

# **The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation Program:**

**Deepening the Spiritual Experience of Modern Friends**



**Elizabeth F. Meyer**

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Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me, beyond what can by words be declared; but as people come into subjection to the spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the Word of wisdom, that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being.\*

-- George Fox

## **Introduction**

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation Program invites its participants into a deeper experience of God's presence through retreats, devotional readings, spiritual community and individual spiritual practices. There is nothing glitzy about the Program; it is plain and simple, but it nevertheless works spiritual transformation in its participants. It seems to work as if by magic, but it works because it is practical and manageable. Spiritual Formation provides a practical way for people in our busy culture to turn to God with their minds through spiritual reading, with their hearts through daily spiritual practices and with their human relationships through local friendship groups.

The Spiritual Formation Program is not particularly rigorous. It does not require a person to take a leave of absence from work in order to spend hours in prayer and meditation. However, it does require a degree of commitment. Participants attend retreat weekends at the beginning and end of the Spiritual Formation Program year (September through May). During the

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\* George Fox, Journal of George Fox (Nickalls ed.) at 27-28.

Program year, participants attend two meetings per month: (1) the monthly meeting of the local group to share reflections on a spiritual book that all have agreed to read; and (2) the monthly meeting of the friendship group, a subset of the local group -- usually three to five people -- who meet to share spiritual journeys and to support one another in spiritual practices. In addition, each participant is expected to devote at least 15 minutes per day to a spiritual practice. Those who make this commitment are rewarded with a closer relationship with God and an opportunity to form deep spiritual friendships.

### **Why Spiritual Formation?**

#### **For the Individual**

If you seek a richer spiritual experience or yearn for a deeper spiritual community, the Spiritual Formation Program may be for you. The Program serves Friends (and meeting attenders) who are at many stages of their spiritual journeys. Those who are new to Friends find that the Program is an effective way to learn about Quaker spirituality and to form personal friendships within the meeting. Long-time Friends who are experiencing a period of spiritual dryness or who have become burnt out with committee work turn to the Program for spiritual renewal. Friends who are beginning to feel God's call into service and who want to explore their gifts and leadings in community find that the Program meets their needs. The Program meets all of its participants wherever they are in the journey, and all benefit when the group includes Friends with a variety of backgrounds and reasons for participating. Whatever your reason for wanting to participate in the Program, you will find it transforming.

The Spiritual Formation Program changed my life. Like many convinced Friends, I was attracted to Quakerism because of its mystical faith and its commitment to put faith into practice through social action. I knew that Quakerism was a way of life rather than just an activity for Sunday, but in my busy life of lawyer, wife and mother, I could barely even manage to get to meeting on Sunday. Moreover, meeting for worship was not particularly satisfying because I had not undergone any spiritual preparation during the week. Nor did I feel especially connected to others at the meeting; they were nice people, but I did not feel part of a real spiritual community. I knew there was more to the spiritual experience of being a Quaker, but I did not know how to find it. I asked myself, “Am I really a Quaker, or am I just a faker?”

I could not bear the thought of not really being a Quaker. It was part of my identity. But I was so wrapped up in the importance of being Quaker that I was really worshipping Quakerism rather than worshipping God. Of course, in worshipping Quakerism, I congratulated myself on having been smart enough to find and join the best religion in the world, so I was really just worshipping myself. Self-worship, or self-centeredness, is a human tendency. Humans are naturally self-centered, but God calls us to become God-centered.

I did not realize that I was beginning to hear the call to a God-centered life. I thought that I was simply unhappy for no good reason. I had everything I had ever wanted: a lovely family and home, a good job and interesting career. Why did I feel unhappy and empty at the core? I had discovered that a self-centered life is an empty life. I needed to feel God’s presence in my life. No amount of worldly activity, material possessions or even satisfying personal relationships could fill the need. Not

even religiousness – defining myself as a Friend and attending meeting – met the need. I needed to seek God, and the BYM Spiritual Formation Program provided me with the structure to do just that in a close spiritual community.

I found that as I participated in the Program, the Spirit was showing me, little by little, how to turn myself to God. God was forming me and molding me as a potter molds clay, and the Program gave me a community of close spiritual friends with whom to share the experience. God continues to form me; this is a life-long process. As my life has become more God-centered, that emptiness has been filled, and I have found a truly rich, happy life and have formed many deep spiritual friendships.

