

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting

Handbook

Last Updated: February 2021

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Welcome to Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting

MEETING FOR WORSHIP: We are delighted that you attended our Meeting for Worship today.

GUEST BOOK: Please sign our guest book and include your address and email address if you wish to receive news of our meeting.

REFRESHMENT: We hope you will stay for refreshments and introduce yourself to our regular attenders and members. If you are new to Friends meeting, please feel free to ask questions about Quaker worship and history.

FORUM: You are welcome to stay for our forum, during which we discuss topics that are of particular interest to Friends. We usually end the forum at noon.

BUSINESS: On the first Sunday of every month, we hold a Meeting for Worship with attention to Business after the regular Meeting for Worship. You are most welcome to stay and learn more about Quaker process in general and about our meeting in particular.

DONATIONS: New attenders often comment on the fact that we do not take donations during our Meeting for Worship. In keeping with our Quaker tradition, Friends contribute to the meeting as they are led, using the contribution box in the foyer or mail (PO Box 1032, Black Mountain, NC 28711). Our meeting is self-supporting, and we contribute to the broader community through charitable giving.

QUAKER LITERATURE: If you want to know more about Quakerism, you are welcome to take pamphlets from the foyer rack and visit our library.

MEMBERSHIP: If you are interested in joining our meeting, almost anyone can tell you about the process. The Clerk or members of Ministry and Counsel can provide you with an explanation of the procedure "Exploring Membership."

We hope you will come frequently to worship with us.

**BRIEF HISTORY OF
SWANNANOVA VALLEY FRIENDS MEETING
1994-2012**

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting, Black Mountain, North Carolina, originated as a mid-week worship group at Highland Farms Retirement Center in November 1994. Several of the founders were active members or attenders at Asheville Friends Meeting—Harriett Mercer, Dee Edelman and Sam Dempsey, Kay Parke, Polly Parker, Ollie and Chris Ahrens, Ruth and Brett Miller-White. Margaret Cooley was a member of New York Yearly Meeting. Bob and Anne Welsh were active members of Celso Meeting. MacGregor Gray was a Friend from Maine. Rosemary Lackey and Paul Rhudy were new to Friends worship.

The mid-week worship group met for its first time on First Day, January 7, 1996 in the Black Mountain Library Public Meeting Room at 9:30 a.m., joined by Betsey Moreton, and Tom and Betty Parry. In March 1996 the meeting for worship was relocated from the Library to the building at 137 Center Avenue, Black Mountain, at the convergence of Flat Creek and the Swannanoa River, rented from Huff Associates, that would later become our permanent home.

Monthly meetings for worship with attention to business were held in Spring 1996, and on May 12, 1996 a letter was sent to Asheville Friends Meeting requesting Preparative Meeting status under the care of their Meeting. Asheville Meeting accepted the request and appointed Kay Parke, Chris and Ollie Ahrens, Phil Neal, and Ursula Scott as its Committee of Oversight. Monthly Meeting appointed Dee Edelman as its first Clerk and Anne Welsh and Ann Bohan as the Committee of Ministry and Nurture. The Meeting then began considering outreach, peace and social justice initiatives, and started looking for a larger meeting space that could accommodate a Children's First Day program. On May 4, 1997, after several months of prayerful consideration, Monthly Meeting requested Asheville Friends to approve transition from a Preparative Meeting to a Monthly Meeting. At its May Monthly Meeting Asheville Friends approved the request to form the Monthly Meeting as Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting as part of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA).

In early Summer 1998 Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting relocated because Marilyn Huff decided to make physical changes to the property (enclosing the garage and creating a full kitchen and bathroom) in order to house her adult son. SVFM moved to Highland Farms, meeting in the north lower lounge of Brookside Building. Attendance had grown to almost twenty-five. During the next two years the Meeting explored a variety of spaces in which to meet. We met briefly at Warren Wilson, February-April, 1999, and at Black Mountain Public Library again, summer 1999. Beginning September

1999, the Meeting returned to Highland Farms. Continuing to explore, SVFM decided at business meeting on August 20, 2000 to lease First Day use of the Black Mountain Arts Center's second story gallery for worship and also a basement room for First Day School.

At a "called meeting" at the end of 2002, agreement was reached to purchase property on Old Route 70 as the new permanent location of SVFM. Controversy ensued over the character, size, and location of this former police station, and over whether Quaker procedure was followed in making the decision to buy. Efforts were made in large and small gatherings to reconcile the conflict. Eventually, the issue was resolved by the Meeting accepting the offer to once again rent 137 Center Avenue, then under the auspices of Quaker-initiated Common Light Meeting place, and to fix up and sell the Route 70 property. After renting 137 Center Avenue from Fall 2003 through December 2006, the Meeting purchased 137 Center Avenue in January 2007 from Common Light. Attendance grew to 35-45 worshipers. The property on Old Route 70 was sold.

SVFM has settled into its meeting place, making various improvements to its grounds and building, attracting new attenders and members, increasing attendance to 35-55. Attention turned to clarifying membership for children and adults, and developing a regular First Day School.

We are growing into a caring community with concern not only for each other but for justice and environmental responsibility. The Meeting supports LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) concerns. The Meeting financially supports Quaker and non-Quaker endeavors as recommended by our Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Individuals in our Meeting are active in a variety of social concerns such as peace work in the US and abroad (especially in Palestine/Israel), interfaith dialogue, recycling, death penalty elimination and legal assistance to inmates on death row, aid to the poor, and immigrants' well-being.

We continue to have deep silence and meaningful vocal ministry in First Day worship. Our numbers are growing, and our First Day School is growing along with it. We continue to deepen the practice and understanding of Quaker business procedure, and our knowledge of our faith and practice.

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting
Officers, Committees, and Positions Descriptions
As approved at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
April 6, 2008

OFFICERS

Trustees –

are responsible for the Meeting as a legal entity and property owner.

Clerk –

presides at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and alone can call a Called Meeting to transact business (except for the Assistant Clerk acting in the Clerk's absence). The Clerk constructs the monthly agenda, facilitates consideration of it and new business with an efficient but unhurried pace, listens to every contribution to discussion, discerns "a sense of the meeting" when present, expresses it clearly with the help of the recording Clerk and everyone assembled. Searching for the right course of action, the Clerk helps maintain the Meeting's spiritual unity. The Clerk should refrain from expressing his or her own views. If a matter arises in which the Clerk feels led to share his or her views, the Clerk should step aside during the discussion of this matter, while the Assistant Clerk or someone else acknowledged by the Meeting clerks it, releasing the Clerk to share his or her views. After the Meeting's conclusion the Clerk is responsible to see that the decisions agreed to are carried out by the persons or committees designated. The Clerk assists the Recording Clerk in the final draft of minutes, communicates with individuals and groups on behalf of the Meeting, coordinates with the archivist to ensure that official Meeting records are maintained, and writes, with assistance of Ministry and Counsel, the annual State of the Meeting Report for SAYMA. The Clerk shares with everyone else in the Meeting responsibility for the well-being of the Meeting.

