minute endorsing the Earth Charter. Some Friends established the Bloomington Climate Action Network (B-CAN). The group's primary concern is global climate change caused by human activity. Plans are to work at the local level, and networking has begun with other local groups concerned with this issue. Another group of Friends has begun working with members of the I.U. community in the hope of encouraging the university to become a greener campus, and especially to consider its routine use of pesticides and herbicides.

Death led us to say good-bye to our dear Friend, Lou Bucklin, and also to Yasuko Adams, a longtime member living in Japan.

We joyously welcome Matt Zink, our newest member.

Campus Meeting

- Jim and Millie Ramsey, correspondents

On July 19 the meeting hosted the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage at a picnic supper. There were 24 youth and four leaders representing seven countries.

A memorial service was held for long-time member, Marjorie Young, on June 17 at the Quaker Heritage Meetinghouse.

Richard Coleman presented a draft letter to our congressional representative and our two senators on behalf of the meeting. The draft urges our lawmakers to see that all detainees being held by the United States be apprised of the reasons for their imprisonment and the nature of the charges against them.

The meeting took up the recommendation from Ministry and Counsel to accept Linda Sears' application for membership.

The Spiritual Journeys group met on September 12 at the home of Summer McBrayer. The query discussed was, "Do we live in awareness of what needs to be done?"

Dr. Phil Holmes, a beloved meeting member, passed away after a two-year bout with cancer. He was 75. On September 9 a memorial meeting for Phil was held in the Quaker Heritage Center Meetinghouse. A large number of relatives attended in addition to all meeting members.

Richard Coleman continues to recover from the amputation of his lower right leg. He has been fitted with a prosthesis.

Canby Jones has received a call to give two endowed lectures at Union College in Kentucky on November 6 and 7.

The inner search group is continuing to explore the writings of author Meister Eckhardt.

Clear Creek Meeting

— *Cecile Holvik, correspondent*

With the opening of the college year and the return of students from both Earlham College and the Earlham School of Religion Clear Creek Meeting hosted an introductory pitch-in for about twenty-five students in late August.

Larry and Mary Huber were welcomed as attenders and Lincoln Callid Keefe joined as a sojourner member from Rochester NY Meeting.

Susan Lee Barton was in charge of arrangements for thirty young people who came abroad as the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage sponsored by FWCC in August. Members of Clear Creek assisted with food and transportation while the group was in Richmond assisting with a Habitat for Humanities project. It was noted that the students represented diverse theological backgrounds but "came together" at end.

Clear Creek is saddened to lose the Sexton family - Carol, Larry, Sarah and Benjamin who will be moving to Pendle Hill Pa., where Carol will teach art and spirituality. While Benjamin will enter Strath Haven High School in Wallingford, PA, Sarah will have her senior year as a Rotary Exchange Scholar in Valencia, Spain. Larry will be seeking a library position.

The contributions the whole family has made to the Meeting are too numerous to mention. We wish them well in their new experiences.

Mariah Miller, just returned from Europe, gave a report on her experiences of the past year. She was studying "globalization" under a program directed from Freiburg University in Germany. For three months at a time she studied in Germany, then in Durbin, South Africa; Delhi, India; and Barcelona, Spain. She reported that the teaching methods were different at each location, making the adjustment to each one very challenging. When she completes one more term in Germany, she will have a master's degree in that subject and hopes to work in that field.

A new opportunity for spiritual enrichment is being offered by Jennie Dove-Isbell. An hour of yoga will be available at 8 am on Sunday mornings in Stout Memorial Meetinghouse. Meeting will begin as usual at 9.15 am.

The midweek worship group continues to meet Tuesdays from 7 to 8 pm at Friends Fellowship Community. All are welcome.

Nathan Ferrell made his appearance on 6/16/06, just two days after his mother, Jennifer, had been the recipient of a baby shower.

On September 3rd Janet Withers and Daniel Sims were married under the care of the Meeting. It was an occasion of joy and reverence, with some of the most beautiful displays of flowers seen in Stout Meetinghouse. We wish the couple much happiness as they begin their life together.

Community Meeting

— *Wilhalmina Branson, correspondent*

We are happy to welcome Jason and Krystin Schmidt and their son, Hyland, age 8, as our new Resident Caretakers at our Meeting House. Krystin is the Clerical Support Secretary for Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting and a student at the Earlham School of Religion and Jason is a graduate student at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

A new brochure has been produced as an introduction for all visitors to our Meeting. Ministry and Council is experimenting with a welcome packet of information about Quakerism.