Through the Spiritual Formation Program I have come to experience the God-centeredness of the early Friends. This was the mystical dimension of Quakerism for which I had longed. It is a sense of God's continual presence and awesome power which leads me into its service.

### **For the Monthly Meeting**

In addition to enriching the spiritual lives of individuals, the Spiritual Formation Program benefits the monthly meetings to which its participants belong by building community, nurturing spirit-led ministries, and developing spirit-led leadership.

The Program provides a vehicle for meeting members and attenders who hunger for community to form a small closely-knit group. Although new participants may join the group only at the beginning of each year, the spiritual formation group does not become some exclusive clique within the

meeting. As the participants form spiritual friendships among themselves, they learn the skills for forming other spiritual friendships, and spiritual friendships within the meeting become contagious. A spiritual formation group within a meeting contributes to a greater sense of community among all the meeting members whether or not they actually participate in the Program.

As Spiritual Formation participants deepen their spiritual lives, they are better prepared to discern how God may be calling them to serve. Their vocal ministry now comes from a deeper spiritual experience, and their service ministries spring from an even deeper commitment to do God's work. Those who are new to Friends or who previously thought of themselves as back benchers – people who like to come to meeting on Sunday but who don't really want to involve themselves too much – find themselves drawn into the life of the meeting community as they experience a richer spiritual experience through the Program. As a result, the monthly meeting benefits from the spirit-led vocal ministry and service from its members.

Some who participate in the Program may find that God is calling them to leadership within the Program or within the meeting. The Program provides many ways for its members to provide some leadership: from leading a discussion to coordinating the local group. The local group is a place where leadership gifts can be recognized and encouraged and where the meeting's new leadership can be fostered.

## **Structure of the Program**

### **Opening Retreat**

The Program begins in September with an opening retreat weekend, Friday evening through Sunday lunch. All the Program participants throughout the Yearly Meeting attend the retreat, generally thirty to fifty participants from four to six monthly meetings within BYM. The opening retreat provides an introduction to the Program and a chance for participants to separate themselves physically from busy lives for intentional retreat and rest. This also is a time when the seeds of spiritual community are planted.

We begin by setting an expectation of spiritual hospitality for the weekend and for the year. We ask the participants to accept each other just as they are, including all spiritual baggage. We all seem to carry spiritual baggage. For example, some participants are uncomfortable with Christ-centered language. Others feel that the only way they can speak the truth is to use Christ-centered language. We invite each participant to speak his or her own truth in the language that he or she finds most comfortable and meaningful. We ask anyone who might feel another's language abrasive to see this as an opportunity for spiritual growth. God loves us just the way we are, and commands us to love others just the way they are too (*See John 15:12*).

The opening retreat includes some thoughts on Quaker spirituality followed by small group time in which participants begin to reflect upon what brings them closer to God and what draws them away from God. In addition, we provide an introduction to spiritual disciplines, daily practices that bring us

closer to God. We give participants a substantial block of time to try various disciplines and quiet space for discernment. We have some time for singing, socializing and making joyful noise, and we invite participants to enter an extended period of silence.

The retreat includes a nuts and bolts description of how we expect the Program to function in the coming year, and local groups are given some time to organize. During this time, we ask each group to select, at the least, a first meeting date and a first reading. We provide a book list of recommended readings (see pages 25-27 for a sample reading list) and a mini-bookstore where participants can browse and purchase books for the year of reading ahead. The organization time also provides an opportunity to identify, within each local group, subsets of three to five people who will meet together monthly as friendship groups.

The retreat ends with final sharing and worship. Friends return home feeling rested and centered and with a basic understanding of the Program. They also feel challenged to discern a spiritual discipline and to make time in their busy lives for reading, group meetings, and a deeper relationship with God.

### **Local Spiritual Formation Groups**

Local spiritual formation groups meet monthly for a potluck meal followed by worship/sharing centered on a book or pamphlet that the group has agreed to read. A local group will be made up of Friends (or meeting attenders) who have participated in the opening retreat and who live reasonably close to one another. They all may be part of the same meeting or the local group could be made up of Friends from several meetings



within reasonable traveling distance. Local groups may be any size, but a group of 8 to 12 people is ideal – large enough for interesting sharing, but small enough so that each member can be heard.

