

**Minutes of Baltimore Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting  
Fourth Month 2, 2005  
Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting**

**I2005-1** *Opening* Friends gathered and settled into worshipful attentive silence in the meeting room at 2:15 pm at the Sandy Spring Meetinghouse in Sandy Spring, Maryland. Out of the silence the Interim Meeting Clerk read a passage from Katherine Evans, in a letter from prison in Malta, in 1661, to her husband and children:

“...I have unity and fellowship with thee day and night, to my great refreshment and continual comfort...praises be given to our God for evermore, who hath joined us together in that which neither Sea nor Land can separate or divide....

“Keep your souls unspotted of the world, and love one another with a pure heart, fervently serve one another in love, build up one another in the Eternal, and bear one another’s burdens for the Seeds sake, and so fulfill the Law of God. This is the Word of the Lord unto you, my dearly beloved.”

from *Hidden in Plain Sight, Quaker Women’s Writings 1650 – 1700*, edited by Mary Garman, Judith Applegate, Margaret Benefiel, and Dorothea Meredith, Pendle Hill 1996, pp 152-153 and 203-205.

The Clerk expressed appreciation for the generosity and hospitality of Sandy Spring Friends.

**I2005-2** Report of the Presiding Clerk of BYM. Lauri Perman spoke of her sense that it had been a blessing to serve the Yearly Meeting, expressed gratitude for the dedication of so many Friends to the Yearly meeting, gave informally the first part of her report, on her travels, on the recent youth safety conference, and on changing agendas for annual sessions, and read her report on the progress of the Ad Hoc Committee of Clearness and Support.

Service to the Yearly Meeting as Presiding Clerk continues to be a blessing in my life and provide many opportunities to grow in the Spirit.

*Travel.* I have been asked to describe my travels on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. I will begin by describing my travels outside the Yearly Meeting. In the fall, I attended the FGC Central Committee meeting. Our Manual of Procedure acknowledges that the Yearly Meeting presiding clerk serves as a member of FGC Central Committee. This was an opportunity for me to learn a lot about FGC and to meet some of the 10 BYM members who serve as our delegates to Central Committee, including some who are unable to attend annual sessions. Later in the fall, I joined several BYM Friends in attending a Pendle Hill clerking workshop offered by Arthur Larrabee. Also in the fall, for personal reasons, I had the opportunity to visit Mt. Toby Meeting in Massachusetts where I spoke with Jan Hoffman, a former NEYM Clerk, and a current member of the NEYM Ministry and Counsel committee charged with recommending a course of action for NEYM to follow with regard to our shared concern about FUM’s discriminatory employment and volunteer policies. Yesterday I attended Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and next weekend I will attend an FGC retreat for yearly meeting clerks.

Inside the Yearly Meeting, I travel regularly to attend meetings of the Supervisory and Program committees, to clerk sessions of the four committees charged to make an FUM budget line item recommendation, and to clerk regular meetings of the ad hoc clearness and support committee. Together these meetings have meant 1 or 2 trips a month.

I have not been able to attend Quarterly Meetings but hope to do so next year.

*Youth Safety Conference.* On March 5, sixty Friends, from 20 different monthly meetings, attended a Youth Safety Conference at Sandy Spring, where we heard presentations from representatives of our insurance company. The next step in the process is for monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting to take ownership of the concern raised by the insurance companies and to season it through our own Friendly processes so that our final policies reflect who we are as Friends. This is something that several other yearly meetings are working on as well. It was exciting today to see how quickly Friends can move. Sandy Spring has already inserted windows in the doors of its RE classrooms in the community building, one of the safety suggestions recommended by our insurance company.

*Ad hoc Youth Safety Committee.* Michael Cronin, Interim Meeting Clerk, and I will appoint an ad hoc Youth Safety Committee, in consultation with the clerks of the relevant committees – Youth Programs, Camping, Supervisory, Religious Education, and Junior Yearly Meeting -- to draft a Youth Safety policy for these committees to consider, for review by Trustees, and for approval by Interim Meeting or Yearly Meeting in sessions. Once Yearly Meeting has approved a Youth Safety policy, each committee may develop its own procedures. This committee will draw on the work of FGC and AFSC and other yearly meetings in preparing a draft policy.