The weekend of Seventh Month 14 - 16 brought the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage sponsored by the FWCC. Quaker teens from around the world gathered in Cincinnati, staying in homes of Friends of all three Meetings. These Quaker teens had come to learn about Quakers in the Mid-West. All Quaker Youth Pilgrims, their host families and other Cincinnati Quakers gathered together Saturday evening for a pot-luck at Community Meeting. It was exciting for our teens to think others would come to learn about us. Many warm friendships were formed.

Eric Wolff attended Friends General Conference the first week of Seventh Month, 2006 in Tacoma, WA.

Two of our teens, Chris Morris and Shannon Isaacs, participated in the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting teen work camp in Hominy, OK for a week in Sixth Month, 2006. Hominy is a center for the Osage Indians. Chris Morris spent 4 weeks in Panama this

summer, living with a Panama family, under the care of the American Field Service Program.

Several members participated in Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting held at Earlham College, Seventh Month 26-30, 2006.

Dayton Meeting

Terri Scarpelli, correspondent

Early in June Dayton Friends enjoyed a joint worship and potluck meal with Mack Memorial Brethren Church. We look forward to an Open House/Festival at Mack Memorial Church on October 28.

In July we were saddened to hear of the death of Ray Cox. Due to illness Ray had been unable to attend our meetings for the past several years, but had been a faithful attender for many years before that. We will be holding a memorial for Ray during our regular Meeting for Worship on September 17.

We extend deepest sympathy to the family of Nikki Coffey-Tousely as her mother just passed away. Her mother had been very ill for the past few months and we will continue to hold Nikki and her family in the light.

This summer David and Rachel Collopy mourned the death of David's mother as well as learning of a severe injury David's brother suffered while biking, so we have held them in the light also.

Our older youth enjoyed a tubing trip on the Mad River, accompanied by David and Virginia Wood, on August 19. Both our older and younger Friends plan to continue to meet for First Day School activities this fall, sometimes with the Mack Memorial youth.

We continue community outreach by serving food at St. Vincent's homeless shelter once a month, joining in weekly peace vigils at the Federal Building in downtown Dayton, and encouraging our members and attenders to participate in events at the Dayton Peace Museum.

Our Meeting has decided to be one of the sponsors for Mercy Walking, a community event which will take place on October 25 and will feature Sr. Helen Prejean speaking about the death penalty. If you would like more information contact Terri at tss06@sbcglobal.net.

This fall we are very happy and appreciative to have our newest attenders join in the work of our committees, knowing they will provide fresh insight and valuable input.

Eastern Hills Meeting

– Franchot Ballinger, correspondent

As it was for others, summer time has been a time of comings and goings for Eastern Hills folks. Quaker-related journeys have included the following:

Daniel Coppock returned safely from his trip to the Holy Land with the Christian Peacemakers Team and spoke to the meeting about his experiences on July 9.

Franchot and Henrietta Ballinger attended Wilmington Yearly Meeting in Friendsville, TN.

On July 22, Franchot Ballinger joined the celebration of Ada Chapel's renovation by playing Native American flute and telling a few traditional Native American stories.

Four Eastern Hills families—the Coppocks, Hills, Lunds, and Montgomerys—hosted a total of eight visitors from the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. The visitors (from England, Ireland, and Germany) also attended Meeting for Worship on July 16.

On September 10, Roland Kreager and Cindi Goslee led out Second Hour discussion with a report on Right Sharing of the World's Resources.

Fall Creek Meeting

– Diann Herzog, correspondent

Fall Creek Meeting is now fully engaged in the renovation process of our meetinghouse. Much work was accomplished over the summer and we are now hurrying to complete outside repairs before cold weather arrives. We are especially anxious to make our basement fully useable. The OVYM Peace & Social Concerns Committee has volunteered to come and help with the work.

We had a very relaxed summer but are once again eager to begin regular religious education meetings. Adults are going to do the Quakerism 101 course

again, while the children's lessons will be led from a variety of resources. Our First Day meetings are well and regularly attended, with Friends usually staying late into the afternoon. We share meals, play with the children, do art projects and sit around and visit. We recently purchased a standing loom and will soon begin a group weaving project for the meetinghouse.

Being a small meeting, we would very much appreciate visits from other Friends. We find much encouragement and edification in the Spirit from visiting Friends and eagerly provide hospitality.