Assistant Clerk –

assists the Clerk in any ways needed by the Clerk, and in the absence of the Clerk assumes the Clerk's responsibilities.

Recording Clerk –

Minutes the proceedings of the Monthly Meeting for Business and any Called Meetings, noting decisions agreed upon and the substance of discussions. The Recording Clerk assists the Clerk in formulating minutes of decisions and reads them aloud at the time to the Meeting to ensure accuracy in recording "the sense of the meeting." The Recording Clerk is responsible for writing, distributing, and thus documenting the minutes as the official record of Business and Called Meetings.

Treasurer –

receives and deposits contributions to the Meeting, keeps track of individual donations to the Meeting, disburses funds in accordance with decisions of the Meeting, reconciles bank accounts, reports quarterly on financial transactions and bank balances; and, with members of the Finance Committee, prepares the annual budget for consideration by the Meeting.

COMMITTEES**Adult Education and Spiritual Nurture Committee –** (revision approved Monthly Meeting 8/7/11)

- Provide experiences that nurture spiritual growth and educate the meeting about historical and contemporary Quakerism (faith, practice, and social testimonies) as well as Christianity and other religious traditions. Explore the importance of leadings in Quaker tradition and practice.
- Oversee both Forums and Meeting retreats.
- Enrich the leadership of the meeting and its connection with the wider Quaker world by encouraging attendance at Pendle Hill, Yearly Meeting, and other Quaker organizations.

Building Committee –

is responsible for the general appearance and upkeep of the Meetinghouse. Most of its duties involve attention to ordinary maintenance and minor repairs, which are paid for out of the Committee's budget. These repair and improvement tasks are often done by volunteers from within the Meeting but are contracted out to professionals when necessary. Major changes to the Meetinghouse and/or repairs or additions costing more than \$500 require Meeting approval; minor repairs and improvements do not. The Committee relies on Meeting members and attenders to help identify both short-range building needs and long-range issues and projects which need attention. The Committee uses work days to encourage Friends to get involved in maintenance and improvement of this beautiful home which we enjoy as a common trust.

Finance Committee – (approved Monthly Meeting 11/5/2017)

- Oversees and supports the Treasurer in the production of monthly reports and the annual budget,
- Is responsible to the Meeting to carry out research and make proposals regarding the use of Meeting funds,
- Determines the amount of our SAYMA assessment each year and works with SAYMA to simplify and standardize that computation,
- Responds to Meeting questions about all funds belonging to the Meeting.

First Day School Committee –

oversees religious education of the children, providing opportunities in First Day School to learn about historical and contemporary Quakerism (faith, practice, and social testimonies), Christianity, other religious traditions, and other matters of spiritual importance.

Grounds Committee –

The Grounds Committee is responsible for the general appearance and upkeep of the Meetinghouse grounds. Most of its duties involve planting, weeding, mowing, general landscaping, trimming, keeping property bordering water channels clear of debris and flood damage repairs as needed on the grounds of the Meeting House. The Grounds Committee is also responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the shed, parking lot, and walkways. Most repair and maintenance cost are paid for out of the Committee's annual budget. These repair and maintenance tasks are often done by volunteers from within the Meeting but are contracted out to professionals when necessary. The Committee uses work days to encourage Friends to get involved in maintenance and improvement of the grounds which we enjoy as a common trust.

The committee from time to time, will made decisions on tree trimming and cutting with outside professionals. These costs are covered by the Property Reserve Fund. Grounds Committee has the right to approve maintenance cost of up to \$500. Higher expenses must be approved in Business Meeting.

The Grounds Committee is the point group for any activity, such as Greenway issues, that may/will affect the Meeting House Grounds.

Hospitality Committee –

The committee will oversee the needs for hospitality in the meeting.

- Coffee and snacks at rise of meeting

- Make coffee and Decaf

- Prepare hot water for tea

- Set out the mugs, creamer, and sugar bowl

- Set out snacks trying to include items that are gluten free

- Clean up after fellowship.

- Create a sign-up sheet for clean-up help for fellowship times as well as after potlucks and other food-related events.

- Schedule entertaining events for Friends and provide snacks.

- Schedule receptions for new Friends and for babies when they are born. Provide refreshments.

- Provide refreshments after funerals and weddings.

- Organize the Holiday Feast before Christmas.

Library Committee –

oversees the choosing, purchase, storage, display, and circulation of books, pamphlets, and periodicals that nurture the spiritual growth and education of Friends.

Meetinghouse Use Committee –

The Meetinghouse Use Committee works closely with the Manager of Meetinghouse Use (a member ex officio) to formulate policies and procedures for users of the Meeting's facilities. The members will help ensure that these policies and procedures are implemented by renters as well as by the Meeting community. They will consult with the Manager regarding concerns raised. They will advise the Manager regarding long-term commitments to renters as well as scheduling decisions where conflicts arise among the different ways the Meetinghouse can serve SVFM's purposes (eg, spaces for the Meeting's communal life, service to the local community through programs provided by renters, and the income rentals provide for the Meeting).

Membership will consist of at least four people, including (ex officio) the Manager of Meetinghouse Use and a representative of the Building Committee and a representative of the Finance Committee. Clerk will be chosen by the Committee members.

Ministry and Counsel Committee – (revision approved Monthly Meeting 11/6/11)

Ministry and Counsel attends to the spiritual health of the community by shining light on the quality of Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Business and on-going pastoral concerns of the Meeting.

Spiritual Quality of the Meeting

- Addressing Membership Issues
- Responding to Wedding and Memorial Requests
- Fostering a Welcoming and Caring Environment
- Encouraging Leadership
- Addressing Structural Needs of the Meeting
- Assisting the Clerk of the Meeting with drafting the State of the Meeting Report
- Receiving and responding to requests for Growth in Quakerism funds.

Pastoral Care of the Meeting

- Facilitating Pastoral Care and Spiritual Nurture
- Facilitating Clearness Committees and Support Groups
- Dealing with Contentious Issues and Conflicts

Nominating Committee –

recommends to Monthly Meeting persons who are willing and able to serve in various Meeting capacities. The committee process is that out of deep worshipful silence names arise for needed positions. Suggestions of others and volunteering of oneself may be made to the committee for its consideration before their discernment process. Sometime prior to the December Business Meeting, Nominating Committee contacts the Clerk, committee conveners, and persons in positions of individual responsibility to determine what new positions will become available in January and to elicit suggestions for possible nominees to fill these positions. Once names have emerged in the discernment process and been approved, the committee will contact prospective

nominees to obtain their agreement to be presented in nomination for Meeting responsibilities. Nominating Committee then presents to Monthly Meeting the names for approval, revision, or further seasoning. The normal term for committee membership or other positions of individual responsibility is three years, which is renewable with Nominating Committee's consent. The timing of terms should be staggered so that continuity is maintained as old members finish and new members begin their responsibilities. Nominating Committee nominates for all positions in the Meeting except itself. Members of the Nominating Committee are nominated by Ministry and Counsel. Nominating Committee should maintain an up-to-date list of appointments, with Clerks' names (chosen by each committee), available on display. Committee meetings are open to visitors unless confidential matters are under discussion. Prospective visitors should inquire of the Clerks about appropriate times.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee –

oversees Meeting awareness of and involvement in the social testimonies. It addresses various justice issues in our community, state, nation, and world, encouraging, educating, and engaging the Meeting in action to ameliorate and transform oppressive systems, social and environmental. It plans social service and social action projects as corporate activities of the Meeting. It acknowledges and supports individual leadings to participate in activities toward mending the world. It keeps the Meeting informed about wider Quaker efforts in justice work and environmental responsibility.