The leadership of the BYM Program compiles a book list (based on recommendation from previous Spiritual Formation Program participants) from which the local groups may select monthly readings. Our list provides a menu of books on the following topics: spiritual disciplines, prayer, Bible, spirituality, community and ministry. We recommend that groups select a reading on spiritual disciplines for the first local group meeting. For the remainder of the meetings the groups should have one reading on each of the prayer, community and ministry topics, several readings on spirituality, and read one book of the Bible. We recommend books that invite the reader into spiritual growth rather than scholarly works. In worship/sharing, we encourage Friends to reflect on how the book speaks to each individual's spiritual life, rather than critiquing the writing style or pontificating on facts or theories.

I like to think of Spiritual Formation as religious education for the heart, and we encourage Friends in local groups to share from the heart rather than from the head. This is not to say that we are anti-intellectual. God gives us minds to use, and some members of the local group may feel drawn to study scholarly works as a supplement to the group reading. The information these Friends share can provide a valuable contribution to the group. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the focus of Spiritual Formation is spiritual growth. Though it may accompany spiritual growth, intellectual growth alone does not bring us closer to God.

## **Spiritual Disciplines**

We ask each participant in the Spiritual Formation Program to practice a spiritual discipline for at least 15 minutes per day. The traditional Christian spiritual disciplines include prayer, meditation, contemplation, scripture study, journal keeping, and lectio divina (slow, meditative scripture reading). Over the years, many participants have been led to practice disciplines inspired by eastern traditions; these disciplines include yoga, walking meditation and t'ai chi ch'uan. Some participants create their own disciplines or customize disciplines for their own needs through variations or combinations of traditional disciplines. A discipline is right for us if it brings us closer to God, regardless of whether we rigidly follow the prescribed practices of the discipline. Turn to page 24 for a sampler of spiritual disciplines.

How do you know what spiritual discipline is right for you at this time? The temptation is to *think* about all of the different disciplines and to decide which you *think* seems right. But finding the right spiritual discipline is not an intellectual process. I recommend that you keep an open mind, try various disciplines, and discern if a particular discipline seems to be drawing you to God. You may be surprised by what you find; something that may not appeal to your intellect might be just what your soul needs. Just as Jesus said, “You did not choose me but I chose you” (John 15:16a), so we really do not choose our spiritual discipline, it chooses us.

## **Friendship Groups**

Within each local group, several subsets of three to five people will form friendship groups. Each friendship group meets

monthly, and its members serve as companions for one another in the spiritual journey. The group may share conversation over a meal followed by a time of deep worship/sharing. The friendship group is a safe place to share concerns from one's past and present struggles with faith and spiritual disciplines. As spiritual friends share deeply from their own experiences and as they feel tender listening, the foundation for spiritual community is laid. By the end of the year, the members of the friendship group feel closely bonded. Lifetime friendships are formed, and many friendship groups continue to meet on a regular basis after the Program year concludes.

The first year that I participated in the Spiritual Formation Program, I lived about 30 miles from all the other participants in my local group. I was part of a four-person friendship group that took turns meeting in its members' homes. One month, our group had trouble finding a time to get together. I had recently hosted the group, so it was my turn to make the drive over to where the others lived. In a round-robin of telephone calls, various evenings were suggested as meeting times, but they were all times that I did not have childcare, so I told the group to go ahead and meet without me that month. Then, I received a call from Andy, one of the members of the friendship group. He told me that the others had been talking and decided the group could be more creative. Andy said, "We will come to you." Their willingness to make that hour-long drive just to include me was a wonderful gift that cemented our spiritual friendships. In this busy world, sometimes the most meaningful sacrifice we can make for a friend is to rearrange our schedule so that we spend time with him or her. As local groups and friendship groups organize at the opening retreat, I always know that a special group is forming when I hear someone say

something like “I can exchange my theatre tickets so that we can meet.”

## **Closing Retreat**

The Program ends each May with a closing retreat. This is a time for the participants from the various local groups to come back together to celebrate the year of spiritual growth and to begin to discern where God may be leading for the future. We give each participant time to share from the year in the large group and more deeply in small groups. We talk about spiritual gifts and about leadings, and invite each participant to begin to discern what gifts God has given and how God may be leading him or her to use these gifts in God’s service. The retreat ends with final worship and good-byes.