*Agenda for Annual Sessions.* I want to alert clerks and others expecting to make reports at annual sessions that I am eager to create a more spacious agenda with time for us to consider our call to peace work, the spiritual life of the Yearly Meeting and our monthly meetings, and time to consider carefully the concerns that have arisen among us about inclusion of convicted sexual offenders in our meetings. In order to allow time for these concerns, it will be necessary to cut the time given in the past to committee reports. There will not be any time for oral reports that duplicate written reports. I met this morning with Ministry and Pastoral Care to ask for the committee's help in seasoning the changes I propose to the agenda.

*Concern about Friendly Adult Presence.* Some Friends will recall that I reported to you last October about a very difficult situation involving an adult who had been asked not to attend BYM programs where children and youth were present. I reported the appointment of an ad hoc clearness and support committee composed of: Lamar Matthew, former presiding clerk of Yearly Meeting and current member of Ministry and Pastoral Care; Michael Cronin, current Interim meeting clerk; Don Gann, co-clerk of Ministry and Pastoral Care, and myself. We had asked the adult, who had formerly served as a Friendly Adult Presence with our youth programs, to suggest three names, from which the other members of the committee chose Riley Robinson to serve as the committee's fifth member.

This committee has taken its work seriously. All five members have met together nine times since Fall Interim meeting -- four times in person and five times by conference call, usually for 2 to 4 hours each time. On two occasions, the committee met in person with the adult in question. During this period, members of the committee also attended two Young Friends conferences and one Junior Young Friends conference. The committee's work has been prayerful and challenging, and I am personally grateful for the courage, dedication, and spirit-filled leadership of its members. In the course of gathering information, members of the ad hoc committee have consulted with counseling professionals, with the Yearly Meeting attorney and insurance agents, and with Child Protective Services of two states.

Unfortunately and sadly, we cannot recommend that the adult be reinstated. We affirm the decision made by the initial discernment committee that the adult in question should not work with BYM youth nor, at this time, attend programs where youth are present. We are committed

to working to find a way for this adult to participate fully as a member of the Yearly Meeting but Way Forward is not yet clear. In the interim, we know Friends will welcome the news that the adult's Monthly Meeting has appointed a support committee. Members of the ad hoc committee are committed to this work because we love the adult and value the many contributions and gifts the adult gives the Yearly Meeting.

We are aware that some Friends remain very troubled by this situation – for a variety of reasons – ranging from a concern for a beloved Friend to a concern for Friendly process, including a sense that either Young Friends Executive Committee or the Youth Programs Committee should have handled the issue. We have responded to letters of support sent to us on behalf of the adult and have yet more letters to which we need to respond. This unprecedented situation has challenged our processes. Members of the ad hoc committee are committed to continuing our work until we see that the Yearly Meeting has processes in place for the future.

Since Fall Interim Meeting we have confirmed that the Young Friends Executive Committee had previously attempted to handle the situation through its Friendly Adult Presence evaluation process and had been unsuccessful in changing the adult's behavior. One of the counseling professionals we consulted has also informed us that Young Friends are not developmentally equipped to handle the problem we encountered. Finally, I will point out that 14 Yearly Meeting Friends have already been involved in this confidential matter, either as part of the initial discernment committee or the ad hoc clearness and support committee.

I am convinced that if we were to relax confidentiality, more Friends would understand the reasons for the outcome and processes followed so far. Relaxing confidentiality would remove pressure and criticism from the ad hoc committee and allow us to counter some misinformation that Friends have heard. However, we are clear that relaxing confidentiality it is not the “right” thing to do. It is not in the interest of the Friendly Adult Presence, the Yearly Meeting, or Young Friends. Our committee is continuing to work hard and remain open to the spirit; we request your prayers, trust, and support. May you keep this adult in your prayers; we do.