Transportation and Visitation –

Visits Meeting members and attenders who are unable to attend meeting for worship or other Meeting events; transports Friends to meeting for worship; transports Friends for medical care in Black Mountain and Asheville; organizes other Friends to help with visitation and transportation. (2 or 3 members)

Visioning Committee –

To meet at least quarterly with the charge of articulating the qualities of SVFM that make it the community we value and articulating how we feel led to evolve to preserve those qualities. In short, to answer two questions: 1.) who we are and 2) who do we feel called to become? When smaller, practical questions arise they should be referred to one of the regular committees of the meeting and not be made the focus of the Visioning Committee.

POSITIONS

Archivist –

preserves minutes of Monthly Meetings' business proceedings and called meetings, maintains official membership and attenders records of the Meeting, correspondence regarding membership, and copies of other official Meeting documents.

Communications:

- **Electronic Communication Coordinator(s)** –distributes Monthly Meeting and Called Meeting minutes and other communications to the email list of members and attenders, oversees discussion on SVFM's group site, and maintains the Meeting website.
- **Facebook Coordinator** – Regularly update the SVFM Facebook page.
- **Listserv Coordinator** – Review and distribute news and information via the SVFM Listserv.
- **Ad Hoc Website Committee** – Designs and maintains the Meeting's website with appropriate security and member and attender access. This website host information about our Meeting and important documents such as the Directory and Handbook.

FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) Representative –

Keeps Friends apprised of FCNL's activities and needs.

Greeter –

welcomes people as they arrive for Meeting for Worship, makes sure new visitors are spoken to after Meeting, and oversees the foyer donation box.

Historian –

keeps a scrapbook of clippings, letters, anecdotes, etc. concerning activities of the Meeting and its members and attenders.

North Carolina People of Faith Against the Death Penalty –

keeps Friends apprised of NCPFADP's activities and needs.

SAYMA (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association) Representative –

serves on the Representative Committee of SAYMA, attends SAYMA's Representative and Yearly Meetings, and reports back to Monthly Meeting.

Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry Representative –

keeps Monthly Meeting aware of SVCM's activities and needs.

Guidelines for E-Mail Announcements and Missives

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting (SVFM) maintains a list (e-list) of e-mail addresses of members and attenders who wish to receive news concerning SVFM affairs. Referred to as SVFM Announcements or SVFMissives, the e-list exists to:

- a. share information about the meeting's activities (e.g. schedules of worship, business, forums, committee meetings);
- b. announce joys, concerns, and special needs of f/Friends;
- c. publish non-profit, non-controversial (see b. below) activities of SVFM f/Friends (e.g. artistic performances; lectures; workshops) consistent with SVFM sensibilities;
- d. broadcast news of Quaker umbrella organizations (e.g. SAYMA, FCNL, FGC, & AFSC);
- e. disseminate information of non-Quaker SVFM affiliates (e.g. PFADP, local Christian Ministry).

As the electronic vehicle for imparting meeting information, the SVFM e-list is not appropriate for:

- a. discussion among f/Friends
- b. distribution of personal opinions, beliefs, or convictions (e.g., issues for which there may exist diversity of opinion within the meeting).

Requests by SVFM members or SVFM attenders to post an announcement/missive are initiated via email to announce@swannanoavalleyfriends.org

Membership

ADULT MEMBERSHIP (approved in Monthly Meeting 11/7/10, revised 2/7/21)

Membership in the Religious Society of Friends is a public acknowledgment that a person seeks to live under the guidance of the divine Spirit and in unity with a particular Meeting community, within the larger historical context of Friends' faith and practice from our beginnings in the late 1640s in England. Seeking divine presence, truth, love, and leadings with others in the worship and business of the Meeting and in our daily lives, rather than following rules, is at the heart of Quakerism. We do not, therefore, expect conformity of belief through accepting a creed or set formula of words because even though words are important, no words can adequately describe experience of spiritual reality. Members commit to caring one for another, nurturing spiritual and personal growth of others and oneself, and accepting responsibility for the work and financial basis of the Meeting. Membership in the Society of Friends is always through a particular Meeting. In becoming a member of a Monthly Meeting, one becomes at the same time a member of its Yearly Meeting, in our case Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, and of the worldwide Religious Society of Friends.

Regular attenders are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the Meeting—in worship, forums, business meetings, committee work, Spiritual Friendship Circles, and social gatherings. Except for Clerk of the Meeting, they may take leadership positions in all aspects of the Meeting as they are valued for their past service to the Meeting, faithfulness in attendance at Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, and the quality of their presence in our worship and committee work. The difference between “member” and “attender” is that members are committed, not only to the community, but to the institution of the Meeting, and thus are expected to be available for leadership roles as able and led, and to engage in the physical, financial, and spiritual work of the Meeting, within one's ability. Attenders, while not expected to give financial assistance, are welcome to do so, and should know that they are included as part of our Meeting community's assessment to SAYMA.

CHILDREN'S MEMBERSHIP (approved in Monthly Meeting 9/5/10)

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting has a primary responsibility to nurture all our children in Quaker faith and practice, whether they are members or attenders. While children and adults both have direct access to God, we recognize that there is a difference between the ways children and adults support the meeting. Children participate in the community, while adults assume primary responsibility for the physical, financial, and spiritual wellbeing of the Meeting.

Children may enter into membership at Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting in one of two ways.

1. A child may ask to become a member. Upon receiving the request, Ministry and Counsel will appoint a clearness committee for membership. The child's parents or guardians may or may not be members; they will be consulted during the clearness process.
2. Parents or guardians who are members of Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting, and who want to continue Quaker tradition, may record a child as a member by submitting a letter of intention to the Clerk.

A child member, whether self-choosing or parentally recorded, when entering into adulthood should make a mature decision whether to remain a member of our Meeting and to assume the adult responsibilities of which they are capable. As an expression of the Meeting's care for the growing individual, and as preparation for an adult decision, the Meeting (through Ministry and Counsel) will make inquiry of that Friend (before the age of twenty-one) whether he or she wishes to own the Quaker identity acquired in childhood. The Friend may choose to resign membership at that time. Young adult members who do not respond to this inquiry may eventually be dropped from membership.

Friends approaching the age of twenty-one who choose to continue membership will go through the clearness process in a way sensitive to the fact that they have grown up from childhood as members in our Meeting. It will thus be an opportunity for an adult conversation about the Friend's spiritual condition and for the Meeting to express its attentive care for these maturing individuals.