## **How Can a Meeting Sponsor a Local Group?**

Because the Spiritual Formation Program enriches the life of the monthly meeting, a committee concerned with developing the spiritual life of the meeting, such as the Ministry and Counsel Committee, might discern that it should sponsor a local spiritual formation group. To sponsor a local group, the committee should begin to publicize the Program within the meeting beginning in the spring, keeping mindful of the August sign-up deadline. The committee might also identify and encourage individuals within the meeting who would particularly benefit from the Program. These Friends would include people who seem to be emerging as leaders or as vocal ministers within the meeting. If the committee has a travel or conference fund to administer, it could offer scholarship assistance to Friends within the meeting. When the committee assists and encourages individuals within the meeting it benefits the meeting as a whole.

Sometimes the need of a particular participant can provide a monthly meeting community with the opportunity to demonstrate to its members that they are loved and cared for. I remember the case of a young woman who was a single mother and who did not have many financial resources. A death in her family left the woman feeling abandoned. Her monthly meeting discerned that the Spiritual Formation Program would be helpful to her, and paid her full cost. A monthly meeting member who was not going to the retreat offered to look after her child for the retreat weekend. At the retreat, another monthly meeting member bought the woman some books at the book table. By the end of the weekend, the young woman confided in me that she felt cared for and loved. It was just what she needed. God gives Friends the opportunity to bond and grow as a worshipping community through ministering to the needs of one another, and the Spiritual Formation Program can be a part of that.

## Resources for Individuals and Local Groups

### **Preparing for the Deeper Journey**

Before attending the Spiritual Formation Program opening retreat, think about what in particular draws you to participate in the Program this year. Jot down a few brief thoughts about your spiritual journey and your hopes for the year ahead. At the first session of the opening retreat, all participants will be given an opportunity to introduce themselves by sharing from these thoughts. Think about what **brief** thoughts you might like to share by way of introduction. You may use the space below to record your thoughts to share at the opening session.



As a way of preparing for the year of spiritual formation ahead, you might like to do one or more of the following exercises.

#### 1. Recalling Early Spiritual Experiences

What were some early spiritual experiences in your life? Perhaps you remember feeling close to God as a young child while attending worship services or on a nature trip. Perhaps you had a feeling of awe at the wonders of creation while

viewing the stars at night. Perhaps you felt like you were coming to a comfortable home when you first attended Friends meeting. Describe one or more of these experiences in your journal or on a piece of paper.

## 2. Visual Depiction of the Spiritual Journey

What has your spiritual journey looked like? Perhaps it has had ups and downs. Perhaps it looks like traveling through a dark place with only a small flashlight. Perhaps it looks like closed doors and open windows. Using some visual medium (*e.g.*, crayons, clay, collage), depict your journey, or a part of your journey.

If you are mathematically inclined, you may want to graph your journey. You might select time as your x-axis, and feeling of closeness to God as your y-axis. Will a greater value of y indicate a closer relationship to God, or should closeness to God be represented by a lower value (deepness)? Perhaps a negative value of y might indicate a turning away from the ways of the world toward God. Look at your graph. Is it a function? Is it continuous? Can you take the derivative or integral? What might the derivative or integral represent to you?

## 3. Exploring Worship

What does Quaker worship mean to you? How do you prepare for meeting for worship? How has your experience of worship affected your life?

Have you ever attended a meeting that seemed especially centered (a “gathered” or “covered” meeting)? How did you

know that this was a covered meeting? What did it feel like? Did it leave you longing for something?

#### 4. Using your Imagination to Explore Scripture

Read John 4:1-30.

Imagine yourself in Biblical times going to fetch water from Jacob's well. What would you bring with you to carry the water (a bucket? an earthen jar)? What would the air feel like? What would it smell like (desert flowers? camel dung)? What would you be wearing? Would you have bare feet?

Imagine that Jesus, sitting by the well, asks you to give him water. What does he say to you? Are you surprised that he has asked you for help? Does he offer you living water?

Is there something he might say to you that would make you say, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done"?

#### 5. Using Fantasy to Explore your Spiritual Longings

Make up a story about your encounter with an angel. What would the angel look like? What would the angel do or say? As an example, I'll share my fantasy:

*I walked into the kitchen and was startled to see a strange man sitting at the table. He had helped himself to a cup of coffee and was perusing the newspaper. His long legs were sprawled out under the table and his hulking frame dwarfed the chair he sat on.*



*My heart pounded in alarm at the sight of a stranger in my kitchen, and I was about to let out a scream when he said, "Fear not." His words brought an instant sense of calm.*

*He said. "I took the liberty of brewing a cup of tea for you. It should be ready by now; sit down, I'll bring it to you."*