Hopewell Meeting

-- Sherita Saffer-Campbell, correspondent

Hopewell Friends Meeting has been busy this past summer with a workshop led by Annie Glen, a second year student at ESR. In this workshop, which grew out of one of her classes at ESR, we rededicated ourselves with ideas and actions to involve our Meeting in growth, activities in the various communities that are reflected by membership in Hopewell Meeting and expansion of our involvement in the greater Quaker Community.

This workshop and discussion was full of energy and excitement, and infused us with great enthusiasm for future projects. So watch out world, here we come.

We have committed ourselves with visiting and doing more with Renaissance house and sending a donation for a corn pellet stove. Several members are working with ecology groups in their various communities to help keep our farmland and our water safe.

Adriana Cabrera, a sojourning member from Columbia, South America and ESR student, led a second hour discussion by reviewing her seven day silent Spiritual Retreat. She related this was a time for spiritual enlightenment and renewed excitement for her ministry.

We studied this past summer, *Dakota*, by Kathleen Norris, and various pamphlets from Quaker hill, to stimulate our discussion in second hour.

Several Friends attended OVYM this year and reported on their workshops and discussions groups during second hour. We are also happy to note

several of our members are on committees within the yearly meeting.

We continue to hold in the Light, all who work, walk, pray and sometimes are killed in their attempts for non-violence and peace upon our wonderful, beautiful planet. We hold in the Light those who have chosen violence as a method of solving problems that their minds and hearts may be changed so that they too may walk in the Light of peace. May Spirit bless.

Lexington Meeting

-- Gail Koehler, correspondent

A record number of Lexington Friends attended yearly meeting sessions at Earlham College this year, where we were so greatly blessed by programming, worship, and (!yes! even) business meetings that a number agreed to serve on yearly meeting committees.

Lately in our First Hour discussions we've explored biblical bases for "Living Peacefully," work by John Shelby Spong, readings from Thich Nhat Hanh, and a viewing of the film "The Future of Food." We are looking forward this fall to a more "Quaker Experience/Quakerism 101" sessions.

Over the summer our youngest F/friends First Day School heard stories from the Hebrew scriptures and this fall we've spent time reflecting on and learning about stewardship of our natural world. Our annual summer Religious Education retreat produced a full year's worth of ideas and great energy-we held a potluck to generate some intergenerational activity plans and have already enjoyed an overnight camping trip together. For the first time in memory, we started out the school year with a small book-giving ceremony at rise of an August meeting where each young F/friend was presented with a book from the FGC catalog with a personalized inscription and wish for a blessed new year at school. We are trying new age groupings that require an increased number of leaders and assistants and have had some good initial responses to that change.

Our Property Management committee has expended much time and effort drawing to our attention critical needs in the physical space we use-the planning and prioritizing of repairs and changes we need and want to make is just beginning.

A number of regular F/friends continue to faithfully witness to the need for an end to military conflict at the local peace vigil every Thursday evening at 5:30 at Triangle Park - now running more than 250 weeks.

Louisville Meeting

- Donna Bisset, correspondent

Jennifer and Doug Stern hosted a Quilt Making Party for new son, Henry, in June. Those who attended had a good time and the finished quilt will represent the Meeting's love and concern for Henry and his family.

Doris Best fell and broke her leg in the same spot as a previous fracture. Doris is on the mend and home again after time in a rehab-facility.

There was a Farewell Ice Cream Social on July 5th for Joanne and Morris Mengel, who have since moved to Montgomery Illinois to be closer to their grandchild, David. Louisville Friends will miss the Mengels greatly, and we send them on their new path in love and joy.

Our current book under discussion is "The Great Turning-from Empire to Earth Community" by David Korten. We meet once a month on a Friday evening and begin the evening with a Potluck meal.

James and Becky Peterson announced they are expecting a son in early November.

Willie, Susan and Jonathan Beatty Wilson have moved across the street from our Meetinghouse. Welcome to the neighborhood!!

LFM shared lunch and fellowship with the walkers on the Gandhi/Merton Pilgrimage on September 11. While September 11 is the 5th anniversary of the attacks on New York and Washington, the date is also the Centennial of Mahatma Gandhi's first non-violent campaign which began on September 11, 1906. LFM was a sponsor of this venture.

The theme of the All Kentucky Gathering in September is STRETCHING. We have worked hard on this theme and eagerly anticipate the Retreat.