TRANSFER MEMBERSHIP (approved 9/5/10)

All requests for transfer of membership from another Meeting will go through a Clearness Committee who with the applicant will discern readiness for and fit with membership in our particular Meeting. This process will provide an opportunity for a deepening connection. The steps of transfer follow:

- Friends who have become acquainted with our Meeting through attendance at worship, forums, and meetings for business may request a letter of transfer from their previous Meeting to Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting. The Friend states in writing to its Clerk the reasons for the request, providing the name and address of the Clerk of SVFM.
- When our Clerk receives the letter of transfer, usually stating that the Friend is a member in good standing of said Meeting which commends him/her to our loving care, our Clerk reads the letter of transfer at Monthly Meeting and passes it on to Ministry and Counsel.
- Ministry and Counsel then appoints a Clearness Committee to meet with the transferring Friend. The Clearness process provides an opportunity for the requesting Friend and representatives of SVFM to get to know one another more deeply, for the Friend to share what his/her previous experience has been among Friends and what his/her intentions are in joining our Meeting, and for the

- Committee to share its sense of our Meeting and Yearly Meeting.
- At the conclusion of this process of mutual discernment, the Clearness Committee reports its sense of clearness to the next Monthly Meeting for Business. When the Monthly Meeting receives a positive report from the Clearness Committee, he or she becomes a member of the meeting.

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP PROCESS
EXPLORING MEMBERSHIP
in Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting
Approved in Monthly Meeting February 7, 2021

Membership

Membership in the Religious Society of Friends is a public acknowledgment that a person seeks to live under the guidance of the divine Spirit and in unity with a particular Meeting community, within the larger historical context of Friends' faith and practice from our beginnings in the late 1640s in England. Seeking divine presence, truth, love, and leadings with others in the worship and business of the Meeting and in our daily lives, rather than following rules, is at the heart of Quakerism. We do not, therefore, expect conformity of belief through accepting a creed or set formula of words because even though words are important, no words can adequately describe experience of spiritual reality. Membership in the Society of Friends is always through a particular Meeting. In becoming a member of a Monthly Meeting, one becomes at the same time a member of its Yearly Meeting, in our case Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, and of the worldwide Religious Society of Friends. Regular attenders are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the Meeting: in worship, forums, business meetings, and committee work (except as Clerk).

Membership Process

- When an attender inquires about becoming a member, they will be asked to write a letter to the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting expressing both their intention to enter into the discernment process regarding becoming a member of the Meeting and why they feel drawn to the Society of Friends.
- The letter will be read at the next Meeting for Worship with a concern for Business and the Monthly Meeting will establish a Clearness Committee. The prospective member may request particular individuals to serve on the Clearness Committee. The Monthly Meeting will welcome such requests in deciding who will serve.
- The Monthly Meeting will share with the prospective member "Exploring Membership in Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting," a copy of SAYMA's "Guide to Our Faith and Practice," and recommended reading (on the origins and development of Quaker faith and practice, history of Quaker social testimonies, and the Queries).
- The Clearness Committee will meet with the prospective member and will

- determine whether additional meetings would be beneficial.
- When the prospective member and the Clearness Committee have achieved clarity, the Clearness Committee will report to the next Monthly Meeting whether they do or do not recommend membership at this time. If membership is recommended and approved, a minute of acceptance into membership is recorded in the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting.
 - The Monthly Meeting will schedule an event to welcome the new member or members, and the Ministry and Counsel Committee will present to the new member(s) a book gift certificate to the Pendle Hill Bookstore.
 - The Meeting has a responsibility to nurture the spiritual growth of new (as well as old) members.

Questions for the Clearness Committee To Consider for their Meeting

These guidelines are to assist prospective members, Clearness Committees, and the Monthly Meeting, seeking under divine guidance to discern the appropriateness of membership with a prospective member.

- Will you please share the story of your spiritual journey which has led you to Quakerism?
- Do you understand the nature of Quaker worship and how Friends respond to leadings to speak?
- Can you share how you feel led to participation in our particular Meeting as well as in the Society of Friends?
- What gifts do you believe you might bring to the Meeting community?
- Are you comfortable with a Society whose unity of spirit coexists with a diversity of beliefs?
- Are you familiar with the history of Quaker faith and practice through reading and study?
- Are you familiar as well with Friends periodicals, such as “Friends Journal,” and Friends’ institutions, such as The American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Friends World Committee for Consultation?
- How closely are you in harmony with Friends’ testimonies and work for social justice?
- Do you understand how Meeting for Worship with a concern for Business is conducted, and specifically how Quakers reach decisions through achieving “a sense of the meeting”? Have you any questions about this process?
- Since Friends reject the distinction between clergy and laity, but accept “the priesthood of all believers,” do you understand that each member has responsibilities for the quality of worship, doing business, financial health, and maintaining love and unity in the Meeting community?

Recommended Book List

A Good Place To Start:

Rex Ambler, *The Quaker Way: A Rediscovery* (Christian Alternative Books, 2013, 159pp. pb, \$19.95)*

Rex Ambler, *Light To Live By An Exploration in Quaker Spirituality* (London" Quaker Books, 2002, 60 pp, pd, £5.00

Michael L. Birkel, *Silence and Witness: The Quaker Tradition* (Orbis, 2004, 144 pp., pb, \$16)*

On the Nature and History of Quaker Spirituality:

Howard Brinton, *Friends for 350 Years* (Pendle Hill, 2002; update by Margaret Hope Bacon; 348 pp., pb \$16)*

Douglas V. Steere, *Introduction from Quaker Spirituality* (Phila. YM, 1988, 56 pp., pb \$3.95)*

____, "Where Words Come From" (London: Friends Home Service Committee, Swarthmore Lecture Pamphlet, 1955; 1968)

____, ed., *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings* (Paulist, 1984, 334 pp., pb \$24.95)*

George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Phila. YM, 1997, 789 pp. pb \$17) (especially pp. 1-120)*

Thomas Gates, "Members One of Another: The Dynamics of Membership in Quaker Meeting" (Pendle Hill, 2004, 40 pp. pb, \$4)*

Rosemary Moore, *Light in their Consciences: Faith, Practices and Personalities in Early British Quakerism, 1646-1666* (Penn State UP, 2000, 296 pp. \$29.95).*

On Quaker Business Procedure:

Howard Brinton, *Guide to Quaker Practice* (Pendle Hill Pamphlet, 1943, 92pp., pb., \$4)*

Michael Sheeran, S.J., *Beyond Majority Rule: Voteless Decision Making in the Religious Society of Friends* (Phila. YM, 1983, 153 pp., pb., \$12)*

Barry Morley, "Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting" (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #307, 1996, 32 pp., pb., \$4)*

Faith and Practice: Book of Discipline

SAYMA (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association of the Religious Society of Friends), "A Guide to Our Faith and Our Practice" (1998; 2002).