*I sat down and watched as he waited on me. Despite his bulk, this man's movements were as fluid as a fairy's. He practically glided across the room. With a few efficient flicks of his wrist, he had assembled tea cup and milk pitcher on a tray and sailed back to present them to me at the table. How did this guy know where I kept everything in my kitchen?*

*"Who are you?" I asked.*

*"An angel." He said.*

*"Yeah, right." I said. "If you are an angel, where are your wings?"*

*"At the cleaners." He said. "I could do them up myself, but the professionals know how to get the starch just right. They look much better when I send them out. Anyway, I didn't need them for this job."*

*He didn't look like any angel I ever saw at the art museum. No wings, no halo, no medieval robes. He was wearing jeans and a leather jacket. He had the dark hair and complexion of a Latino. He had the muscular frame of a*

*body builder, but his face was incongruously androgynous, almost feminine. He was handsome but not at all sexy.*

*“Okay,” I said, “If you are an angel, I feel like I am coming down with a cold, how about making that better?”*

*“What? Do I look like Jesus? I am an angel; I don’t do healings.”*

*“Oh, right,” I said. “Angels are messengers. Well, what is the message you are bringing to me?”*

*He stood and walked over to the window. Standing framed in the sunlight that streamed in behind him, this strange creature spoke his message. “Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord.” Then he turned and became part of the sunbeam coming in the window. He was gone.*

*I sat open mouthed in amazement thinking, “That was it? That was the message? The last line of the 27<sup>th</sup> Psalm. That’s all? I get a visit from an angel and that’s what he says?”*

## **Guidelines for Local Spiritual Formation Groups**

**Coordinator:** The local group coordinator is a servant-leader of the group. The coordinator makes sure that arrangements are made for the group meetings, including: (1) reserve the meeting house or other space for the spiritual formation group meetings; (2) notify all group members of the meeting date and time; (3) arrange for the ordering and distribution of reading materials; (4) contact members who miss meetings to let them know they are missed and to give them information concerning the next meeting. The duties of the coordinator can be rotated among the members of the local group or split among co-coordinators (*e.g.*, one person orders and distributes the books, the other takes care of arrangements and notification).

**Meals:** Begin each group meeting with a shared meal. This time of relaxed fellowship gives group members an opportunity to know one another in that which is temporal and prepares the way to go deeper – to get to know one another in that which is eternal.

**Sharing from the Reading:** After the meal, enter into silence out of which each group member is invited to share a reflection based on the reading. Members are encouraged to speak from their own experience: How did the book speak to you? What moved you? What changed the way you think or feel? What did you find difficult? Allow each member to speak as led out of the silence. Avoid quick responses to another's sharing; allow time between speakers so that each reflection can be fully absorbed by the group. Avoid speaking a second time until each person has had a chance to speak once. After each person has shared out of the silence, the sharing might change character from worship/sharing to deep worship or from worship/sharing to

worshipful discussion in which a give and take can help clarify thoughts among the members. There is nothing wrong with a worshipful discussion as long as it does not degenerate into debate or argument. Allow the meeting to follow its natural course; each meeting may have a different character depending upon the particular reading and the work of the Spirit within the group at that time. End each meeting with a group good-bye such as holding hands around a circle or group hug.

**Local Resources:** Local meeting committees, such as the Ministry and Counsel Committee or the committee concerned with providing pastoral care, can serve as valuable resources for local groups. Sometimes the structure of the Spiritual Formation Program is not appropriate for a particular person at the time. A member of the local group who seems to dominate the discussions or who seems particularly withdrawn may have greater needs than can be met through the Program. The loving intervention of an appropriate committee of the local meeting with the offer of a clearness committee or other pastoral care might be what is needed instead of or in addition to Spiritual Formation.

## **Suggested Activities for Friendship Groups**

Friendship groups meet monthly to share spiritual journeys and to support and encourage each other in daily spiritual disciplines. The members of a friendship group may want to share a meal and fellowship before entering into deeper personal sharing together. This time of deep sharing may seem to structure itself naturally, but the following are offered as possible activities the group may want to try. However, do not forget to allot some time in each friendship group meeting to supporting one another in the daily disciplines.

**Words for God:** Each group member shares what s/he calls the divine. What words do you use in your own private prayers? What words do you use for the divine when speaking to others? Do some words bother you? Affirm each group member's experience with words for the divine, and invite each person to speak his or her own truth in the friendship group. This might be an appropriate activity for a friendship group's first meeting.