The following Minute was approved at Business Meeting, 8/13/06:

"For the right joining in marriage is the work of the Lord only, and not the priests' or the magistrates'; for it is God's ordinance and not man's; and therefore Friends cannot consent that they should join them together; for we marry none; it is the Lord's work, and we are but witnesses." George Fox, 1669

Friends Meeting of Louisville welcomes individuals of all races, genders, nationalities, and sexual orientations into all aspects of the life of our Spirit-led community. We affirm our fundamental belief that there is "that of God in everyone."

We acknowledge the presence of the Spirit in loving unions. For over 350 years, Friends have held that joining in marriage is God's work and that of no one else. We hold in the Light those persons seeking covenant relationships under the care of the Meeting. We ask that these marriages we witness may be a source of greater love among us so we all will be drawn deeper into our understanding and experience of the Source of all love, God.

Members or others who request oversight of their marriage from Friends Meeting of Louisville will undergo a process of inquiry into their proposed marriage. During the clearness process the couple and its clearness committee will weigh the couple's responsibilities to each other and to this Meeting. When Friends Meeting of Louisville accepts a marriage under its care, it commits its spiritual support to the couple. The seeking of Truth and the leading of the Spirit continue both individually and corporately.

Oxford Meeting

- Carl Hyde, correspondent

We have returned from our sojourn as guests of the Hillel Foundation, and are again meeting at the United Campus Ministry, 16 S. Campus Ave., which had been our "home" for many years. That feels right. Our mailing address is still P.O.Box 495, Oxford, OH 45056

Oxford Friends had a quiet summer, but now activities are demanding our attention. Several of us went to OVYM, and also serve on YM committees.

At present we are preparing to co-sponsor again the Empty Bowls lunch for the community on 10/28. We have help from several local churches, and the soup

bowls are donated by students in ceramics classes at Miami. Last year we raised almost \$4,000. For the local Family Resource Center which serves needy families.

The CROP walk again draws some of us to participate, and we filled school bags and health kits for Church World Service to distribute worldwide and locally, as we've done for years.

The publication of the YM teen newsletter, *Walking in the Light*, was delayed because of Camilla Flintermann's absence for surgery and rehab but has now been resumed -- and we're glad to have Camilla back in Meeting.

Yellow Springs Meeting

— Carl Hyde, correspondent

Friends bade farewell to Bill Preis, who died on May 30. He will be remembered as a unique personality and a generous benefactor of our Meeting and other causes. He is survived by his wife, Barbara. They were married by the late Ralph Templin at Rockford Meeting House.

Denise Runyon and Tom Malcolm were married under the care of the Meeting on June 10. Friends led a traditional Friends' wedding, including the speaking of vows by the couple, and the signing of the certificate, which was then read aloud. All attenders signed the certificate at the end of the ceremony. This was followed by a potluck meal.

We are pleased also by the marriage of our member Eva Paige to Benjamin Thornber on July 22. Ben started preaching at the New Burlington Friends Meeting on August 6.

Our member John Eastman is an independent candidate for Ohio Secretary of State. John counts himself as a ninth generation member of the Religious Society of Friends. He works as Chief Environmental Engineer at the consulting firm of LJB in Dayton.

Arthur Morgan advocated a nursing home for Yellow Springs, but it was not built during his lifetime. In 1977 Yellow Springs Friends began serious planning for a nursing home. The Friends Care Center opened in 1980. It has since grown to include assisted living and independent living duplexes. Plans are underway to add apartments.

The Meeting is responsible to nominate six of the eleven members of the Friends Care Board of Directors. At the outset, donors insisted that Friends continue to have responsibility for the facility, in order to assure its financial stability. With a very competent administrator, Jeff Singleton, financial stability seems assured. Friends' main responsibility now is to enhance the spiritual character of the institution without in any way making it a sectarian home.

Friends In the News

A small group, Fort Wayne Friends remain resolute. The Meeting is thankful for Plymouth Congregational Church, where it worships.

By K. E. Casey, kcasey@news-sentinel.com

The Friends group began gathering at Plymouth after it became too difficult to maintain their former meeting house on North Clinton Street.

For most congregations, losing a pastor and then their building would mean the end. But one such group has found a new home within the walls of a different faith.

The Fort Wayne Friends Meeting, also known as the Quakers, hold worship services each Sunday at Plymouth Congregational Church, a member of the United Church of Christ denomination.

The Quakers used to have a building on North Clinton Street. However, the small group could not maintain the property and deeded it over to the regional association of Friends so the association could sell the land ...

From the property on North Clinton, the Friends moved into Room 201 at Plymouth, where they have held their meetings for the past five years.