We, as Friends, cherish each member of our communities and rise in support when a member is hurt. We have a healthy distrust for authority, we value openness, and we value self-governance for Young Friends. These virtues, shared by BYM, means that this confidential situation is inherently controversial. Our committee welcomes hearing from concerned Friends; in the future we hope to be able to meet and listen carefully to you. We include in our charge fostering the necessary healing that our Yearly Meeting community requires. At this time we do not anticipate our work ending anytime soon. We have another meeting scheduled for tomorrow. May Love and Light show us the Way Forward, and may we recognize the power of the Spirit to bring about healing transformation for all concerned.

**I2005-3 Ad Hoc Committee on Intervisitation** Convenor Marci Seitel described the process of the formation of this committee in answer to the concern for building positive relationships within FUM. She named its other members: Georgia Fuller, Rebecca Richards, Howard Fullerton, Walter Brown, and Ken Stockbridge. She provided a Mission Statement which the committee had created.

### **THE MISSION OF AN INTERVISITATION PROGRAM**

The intervisitation program of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting is being planned because of BYM's concern for Friends United Meeting's policies on sexual diversity and sexual conduct in

community. This concern has awakened us to the fragility of the relations among the yearly meetings and monthly meetings of FUM. We encourage, prepare, and support Friends to travel with the faith that we can listen, strengthen our relationships, offer care for each other, build our faith community, and lay a groundwork for discussions around sexual diversity and other issues as they arise. This plan assumes that intervisitation will be in all directions, and those interested will offer and receive hospitality.

We recognize that diversity raises issues and opportunities within all the FUM monthly meetings. Our purpose is to strengthen the Society of Friends in the hope of leading us toward a clear sense of what it means to know and live in the bebed community of Friends.

This mission statement can best be understood in the context of the full report of this ad hoc committee's initial meeting of March 5, 2005. We propose that this mission statement be reviewed in five years.

We expect that our committee will receive traveling minutes specifically for those visiting under our program and that we will consider and present them to interim or yearly meeting for endorsement.

It is important to first build better relationships with FUM, then to address our concern of what we see as their discriminatory personnel policy. Marci described what the committee envisioned as the process by which one might embark upon this intervisitation: if a Friend feels a leading to participate, they should approach their Monthly Meeting for a clearness committee, which might recommend a travel minute be endorsed by the monthly Meeting. This is then forwarded to the ad hoc committee for its discernment, and if approved, the committee will assist in preparation of the Friend for the travel, including bringing the minute to either IM or Annual Sessions for endorsement. The Friend would then begin travel, and would be expected to report back to the YM. Friends under such a leading are asked to consider a 3-year time frame of commitment. [See full report at the end of these Minutes.]

The ad hoc committee has received four requests for visitors:

- ? At BYM Annual Session, the Rich and Joan Liversidges' marriage enrichment workshop will be attended by a Kenyan couple.
- ? A contingent of pastored Friends will be attending annual session at the invitation of the Committee for Gender and Sexual Diversity Concerns
- ? Winston-Salem [NC] Monthly Meeting has requested visitors. Marci was touched by the reference in the request to help BYM had provided NC Friends over 150 years ago, and their memory of that help.
- ? Others will be invited to attend our annual sessions.

The cost for much of this is expected to be \$11,000. There is a desire to include a strong youth component, an African component, eventually a consultation on sexuality issues, informal contacts such as pen pals, visits on vacations, and others.

FUM staff have enthusiastically endorsed the concept of intervisitation, and suggested the consultation. A full report will be placed on the BYM website. After expressing thanks to the committee for their impressive work, Friends **APPROVED** the Mission statement

Marci read a traveling minute for intervisitation from Langley Hill Monthly Meeting for Walter Brown. Friends **APPROVED** endorsement of this minute.

**I2005-4** *Camp Property Manager's Report* David Hunter presented his report. Camp Property Manager's report to Interim Meeting of Baltimore Yearly Meeting April 2, 2005. This winter and spring most of my energy has gone into addressing the water quality issues in the Pond at Catoctin. The goal is to have the lagoon available for swimming for the summer camping season.

What has happened?

? The Bacteria counts in the stream that feeds the pond at Catoctin has presented an ongoing problem. Frederick County Health Department said that they would not accept an application for a baiting beach permit from us any more.