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Faith & Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline* (1972; 2002, pb., \$7).*

Britain Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith & Practice: The Book of Christian Discipline* (1995; third edition 2005; 667 pp., pb, \$18)*

For Extended Reading:

Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (Cambridge University Press, 2007, 277 pp, pd, \$19.95)

- Stephen W. Angell and Pink Dandelion, eds., *Early Quakers and Their Theological Thought 1647-1723* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015 340 pp, hb).
- Stephen W. Angell and Pink Dandelion, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, (Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1912, 2nd edition revised by Henry Cadbury 1955, 607 pp, hb)
- William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, intro Rufus Jones (London: Macmillian, 1919, 688 pp, hb)
- Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (Yale, 1964; 272 pp.).
- ___ & J. William Frost, *The Quakers* (Friends United Press, 418 pp., pb., \$30).*
- John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History* (Britain YM, 1984, 293 pp., pb., \$16.50).*
- Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America* (Quaker Press of FGC, 1995, 280 pp., pb, \$14.95).*
- Elfrida Vipont [Foulds], *George Fox and the Valiant Sixty* (QP of FGC, reissue 1997, 160 pp., pb., \$12.95)*
- ___, *The Story of Quakerism 1652-1952* (London: The Bannisdale Press, 1954; 312 pp.).
- Rex Ambler, ed., *Truth of the Heart: An Anthology of the Writings of George Fox* (Britain YM, 2001, 202 pp., pb., \$20)*
- R. Melvin Keiser & Rosemary Moore, eds., *Knowing the Mystery of Life Within: Selected Writings of Isaac Penington in their Historical and Theological Context* (London: Quaker Books, 2005, 322 pp., pb., £ 18.00)*

[*Available through *Quaker Books of Friends General Conference: A Resource Guide for Quaker Materials 2005 Catalog* (70. pp., pb) (bookstore@fgcquaker.org). (ph: 1-800-966-4556; email: bookstore@fgcquaker.org); and through Pendle Hill Bookstore (610-566-4507, ext 2, or 800-742-3150).]

SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE GUIDELINES

Ministry and Counsel

December 4, 2013

Approved in M&C

Spiritual Friendship Circles for all interested members and attenders of SVFM are reorganized periodically (usually every other year) to enable groups of about eight people to meet together at intervals and times of day or evening at their own choosing. Circles are both social (an opportunity for members and attenders of SVFM to get to know each other better) and spiritual. "Spiritual" has varied meanings: a social gathering with depth, the way we relate to mystery, our orientation in life (distinguishable from beliefs), sharing our life journeys and what has been of ultimate importance in them (whether or not that includes an account of participation in a religious tradition).

All individuals in the group should have an equal opportunity to express themselves in the group. Please be mindful that you participate in a balanced way contributing to and not dominating the conversation, and mindful of the frequency and length of your expression. If you are uncomfortable with your group and want to switch, contact the coordinator appointed by Ministry and Counsel.

Possible Topics:

Focus on one of the Queries or one of the Testimonies to discuss at each meeting.

Take turns sharing a meaningful poem or excerpt from a Quaker text.

Take turns describing your spiritual journeys.

Come up with your own list of questions, one for each month, for example:

How do you prepare for Meeting for Worship?

What do you mean when you say, "I'll hold you in the Light"?

How did you come to Quakerism?

What does "discernment" mean to you? How do you make hard decisions?

How do you know when to speak in Meeting for Worship? What do you consider vocal ministry?

What's your favorite Bible story? Why?

Experiment with Light

January 1, 2010

Dear Friends,

A small group of us has been meeting bi-weekly to explore Experiment with Light, a guided Quaker meditation devised by our British friend Rex Ambler. In reading the writings of George Fox, Rex discerned what he thinks drew people into and kept them in Quakerism: experience of the Light, not only as guide, but as revealing one's own condition. He subsequently developed a guided meditation to provide experiences of the Light illumining aspects of our lives.

We are inviting any and all to join us in this experiment. The guided meditation takes about thirty-five minutes using his prompts with five minutes of silence between each. The prompts are to center down, let the issues of your life arise, select one, and hold it in the Light. Without thinking about it and trying to solve it, you wait in what the Light will reveal about it. Images may come; words may be whispered; new insight or new angles may present themselves; nothing may happen. We've had all of these happen in our experiences. We take fifteen minutes after the end of the meditation to write or draw in solitude and then come together to share, as much or as little as one chooses, about what has come.

Rex writes very personally about his experience in developing this meditation in his *Light To Live By: An Exploration in Quaker Spirituality* (London: Quaker Books, 2002), which is in the Meeting Library.

Conveners are Mel and Beth Keiser

Quaker Witness to Marriage Equality

By Tony Bing

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), we have a long-standing commitment to the equality of all individual human beings, as expressed not only in the teachings of Jesus and in our own Quaker faith tradition, but also in the Declaration of Independence, which declared equality the basis for creating the independent nation which became the United States.

We consider our support of same-sex marriage to be of a piece with our tradition of Quaker witness to equality. This tradition includes honoring equality between men and women (by working for women's education, right to vote, and equal property rights), and between races (by working to end slavery, to support civil rights, and to legalize interracial marriage).

Because of this witness and out of our prayerful discernment, the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting declares publicly that we will no longer serve as an agent of the State in certifying the legality of marriages carried out under our care, so long as the State of North Carolina declines to recognize the legality of non-heterosexual marriages. Although couples seeking legal certification of their marriage will need to do so in a civil procedure, the meeting will continue to celebrate marriages of couples under our care, regardless of sexual orientation.

This conscientious stand is not against the right of the State to give legal sanction to marriage. Rather we are witnessing against the injustice of the system as currently practiced. We honor the distinction between marriage as a religious sacrament, defined by a particular faith community, and marriage as an instrument of the state, protected by law because of the benefits it offers to civil society, a distinction that is part of the constitutional separation of Church and State.

In taking this position at this time, Friends stand with a growing number of faith communities. We recognize the efforts towards marriage equality of the local group "People of Faith for Just Relationships," especially the public witness of two Asheville ministers, Joe Hoffman of the First Congregational Church and Mark Ward of the Unitarian-Universalist Church. We welcome prayerful dialogue on this issue.

The Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting:
PO Box 1032, 137 Center Avenue, Black Mountain, NC

Contact: Mel and Beth Keiser 828-669-3616
802 North Fork Road
Black Mountain, NC 28711

Selective List of Quaker Organizations

[American Friends Service Committee \(AFSC\)](#)

American Friends Service Committee is the major Quaker service organization in the United States. It supplies humanitarian relief around the world and supports political efforts to establish peace and to speak truth to power.

[Earthcare Witness](#)

Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of Friends (Quakers) in North America and other like-minded people who are taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world from a spiritual perspective, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies. While QEW supports reforms in laws, technology, education, and institutions, its primary calling is to facilitate transformation of humans' attitudes, values, identity, and worldview that underlie much of the environmental destruction going on in the world today.