The room stands as their multipurpose room, according to Paul Ricketts, clerk of the Worship and Ministry Committee. Though Plymouth did not ask for any rent, the group pays the church a fee to help cover the expenses of heating and air conditioning the room.

Each worship service has an average of eight to 10 members and visitors attending, Connerly said.

The Fort Wayne Friends have never been a large group, with the attendance never more than 15 or 16 people, according to Connerly. "Everyone knows each other real well," said Ricketts. "Strangers are not strangers very long."

For the past nine years, the Friends have not had a pastor to lead their services. However, this situation presented a new opportunity. After the pastor, Jeffery Queen, left Fort Wayne, the group decided to change from a "programmed" to an "unprogrammed" worship service.

During an unprogrammed Quaker service, there is no pastor to lead readings or give a sermon. Rather, all participants sit in silence and search for an inner light, for the voice of God within them. A participant who feels inspired stands and shares his or her thoughts with the group, then sits down. Through this process, the members turn within themselves to search for the inner presence of God as well as share in fellowship with one another.

Since the service became unprogrammed, "the people who've stuck with this meeting have found themselves more centered in their worship," said

Kurt Hagerman, who was clerk of Fort Wayne Friends for 12 years ...

Worship

The Fort Wayne Friends Meeting, also known as Quakers, gather for worship at 10:15 a.m. Sundays in Room 201 at Plymouth Congregational Church, 501 W. Berry St.

Rewarding relationship

The interfaith relationship between the Friends and Plymouth came about through a conversation between Ricketts and the Rev. John Gardner, pastor of Plymouth. Gardner offered a room in his church to the Friends after hearing of the loss of their property.

"It's been a good, solid relationship," said Gardner. Though differing in style of worship and theology, Plymouth and the Fort Wayne Friends have many interests in common. Both faiths emphasize peace practices, and "like Plymouth Church we have a sense of theological diversity," Ricketts said, explaining that the Quakers have a common understanding but varied expressions of their faith ...



Photo by Demelza Helms of The News-Sentinel

Members of the Fort Wayne Friends (Quakers) stand outside Plymouth Congregational Church on Berry Street before their services begin. The Friends group began gathering at Plymouth after it became too difficult to maintain their former meeting house on North Clinton Street.

NEWS FROM OUTSIDE OVYM

16th Annual Westheimer Peace Symposium Wilmington College

Coloring Outside the Lines: Moving Beyond Borders
October 18, 2006

10:00 a.m. Richard Rodriguez, Eating a Burrito

Richard Rodriguez is one of America's most important essayists and a master of the "personal essay." The son of Mexican immigrant parents, he grew up in California and went on to study at Stanford, Columbia, the Warburg Institute in London, and the University of California in Berkeley. In "Eating a Burrito," Rodriguez will focus on the cultural borders Americans face every day. It is possible to cross a border simply by opening your mouth. The foreign is everywhere and nearby. The only question is how much of it we dare bring into our lives.

1:15 p.m. Therese Zink, Exploring Outside the Comfort Zone

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Dr. Zink does research in family violence, teaches medical students and family medicine residents, and cares for patients in a small town in Minnesota where she has twenty acres. Throughout her career she has taken the opportunity to work in international locales because such experiences feed her heart like nothing else. Exploring outside one's comfort zone necessitates taking risks, but opens the door to breaking stereotypes, learning about the humanity of others, and deepens self knowledge.

2:45 p.m. Bobbie Gottschalk, Maine Seeds of Peace - The Way Life Should Be

Invited by John Wallach to become the first Executive Director of Seeds of Peace, Bobbie Gottschalk worked closely with the founder to

initiate and form the organization's mission and operation. As a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Scholar, Bobbie teaches college students about Seeds of Peace philosophy and methodology. In 2000 Seeds of Peace developed a domestic initiative called "The Portland Project" to address the violence erupting in its own backyard between Americans living in Portland, Maine. Since then the program has expanded to include other cities in Maine and is now called "Maine Seeds."

7:30 p.m. Special Performance by Wilmington College Chorale followed by Stephen Bloom, Is Postville a Metaphor for America?

Stephen Bloom teaches narrative journalism and personal-experience writing at the University of Iowa. More than 300 Hasidic Jews, plus hundreds of Mexicans, Guatemalans, Ukrainians, and Russians have taken up residence in Postville, Iowa, in the last decade. We will view a documentary about the town that explores the struggles and rewards of the social and economic changes occurring in Postville, based on Stephen Bloom's book, *Postville: A Clash of Cultures in America's Heartland*. Bloom will then lead us through a discussion of the borders - cultural, religious, ethnic, and psychological - erected in this town, and how its residents have dealt with their changing home.