? Over the course of last summer and fall we researched and consulted and researched and consulted

? Late in the Fall we asked three environmental engineering firms to submit proposals

? At the end of January the BYM and camp community came together to model how wonderful it can be to be a part of a Quaker community. A group of Friendly environmental engineers, biologists, water treatment experts, and environmental lawyers came together to evaluate the proposals that had been submitted. We interviewed the firm that we like the best and eventually contracted with them to help us address the problem.

What we are doing?

? The current plan is to remove all the sediment from the water that flows out of the stream into the pond

? Treat it with ultra-violet light to kill the bacteria

? And to control turbidity in the pond

How we are financing it?

? We have just begun a fundraising campaign

? It is off to a fabulous start

? Meetings and Members of the Yearly Meeting should look forward to hearing from us.

**Work weekend dates** bring your friends, families, neighbors – all are welcome.

Catoctin Quaker Camp – April 15-17, 2005

- ? We will be working on the landscapes around camp
- ? Clearing trails
- ? Painting
- ? General cleanup and maintenance projects
- ? Taking down one of the old cabins to make room for a new one in the fall. Come and see how the Lagoon water quality improvement work is coming!

Opequon Quaker Camp – April 29-May 1, 2005

- ? Raising and improving the foundation of two cabins
- ? Painting
- ? Cleaning and maintenance tasks

Shiloh Quaker Camp – April 8-10, May 6-8, and May 13-15

- ? Replacing upper Walnuts' platform with a screened cabin
- ? Roofing the crafts shelter
- ? Maintenance jobs
- ? Cleaning tasks
- ? Trail clearing

In answer to a Friend's question, David described the typical weekend's activities. Friends are welcome to arrive Friday evenings, but most work is done on Saturday and Sunday. David encouraged Friends to visit the website for information, and to call the office to let them know of planned participation.

**12005-5** *Friends International Center in Ramallah.* Lamar Matthew, York Monthly Meeting, spoke of his experience of traveling from March 3-14 with John Salzborg of Bethesda Monthly Meeting to Ramallah as part of the International Ramallah Friends Committee. This committee had initially been formed to restore the Ramallah Meetinghouse, and to establish a Friends International Center in Ramallah. The Center has the mission of hospitality to all in the region working for peaceful solutions to current conflicts there.

The Committee met for consultation with eighteen groups working for peace, justice, women's rights, and other issues of Friendly concern. Lamar found that the atmosphere on Ramallah had changed dramatically from his last visit three years ago – there is now a sense of vibrancy, which sadly does not

extend to the Hebron area, which remains devastated and deserted. Lamar listed some of the groups with which the committee representatives met. All have good programs, but because communication is so difficult, there is much overlapping of efforts.

The next *Interchange* will have his report and it will also be posted on the BYM web site. The committee hopes for a Friend-In-Residence (there is already a potential applicant) who will care for the house and annex, but is not expected to act as a preacher. This unprogrammed meeting was described as a 'faithful remnant' of the Meeting established nearly 100 years ago – and whose meetinghouse was dedicated exactly 98 years before the rededication celebration on 3/6/2005. Many of the attenders of this celebration were First Day School graduates.

The Committee also met jointly with Ramallah Friends School and Monthly Meeting members to talk about cooperation. Costs escalate so quickly that it has been difficult to predict budgetary expenses. Friends can expect a request for funds to further the mission of the International Center's work.

**12005-6** *Ramallah Visitation Report given by Hope Braveheart.* Hope Braveheart, Andrei Israel, and Phoebe Stern had traveled with Frank Massey to Ramallah in mid-February to explore with Friends there the possibility working with Ramallah Friends to establish a Baltimore Yearly Meeting Workcamp there. Hope read her moving report of her travel and encounters with many Palestinians, and concluded with her desire that we all work together for friendship, healing, and bearing witness in this troubled land. Summer of 2006 is the hoped-for beginning of this project.

## **RAMALLAH REPORT**

As a convinced Quaker of 5 years and as Youth Secretary of Baltimore Yearly Meeting you might assume that I am always around Quakers. But that is not so. I realized this most abruptly when I shared with family members and friends that I was going to Israel and Palestine for two weeks to research the possibility of a youth Workcamp there. They did not want me to go because they feared for my safety. Despite their convincing arguments and pleadings, they realized that I was still going, and then began to question me about "my plan" – "my agenda". "What is your goal?" they asked. "What are your expectations?" "How will you know if your trip is successful?" "How will you measure your work?" they asked. How can I answer those questions or even have an agenda with people I had never met.