[Friends Committee on National Legislation \(FCNL\)](#)

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is the Quaker lobbying arm in Washington DC. They try to mobilize Quakers around the country to contact a representative or senator on issues regarding war and peace, Native American rights, and social justice. Contributions made to FCNL are not tax-deductible. Friends Peace Teams is the umbrella organization.

[Friends General Conference \(FGC\)](#)

Founded in 1900, FGC has grown from a voluntary organization of seven yearly meetings created to hold a "general conference" to an association of fourteen yearly meetings and regional groups and ten directly-affiliated monthly meetings that serves Quakers year-round. [Bookstore](#)

[Friends International Center Ramallah \(FICR\)](#)

Friends International Center of Ramallah (FICR), supported by Quakers throughout the world, supports the Ramallah Friends Meeting and uses the Meetinghouse for activities that promote peace and justice in Palestine, including nonviolence training.

[Friends Journal](#)

Quaker Thought and Life Today: This is a magazine that has articles, classified ads, and lists of meetings throughout the world.

[Friends for Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns \(FLGBTQC\)](#)

A Quaker faith community within the Religious Society of Friends, FLGBTQC deeply honors, affirms, and upholds that of God in all people. We seek to know that of God within ourselves and others. We seek to express God's truth in the Quaker and in the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transsexual/transgender communities, as it is made known to us. It is our hope to offer an oasis to those who have been spurned by the world at large. We are learning that radical inclusion and radical love bring further light to Quaker testimony and life. Our experience with oppression in our own lives leads us to seek ways to bring our witness to bear in the struggles of other oppressed peoples.

Friends Peace Teams

Friends Peace Teams is the Quaker organization that began Quaker work in Rwanda and Burundi after the genocide. The subgroup under Friends Peace Teams that now carries on that work is called AGLI, for African Great Lakes Initiative.

Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC)

The purpose of the Friends World Committee for Consultation is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. The mission is answering God's call to universal love. FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.

Pendle Hill

Pendle Hill is a Quaker residential study center that seeks to nurture the life and witness of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) through worship, work, study and service. We seek to prepare Friends and others for Spirit-led lives of service, leadership, prophetic witness, and right relationship. We work to build an inclusive community and to foster the spiritual growth of all who join us. We partner with Friends' and other organizations to work for peace, justice, and spiritual renewal.

Bookstore

Quaker House

Located in Fayetteville, NC, near Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base, Quaker House has been working for peace and GI rights since 1969.

Right Sharing of World Resources

Right Sharing of World Resources encourages Friends to simplify their lives, by de-cluttering our homes of stuff not needed (Simplify Life Garage Sales), by holding a Simple Meal of soup and bread, calling us to be mindful of many for whom this meal is the normal daily meal, and donating the minimal cost of this meal (suggested donation for each person \$5.). RSWR grants provide support for income-generating microenterprise groups (mostly women) in developing countries like India and Kenya, leading those involved to self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA)

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, a community of local meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, continues to be inspired by the spirit of seventeenth-century English religious reformers who sought to revive primitive Christianity. Our name identifies the geographical center of our widespread monthly (local) meetings and, in traditional Quaker language, indicates that we meet annually to conduct our business. The yearly meeting, however, is a cooperative association and exercises no authority, other than moral and advisory, over any local meeting or individual Friend. In 1954 Celo, NC and Atlanta, GA were the only Monthly Meetings in the SAYMA geographical region. Today SAYMA is composed of 29 Monthly Meetings in parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. The Yearly Meeting is each Sixth Month at Warren Wilson College.

School of the Spirit

School of the Spirit was formed by several Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in response to a leading to offer a training program in spiritual nurture that is grounded in Quaker tradition and spirituality. Their program, On Being a Spiritual Nurturer, is a two-year program that was first offered in 1990 and is currently completing its tenth class.

William Penn House

William Penn House is a Quaker-run guest house on Capitol Hill in DC. It invites Quaker groups to stay there for a nominal fee while they are in DC lobbying Congress.

TRADITIONAL QUAKER EXPRESSIONS M&C for SVFM June 2012

Affirm: Refusing to swear in court, Friends affirm that they do and will tell the truth in court as well as out of court without taking an oath (affirming, rather than swearing an oath, in court was first legally approved in 1696 by the English Parliament). The reasons are that truth-telling should be a constancy and not only when you put your hand on the Bible; swearing on the Bible as if there will be divine retribution if you lie, is magic and a fanciful and ego-driven picture of God; and Jesus forbids swearing.

After the manner of Friends: Business or wedding, or other events, according to Quaker procedure.

As way opens: Trusting in the Spirit or Light to work towards some desired future event or outcome which is not foreseen how, what, or when at the moment. Said in Business Meeting when sense of the meeting is difficult to arrive at and time for seasoning is needed, or in personal interactions hoping for, but not planning, further time together.

Birthright Friend: Someone born into Quaker membership, registered at birth by parents as a member. Yearly Meetings vary whether one or both parents must be members.

Break Meeting: Ending meeting for worship with a handshake all around begun by someone empowered to close meeting.

Center down: At the beginning of Quaker worship, the meditative descent into inward depths beneath ego concerns of daily life, stilling the body and mind to open to the divine presence and guidance in the Silence.

Clearness: Attending to Spirit in our depths in order to be guided, beyond our own desires, thoughts, imaginings, into a Light-illuminated decision or resolution of an issue. Often used for the name of a committee meeting with people seeking to be married under the care of the Meeting, seeking membership in a Meeting or seeking help with discernment related to a concern.

Clerk: A non-hierarchical and non-sexist term for the person responsible for facilitating a meeting or group, e.g. Monthly or Yearly Meeting. Verb: **to clerk**.

Concern: "I feel or I have a concern" expresses a weighty matter of conscience that arises out of living in the Silence and is presented for discussion, decision, and action.

Condition: My and our situation in life at the moment which involves all of the realities we are related to acting on us (personal, social, natural) including that of God as God is stirring within us now, and how I respond with openness or defensiveness.

Conscientious objection: In Business Meeting when a Friend senses the group has not discerned the guidance of Spirit and feels a concern about the matter illumined in the depths by the Light (deeper than ego and principles), he or she can “stand in the way” of the Meeting reaching a sense of the meeting. In which case the matter must be held over until later. In the intervening time Friends may listen and labor with the objecting Friend, perhaps arriving at unity over how to move forward to be presented at the next Monthly Meeting.

Conscientious Objector: A legal designation for someone refusing to participate in the military. During a national draft such status had to be approved by one's local Draft Board; two years of non-military service was required, such as working as an orderly in a hospital or in nature conservation.

Continuing Revelation: Experience of God at work in our lives providing new insights (or “openings” as George Fox called them) is ongoing and not limited to the biblical authors. This means the canon (the church's authoritative scripture) is not closed but open to new words that can speak to our present condition.