Reservations are not required. Seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Call for Articles for *What Canst Thou Say?*

Mariellen Gilpin

What Canst Thou Say? is a newsletter on Quakers, mysticism and contemplative living -- a worship-sharing group in print, with each writer contributing his or her experience in response to a central theme. Themes for upcoming issues are as follows:

February 2007

The Workplace

Guest Editor: **Fred LaMotte with Patricia McBee**

To turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives.... (John Woolman). Have you sorely needed spirituality in the workplace? What are your spiritual practices at work? Have you known God's presence on the job--God's interest in that repetitive task, difficult customer, office gossip, intransigent boss, dysfunctional colleague, wrongly-ordered profession? How were you changed? How has your working changed?

Deadline November 15, 2006

May 2007

Unseen Hands

Editors: **Kathy Tapp and Mariellen Gilpin**

Nothing in death or in life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers...in heights or depths...nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God. (Romans 8:38). Have you ever felt you were being helped by unseen hands? Who do you think your helpers were? What did you learn from the experience? How has it affected your spiritual journey? Tell us your stories.

Deadline February 15

August 2007

Hospitality

Guest Editor: **Maurine Pyle with Mariellen Gilpin**

Do not neglect to show hospitality, for by that means some have entertained angels unaware. (Hebrews 13:2) Have you made room in your heart for the other, the one who is different from you? Have you been challenged to shed prejudices and be taught by God through the stranger? What was it like? Did you have second thoughts? How did you make room for the other? In sharing the gift of hospitality, have you entertained angels without knowing it?

Deadline May 15

November 2007

The Feminine Face of God

Editor: **Judy Lumb**

For in wisdom there is a spirit intelligent and holy ... she pervades and permeates all things because she is so pure. Like a fine mist she rises from the power of God, a pure effluence from the glory of the Almighty. (The Apocrypha, Wisdom of Solomon 7:22-5). It is hard to find feminine aspects of the Divine in the Bible. Where else can we find Her? What is your experience of the feminine in the Divine? Deadline August 15

We'd love to hear from you. Articles can be from 350-1500 words long. Don't worry about writing perfectly. You can send it directly to me at m-gilpin@uiuc.edu. Articles should be in electronic form, if at all possible, but we're happy to accept a handwritten story, if necessary.

When you write for WCTS, here are some things to keep in mind: Articles that best communicate to our readers generally focus on specific events and are written in the first person. There is a special richness when the writer goes beyond describing the experience and tells how it has changed her/his attitude and/or behavior. However, mystical experiences and contemplative insights may transcend editorial processes, so please consider these guidelines as gentle assistance rather than limitations. In general we shy away from articles that expound on theoretical or theological propositions. With joyous expectation we look forward to receiving your contribution to our worship-sharing group in print.

If you can open pdf attachments, I can email a back issue to you. Save a stamp and save a tree. WCTS is \$10 for four issues a year. Subscriptions can be sent to WCTS, 1035 Hereford Drive, Blue Bell, PA 19422-1925, or whatcanstthousay@verizon.net



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Quaker Genealogy Conference

In April of 2007, The Mary L. Cook Public Library and Wilmington College will be hosting the Third Annual Quaker Genealogy Conference entitled "*Anti-Slavery ~Taking a Risk for Freedom*"

Date and time: Friday evening April 27th, Saturday April 28th (sessions), and Sunday April 29th (tour of UR sites), 2007 at the Quaker Heritage Center/Boyd Cultural Arts Center at Wilmington College and White Brick Friends Meetinghouse and The Mary L. Cook Public Library, Waynesville, Ohio

We want to begin collecting and archiving research for this conference as soon as possible by initiating an interview process of people who have information about their ancestor's involvement in the Anti-Slavery Movement and/or the Underground Railroad in Warren, Clinton, Greene, Clark and Highland counties.

Emphasis will be placed on the various Anti-Slavery activities of Friends, as well as the Underground Railroad, first, to relieve the suffering of the afflicted; second, to raise the general consciousness of the evil and injustice of the system; and third, to work in organizations on the political front to change the laws of the land.

Emphasis will also be placed on researching the Afro-American communities that sprang up in the area, i.e. the Gist Community and others. People of other denominations also participated in these activities. It was truly an ecumenical endeavor. We also welcome information about people of other churches or beliefs involved in Anti-Slavery/Underground Railroad work.