On February 18, 2005 Frank Massey, Andrei Israel and I met with Jean Zaru, a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Palestinian Quaker woman who is also the clerk of Ramallah Friends Meeting. In her home, Jean gave us an informal 7 hour cliff notes version of the Palestinian occupation, oppression, and severe lack of human rights in her homeland. She also shared with us her passion and vision to see life affirming youth activities. I was however most moved by her immeasurable endurance and incredible light.

We also met with Joyce Ajlouny, Director of The Friends High School  
Muna Khleifi, Kindergarten Director of the Friends Elementary School  
Kathy Bergen, AFSC National Coordinator of the Middle East Programs Peacebuilding Unit  
Maia Carter Hallward, in Jerusalem

Jeff Halper, Coordinator of the Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions  
Father Chacour of the Mar Elias High School, Elementary School and University.

And representatives from the Al Amari and Jalazone Refugee Camps  
Each encounter helped raise our awareness and compassion for Palestinians and Israeli Arabs who have been horribly underrepresented, overburdened and underserved.

Quickly I realized that those sharing their stories were the ones left - the ones who can still speak. The truth with which people spoke shook me at my roots. I listened with my entire being. And as the haunting stories poured forth I realized that they were speaking not only for themselves, but also for the countless Palestinians who can no longer speak. My prayer was to listen with my life. "God uncover the strength in me", I quietly prayed "the strength to hear this and listen for those who have not yet heard."

At Jean's kitchen table we shared the possibility of BYM Young Friends working with Ramallah Friends Meeting in the future. We shared that we did not come with a plan or agenda for Palestinians, but rather our hope that we could create a plan together. We also asked if she would like to work with BYM in this way. Whatever barriers that were between us seemed to fall as a deep and literal sigh of relief came from Jean. She expressed sincere gratitude for our open approach.

I recently read that "behind every political wound is a personal one and personal wounds need to be addressed at a personal level." It is impossible for me to describe the emotion and love in me that wanted to meet each person while in Palestine and Israel. As much as I want to try, it is impossible for me to share with you the vast possibilities that could come from such work. But it IS possible for us to clear the path so that this kind of friendship, healing, and witness can continue.

A week after I returned home I was sharing my experience with a friend over lunch. She said "What do you mean you have no agenda with Palestinians - Isn't Peace your agenda?" and I've found myself asking the same question in quiet, but difficult moments. Perhaps peace will come - perhaps it won't or maybe it will come generations from now. I've returned with more questions than answers. But I have clarity on this - for solutions, aid, even peace to be sustainable, it must be indigenous and involve youth. Otherwise, we're just the dysfunction big brother in America who thinks he knows what's best for everyone else, supplying resources that will be wasted because we didn't listen with our lives before we let them speak.

I was acutely aware of the moments when the people we met with leaned closer to us, over conference tables, kitchen tables and highly caffeinated Arabic coffee saying "can I tell you something off the record?" I felt the distance between us evaporate. And if I could tell you something off the record, it is this. The Youth of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting have the courage, strength, and hunger it takes to participate in a workcamp in Ramallah. May we remember that as Americans, we are often obese with privilege and spiritually emaciated. It is painful to know there is a contribution we can make, and yet not know how to make it. This trip can answer that calling in some of us. And I'm so thrilled that we can offer this possibility to our Youth.

I set aside my privilege for two weeks. It was difficult to be searched at checkpoints, yet simultaneously powerful to witness the lack of dignity Palestinians deal with constantly. And still, Palestinians often smiled at us, said welcome and helped us navigate through the unfamiliar territory of oppression. I have been deeply altered by this. I hold privilege differently now, not as something that is mine because I am lucky - but rather as an ideal that human rights, privilege, and dignity belong to everyone. May the use of my privilege in this way, *our privilege*, be a reminder to those who oppress others. May it inspire those who are oppressed. I pray that it be used thoroughly and well.