Convinced Friend: A person who has chosen to enter into membership in a Quaker Meeting, rather than being born, or entered by parents, into it. **Convincement** rather than “conversion” has been used from the beginnings of Quakerism to indicate a transformed identity through recognizing the truth of one's own condition (that the Light is within, that one has not lived at this level, that one commits to living in and from the Light, and that the Light connects us to our fellow humans and earth creatures). “Conversion” suggests, to the contrary, that our life is turned around from going in the wrong direction, rather than in need of deepening, expanding, and integrating from where we are.

Corporate: Friends speak of “corporate worship” to distinguish it from individual meditation. It means body, the body of Friends as in a gathering, not as a “corporation.” Early Friends speak of the pleasure of meeting in group worship face to face.

Discernment: The act of attending to the Spirit or Light at work in Business Meeting or a life situation and determining its presence and guidance, hence a meditative way of making decisions responsive to divine energy.

Discipline, Book of Discipline: The guidebook each Yearly Meeting publishes that presents the Quaker way of life, individually and communally, and of doing business together, called “Faith and Practice.” “Discipline” etymologically means “to learn,” and thus refers to the Quaker way in which we are learning to be.

Disownment: Removal from membership because of blatant un-Quakerly behavior in word or deed. Also called “being read out of Meeting,” historically people were

disowned for joining the military, “marrying out,” i.e. marrying a non-Quaker, or engaging in irresponsible business practices. Now rarely done, and not for any of these reasons, but for being quite disruptive to a Meeting and Quakerism in general.

Elder, Eldering: “Elder” was an appointed position in a Monthly Meeting responsible for oversight of the quality of ministry in worship and spiritual life in the Meeting. Historically they became a dominating power that became focused on right belief and was thus one factor that led to the Hicksite-Orthodox Split of 1827. “Eldering” was used for the action elders would take to confront Friends with their un-Quakerly behavior or belief. It thus became a verb to correct someone according to a standard. Today, Friends are seeking to use it in a more positive mode: to support someone prayerfully in their lives and leadership roles, while it continues to be used to hold people responsible for living and speaking in Quakerly ways.

Feeling: Early Friends' talk was filled with references to “feeling,” just at a time culturally in Britain that feeling was beginning to be denigrated as merely subjective. Early Friends speak of “feeling God,” feeling the Spirit,” “feeling the Truth,” “feeling the Light,” with no hesitation of mixing the senses (the Light is not simply “seen” but is “felt”). Today Friends speak more often of “experiencing” God, Spirit, Light, than of feeling it, but experience is unequivocally feeling-full.

First Day: Sunday, so called “First Day” to avoid the mythological references in the days of the week, e.g. “Thursday” Thor's Day, “Friday” as Freya's Day, and a similar avoidance in months, e.g. “January” as Janus' Day, “July” as Julius Caesar's Day. The intention was not only to reject these pagan representations but to achieve the simplicity of truth by using numbers to name the days and months.

Friend: Member of The Religious Society of Friends. “Friend” comes from one of the two earliest names Quakers gave themselves: “Friends of the Truth” and “Children of the Light.” They got it from John 15:15: “No longer do I call you servants [slaves], for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends. . . .”

Friend speaks my mind: Used to indicate agreement in Business Meeting with a comment to assist Clerk in discerning a gathering sense of the meeting.

Gathered Meeting: A meeting for worship in which participants feel bound to one another at a deep level. Unity is felt in the silence and in any speaking arising from, and carrying with it, rather than breaking, the silence.

Holding in the Light: A frequent phrase today for prayer for others. The Quaker equivalent for the Christian church's “intercessory prayer,” it differs by not asking for something specific we desire but that God will be present with, touch the heart, enfold, make whole, transform the person of concern; hence resonating with Jesus' prayer in

the Garden of Gethsemane: not my will but thine be done. Some Friends visualize the person of concern surrounded and pervaded by Light.

Inner Light, Inward Light: One of many metaphors for the divine reality within everyone, used by early Friends—along with Spirit, Seed, Inward Teacher, Truth, Mystery, that of God in everyone—now principally used today. Light shines in conscience as its depth but is not equated with historically conditioned conscience.

Lay down a committee or a meeting: As Light or Spirit leads to creating official groups, it also leads to discontinue them.

Leadings: Friends experience the divine reality at work in our lives guiding us individually and corporately into decisions, actions, thoughts. Early Friends often spoke of “promptings” of the Spirit, or “openings” of the Light; today Friends often speak as well of divine “nudges.”

Love: Too big and pervasive a word to attempt a definition here. In an “Introduction” at Britain Yearly Meeting May 2012, a speaker pointed out that it is the one significant word that is not indexed in BYM's *Faith and Practice*, yet is fundamental to the Quaker way. John Woolman speaks of divine leading to begin writing his *Journal* and to visit Indians during time of war in terms of love: “Love was the first motion.” Love initiates, love sustains, love is the aim, love concludes, in Friends experience of divine presence within the depths of ourselves and the world.

Minister, Ministry: Friends practice Martin Luther's expression “the priesthood of all believers.” In Quakerism the priesthood is not eliminated but the laity is redefined as ministers. To minister generally is to speak and act toward meeting the needs of others. More specifically, it refers to speaking in Meeting for Worship: brief messages from the heart stirred by the Spirit into words. Friends with a gift for verbal ministry were officially recognized and “recorded” as ministers in unprogrammed meetings in earlier days (still retained by some Yearly Meetings) who then sat on the “facing benches,” two or three rows of elevated pews facing the rows of assembled Friends.

Minute: Both a noun and a verb, a “minute” is a record of what has been decided or happened or intends to be done; “to minute” is the act of recording a sense of the meeting; “minutes” are the records of Monthly Meetings and committee meetings (which Friends have been assiduous in writing and preserving from our beginnings).

Outreach: Friends use this Anglo-Saxon word, rather than the Latinate word “evangelize,” to express the manner in which Friends reach out to non-Friends in non-proselytizing ways through social service and social action, and witness to our faith and practice. From the beginning early Friends sought to persuade others of the Quaker way, but the effort was not to persuade them of right beliefs (which is the way “evangelize” is usually used today) but to turn them to the Light in their own depths to

experience its presence and leading for themselves, on the basis of which they could then articulate their own beliefs

Pacifism: Opposition to war and to violent means of settling disputes, officially declared as the Quaker way to the Restoration King Charles II in 1660: “We know that wars and fightings proceed from the lusts of men. . . . All bloody principles and practices, we . . . do utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world.” Many early Friends had been in the army before becoming Quakers. Throughout our history some members have participated in warfare, and either been disowned or tolerated. Non-violence is a way of life, for which Friends are known, so that Friends in the military are aware they are acting contrary to Quaker values but may feel conscience led.

Pastoral Friends, Programmed Friends: Formed in the latter part of the 19th C in the Midwest and upstate New York under the impact of the Holiness Revival, and now the majority of Friends in the world (e.g. Kenya and Bolivia), these Friends moved in the form of worship and belief towards the center of evangelical Protestantism, with the result of a “programmed” worship service with prepared sermon, Bible reading, hymn singing, led by a hired minister, with or without a period of silence in which anyone may speak.