**Individual Spiritual Journeys:** Set aside one meeting for each person in the group to share his or her spiritual journey in depth. The person doing the sharing should prepare for the meeting by outlining what s/he wants to share during the session. The other members listen deeply to the sharing member and lovingly reflect what they have heard.

**Holding in the Light:** Take turns holding one another in the Light. Each person takes a turn to sit in the center of a circle surrounded by the other members of the friendship group. The person in the center might share a particular need or concern that s/he would like held in prayer. The members hold the person in

silent prayer, and if a vocal prayer arises in someone's heart, that may be shared aloud.

**Naming Gifts:** Take turns identifying the spiritual gifts the members see in one another. Prepare for this meeting by considering the other members and discerning what spiritual gifts you have recognized in them. This might be a good activity for a group that has met for several months and the members feel they know each other well.

**Gratitude Circle:** Each member shares something for which s/he is grateful. If the group has been meeting for a while, the gratitude sharing can focus on something each member is grateful for that came from the group itself. Another variation is to focus on one member at a time and have each of the others say what s/he is grateful for from the member focused upon.

**Closing Activities:** At the conclusion of each meeting, have some kind of group good-bye such as holding hands around a circle or a group hug.

## *A Sampler of Spiritual Disciplines*

*prayer*

*lectio divina*

*journal keeping*

*Bible study*

*meditation*

*contemplation*

*silence*

*movement / dance*

*yoga*

*t'ai chi ch'uan*

*reading scripture of other traditions*

*art / music*

*walking meditation*

*spoken grace or silence before meals*

*memorizing scripture*

*celebration*

*Jesus said, "You did not choose me  
but I chose you." (John 15:16)*

*Similarly, we do not choose our  
discipline, rather we find (discern,  
discover) what discipline is  
appropriate for us at this particular  
time. In that way, our discipline  
chooses us.*



## **A Framework for a Reading List**

The leadership of the BYM Spiritual Formation Program compiles a new reading list each year and provides the list at the opening retreat. The list includes some spiritual classics and some newer books. The following is an example of the framework used for building the reading list and of some of the books that have been on the list over the years.

**DISCIPLINES** (choose one as the first reading for the year)

Improvisation & Spiritual Disciplines: Continuing the Divine-Human Duet by Carol Conti-Entin, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 288 (1989)

Listening Spirituality Volume I: Personal Spiritual Practices Among Friends by Patricia Loring (1997)

**SCRIPTURE** (read one book of the Bible)

Matthew, Mark Luke, John, Philippians or Psalms

**PRAYER** (choose one)

Prayer: Beginning Again by Sheila Keane, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 339 (1998)

A Guide to True Peace or the Excellency of Inward and Spiritual Prayer compiled from the writings of Fenelon, Guyon and Molions, (reprinted by Pendle Hill 1979)



Open Mind, Open Heart: The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel by Thomas Keating (1986)

**SPIRITUALITY** (choose several)

Four Doors to Meeting for Worship by William Taber, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 306 (1992)

Listening for the Heartbeat of God – A Celtic Spirituality by J. Philip Newell (1997)

The Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence (various editions are available of letters and conversations with Brother Lawrence, a 17<sup>th</sup> century monk)

A Testament of Devotion by Thomas R. Kelly (1941)

Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings edited and introduced by Douglas Steere (1984) – Any one of the selections from this book, including Douglas Steere's introduction, makes a suitable reading for a Local Group meeting.

The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman Edited by Phillips P. Moulton (1971)

Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith by Marcus J. Borg (1994)

**COMMUNITY** (choose one)

1 Corinthians Chapters 12 and 13

Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting by Barry Morley, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 307 (1993)

Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faith Church Community by Sandra L. Cronk, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 297 (1991)

**MINISTRIES** (choose one)

Tall Poppies: Supporting Gifts of Ministry and Eldering in the Monthly Meeting by Martha Paxson Grundy, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 347 (1999)

Walk Worthy of Your Calling edited by Margery Past Abbott and Peggy Senger Parsons, Friends United Press (2004)

Virtuous Lives: Four Quaker Sisters Remember Family Life, Abolitionism, and Women's Suffrage edited by Lucille Salitan and Eve Lewis Perera (1994)



Elizabeth (“Betsy”) Meyer, a member of Sandy Spring Meeting in Maryland, serves as part of the leadership of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation Program. She may be contacted at [efmeyer@comcast.net](mailto:efmeyer@comcast.net).