Phoebe Stern, Frank Massey, Andrei Israel and I look forward to working with Youth Programs Committee and to the possibility of being part of a youth WorkCamp with BYM Youth, Ramallah Friends School Youth and the Ramallah Friends Meeting in the summer of 2006.

Thank you

Andrei gave personal reflections from his trip. He spoke of learning: First, that we can't be spiritually whole if we don't open our hearts to the presence of oppression in the world, and second that our Quaker family is more powerful, more whole and vibrant the more we are able to connect with one another. He experienced a spiritual deepening as the result of this experience, and expects the workcamp experience will be transformative for the youth who participate. Those involved in this exploration welcome the prayers, ideas, and offers of help from Friends.

Phoebe Stern was unable to attend this IM, but will bring her report forward in June.

In an answer to a Friend's question, Andrei said he may speak of this concern when he attends the World Gathering of Young Friends as way opens.

**I2005-7** *Report of the Joint Meetings of Four Committees regarding BYM budget contributions to FUM:* Clerk Lauri Perman offered to send copies of the minutes of the three meetings [January 29, February 12, & March 12] already held to anyone interested, and said the committees planned to gather next in May. She gave a brief history of the previous meetings of these committees. About 20 have been at each meeting, and representatives from all four committees have been at each meeting. The committees are lifting up that waiting and not knowing is a sacred place. They have tentative unity to recommend that the \$17,400 budgeted for FY 2005 be designated entirely for Intervisitation but do not yet have unity on a recommendation for the remainder of FY 2004's allotment - \$8,700. She asked for Friends to hold the committees in the Light, and asked Monthly Meetings to consider the issue. Of the roughly 20 monthly meetings that have forwarded minutes on this subject to the Yearly meeting, about 1/3 do not want the Yearly Meeting to forward their apportionment shares and/or any monies to FUM, about 1/3 do not have unity within their monthly meetings, and about 1/3 have suggested other interesting proposals. The committees are "Standing still in the Light, waiting for Light with the sure knowledge that we will be guided." A Friend reported that other Yearly Meetings share our concerns.

**I2005-8** *Camping Administrative Secretary:* Jane Megginson addressed the "Interim Meeting for the first time in her new role, but had been on the BYM staff for three years. She has seen a great deal of change in those three years. Though the camps have received many applications, there are spots of openings at all three camps for ages 10-13. Jane is challenged, excited, and energized by what she is doing, and is inspired by working with the five camp directors: they love what they're doing, and know what they're doing.

Clerk Michael Cronin thanked Jane for the seamless transition she had managed after the extended service of Josh Riley.

**I2005-9** *Manual of Procedure Committee.* Howard Fullerton presented the document of proposals from the committee. He suggested they could be viewed in three parts: 1) substantive changes that if approved by IM would be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting, 2) minor changes not needed for wider consideration at annual sessions, and 3) grammar changes.

A. *Substantive Changes.*

1. *function of the Clerk of Interim Meeting:* In Sixth Month last year, [I2004-21] Search Committee asked Friends to consider allowing Supervisory Committee to name its own Clerk from its constituent members. The matter was laid over for seasoning. The Manual of Procedure Committee discussed this proposal recently. A change in how the Clerk of Supervisory

Committee would be chosen would require that the Manual be changed to have the General Secretary report to the Clerk of Interim Meeting, one of the Yearly Meeting's officer. Perhaps this change should be discussed next by Supervisory Committee.

Friends **APPROVED** forwarding this proposal to Supervisory Committee for its consideration

2. *Faith & Practice Revision Committee.* The description of the Faith and Practice Revision Committee does not reflect its current function; to entirely rewrite *F & P*. We recommend removing the description from the Manual of Procedure and making the current Committee an ad hoc committee. As an ad hoc committee, it needs a charge. We suggest it prepare one.

Friends **APPROVED** asking that Committee to write its charge.

3. *Ethel Reynolds Fund.* The Ethel Reynolds Fund evolved through decisions made by Interim Meeting to make grants from the unrestricted bequest of Ethel Reynolds, a member of Nottingham Meeting who died in 1976. When the bequest was made known, Friends wanted to use the bequest in a way that did not "fritter" the funds away; they also wanted to use the money in a manner consistent with Ethel Reynolds' interests. The money was placed in a fund (restricted by the Yearly Meeting) and a committee was established that included a member of Nottingham Monthly Meeting.