Plain Speech: Traditionally, as a critique of the socio-economic hierarchy of Britain, Friends used “thee” and “thou” (terms in the 17th C appropriate for intimate relations, as within a family, like “tu” in French today) for everyone, often enraging “their betters” with this passion for equality and refusal to flatter. Like the yeoman's simple clothes that later became a badge of this “peculiar people,” Friends retained the use of “thee” (dropping “thou” in the 18th C) among family and fellow Friends, as in: “How is thee today?” While still used by some today, Friends have dropped this form of speech in recognizing how it excludes those to whom the speech is not used. Today “plain speech” can simply refer to speaking directly to someone or to an issue.

Public Friend: Initially this meant any Quaker who preached in public places. Later it came to mean any Friend “traveling in the ministry” with a “traveling minute” from his or her own Monthly Meeting to visit Friends in other areas and countries. And it came to refer to any Quaker in the public eye, such as Ralph Bunche, African American Friend U.S. Ambassador to the UN.

Quaker: A term of derision used by others starting in 1650 for Friends in the Truth or the Children of the Light. Two possible explanations: Friends were dubbed “Quakers” by Judge Bennet of Derby in 1650 when in court Fox “bid them [judges] tremble at the word of the Lord”; and/or when Friends spoke in meeting for worship, the movement of the Spirit within was evident in bodily shaking, as one filled with awe. Friends

appropriated what was said in denigration as a positive attribution, now the better known name for a member of The Religious Society of Friends.

Quaker midnight: 10:00 pm at Pendle Hill to indicate the end of the day.

Quaker way: The manner of Friends holistic living that is spiritual, ethical, and thoughtful simultaneously; used to avoid disembodied spirituality, dogmatic belief, or activism not led by Spirit.

Queries and Advices: Questions and statements that engage Friends individually and corporately in reflecting upon their living the Quaker way. Rejecting all creeds, these are means to examine oneself and one's Meeting in the light of inquiries Friends have used over the centuries, always under revision to engage current needs. Originally, in 1682 London Yearly Meeting asked representatives of British Friends to answer three questions orally: Who has died in the past year; Who has been imprisoned; and "How the Truth has prospered amongst them since the last yearly meeting?" Later in the 18th C, these questions became a way of maintaining the boundaries of a "peculiar people." In 1791 Advices were added, subordinated to the Queries. In the 19th C they measured Friends' evangelical commitments as well as domestic doings. In the 20th C and now they have become means for self-examination, not as rules but as guides. Retained from the beginning, as example, the first number in Britain Yearly Meeting's "Advices and Queries" is: "Take heed, dear Friends to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leading of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life."

Right Order: A body of wisdom and insights that has evolved over three hundred years of seeking the guidance of the Spirit, which directs us as individuals and a Meeting.

Sacrament, Sacramental: Early Friends rejected all of the outward sacraments of the church because they experienced them to be empty of the Spirit. A ritual act or symbol can lose its spiritual depth and become an object to be retained and performed for its own sake. All of life, and the things in our lives, should be filled with Spirit, should be approached in openness to the divine mystery in inwardness, and thus life itself should be sacramental, that is sacred, expressive of feeling of the divine.

Seasoning, Seasoned Friend: When a possible decision is being considered in Business Meeting, it may be suggested that the decision be "seasoned," that is, give it time for us to live with it to see if Spirit is guiding us to embrace it. A "seasoned Friend" is one who over time has learned how to go deep in facing issues and reaching decisions so that he or she is seen as trustworthy to have engaged in real discernment of the Light over and over again. This does not mean that their insights are necessarily the ones that result in the Meeting's sense of the meeting, but they will be listened to attentively as each seeks to discern the truth of the situation and fitting action.

Sense of the Meeting: Friends call the decision reached in Business Meeting a “sense of the meeting” because it is not a vote, nor a negotiation, nor a compromise, but a corporate discernment of the moving of the Spirit in consideration of a matter. It expresses unity but not uniformity. The degree to which participants agree with the decision varies, including some who may feel unhappy with the decision, but all feel that what has been arrived at is what Spirit is leading us to.

Silence: The context of stillness in which Friends seek the presence of God either in meeting for worship, in individual meditation, or in decision making. In more recent times “silence” is also used as a metaphor, along with Light, Seed, etc., for God.

Speak to one's condition: In Fox's conviction experience he heard a voice that said “There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.” His condition was one of despair of ever finding his way, of wanting direction and a sense of meaning in his life. He discovered that in letting go of his own efforts that his inward condition was illumined and that within it the divine was present and at work to transform, guide, fulfill. He came to understand the mission of Friends to be “answering that of God in every one,” which is evoking a sense of the divine within persons' inwardness and igniting their awakening to the capacity of the Light to illumine the reality of their situation.

Speak truth to power: The title of an AFSC publication in 1955 that catches efforts by Friends from the beginning to speak to political powers about the destructiveness of injustice and war, and the possibilities of finding peaceful solutions to conflict if open to the Truth, another metaphor for God and our own condition in which God is present.

Testimonies: Not rational arguments, scriptural quotes, the church's beliefs, but experience one witnesses to in one's own life is the basis on which Friends' values have traditionally been expressed. The witness is a “testimony” to the Truth that beckons us to be, act, and think in the ways of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and equality. The list varies among Friends (Howard Brinton speaks of “harmony”) and is being added to, such as environmental responsibility, but it is important to retain the unity of these ethical guides with the spiritual way, rather than separating them as stand-alone values. Like Queries, these are challenges for individual and corporate self-examination.

That of God in everyone: Intentionally vague, from the beginning Friends used this phrase to suggest the presence of the divine in everyone, without dogmatic articulation of the divine and human natures and how they are related. This was a major distinction from their Puritan, Protestant cousins who believed that the divine Spirit only took up residence in a person once they achieved right belief in Christ.

Under the care of the Meeting: Marriage approved and conducted according to Quaker procedure, whether or not legally approved by the State.

Unity: Harmonious connectedness with God, fellow humans, and all of creation, “unity” is not uniformity but a mutuality in depth. Isaac Pennington says: “For this is the true ground of love and unity not that such a man walks and does just as I do but because I feel the same Spirit and life in him, and in that he walks in his rank, in his own order, in his proper way and place. . . .” Fox speaks of “being in unity with creation” as a guide. When unity is achieved in a sense of the meeting, it arises from feeling the same Spirit and life which has led the Meeting to a conclusion.

Weighty Friend: A Seasoned Friend, someone whose judgment has been experienced over time by others to be sound and deep, led by Spirit. While each person is welcome to express views in Business Meeting and is considered capable of providing important insights as a sense of the meeting is being gathered, the views of “weighty Friends” weigh more on people's hearts because of long experience of their discernments. From the beginning Friends did not understand equality as sameness, but recognized, as they called them, different “measures” of the Spirit which each person is given, and with spiritual work can develop.

(For further reference see Warren Sylvester Smith, *One Explorer's Glossary of Quaker Terms* [Philadelphia: Friends General Conference, 1985], QPS in SVFM Library.)