The goal to not fritter the funds has been wildly successful; the original bequest of \$62,000 was \$83,000 at the end of 2003. It has been so long since Ethel Reynolds died that few people in Nottingham Meeting remember her. She asked that we spend the bequest; the Yearly Meeting policy (*Faith and Practice*, Appendix I) requires that we spend the bequest; and the Internal Revenue Service expects that we spend the bequest.

The Manual of Procedure Committee recommends that the Yearly Meeting lay down the Ethel Reynolds Fund Committee and that the funds be allocated among three committees and our youth program, 30 percent each for the Camping Program Committee and youth program and 20 percent each for Religious Education and Advancement and Outreach Committees.

We recommend that Interim Meeting ask that these committees and program develop a plan in coordination with the Stewardship and Finance Committee to spend these funds over the next three to five years. Finally, we recommend that any funds unspent on December 31, 2010 be put in unrestricted reserves.

Friends were unable to unite with this proposal at this time. The four committees were asked to bring proposals to the Ethel Reynolds Committee for spending these monies over the next 3-5 years. Further action was **LAI D O V E R** until the next Interim Meeting.

4. *Camping Program Committee.* The Camping Program Committee consists of approximately 18 persons nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Yearly Meeting, plus the directors of the camping programs, and the Camp Administrative Secretary, ex officio.

The committee nurtures and supports the directors and staff in the implementation of the outdoor religious education programs and works to promote awareness of the programs within the wider Quaker community.

The Camping Program Committee oversees and coordinates the philosophy, policy, financing, and program emphasis all of Yearly Meeting endeavors in the field of outdoor religious education—seeking to provide for all the various ages and interests of our Yearly Meeting through a variety of camping styles. The Camp Administrative Secretary is responsible for implementing goals, direction, and policy as set by the Camping Program Committee.

The Camping Program Committee advises BYM staff on employment of camp directors and the Camp Administrative Secretary.

The committee nurtures and supports the directors and staff in the implementation of the outdoor religious education programs and works to promote awareness of the programs within the wider Quaker community.

The Clerk or another member of the Camping Program Committee serves as a member of the Camp Property Management Committee.

This change implies a change in the section of the Manual of Procedure about staff (p. 11) since the Camping Program Committee will no longer do the hiring.

Interim Meeting selects, employs, and defines the responsibilities of the General Secretary. The General Secretary, with the guidance of the Supervisory Committee, may employ staff as provided in the budget approved by the Yearly Meeting in session. The Directors...

Friends **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Camping Program Committee to revise the Manual of Procedure description of the committee tasks in the ways proposed, including the change in the description of the responsibilities of hiring staff.

## ***B. Minor Changes.***

- 1. Educational Funding Resources Committee:*** The Educational Funding Resources Committee is composed of at least six members nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Yearly Meeting, plus the Treasurer of the Yearly Meeting, ex officio. The purpose of this Committee is to help Friends secure secondary and post-secondary education by providing loans. Preference is given to requests for loans for undergraduate level study. Monies and income from both the Educational Fund and the Fair Hill portions of the Consolidated Endowment Fund are used to provide post-secondary loans. The Pre-College Fund provides loans for secondary education.

Each Monthly Meeting annually appoints one person as a corresponding member of this Committee. Such corresponding members normally serve for no more than six consecutive years. No member appointed by the Yearly Meeting to the Educational Funding Committee serves at the same time as a Monthly Meeting corresponding member. The corresponding member provides liaison between the Monthly Meeting and the Committee. The corresponding member will meet with each applicant from the Monthly Meeting, perhaps as a clearness committee, to consider together the implications and responsibilities of debt. Applicants need to understand that as they repay their loans, funds become available for future students. The corresponding member's advice to the Committee is an essential part of the application process and should include comment on the applicant's involvement in the Monthly Meeting and any information that would be helpful in making a decision.

The Committee meets twice a year. It will meet on a Saturday in May to evaluate applications and make loans, and on another mutually convenient day to discuss other business. The Educational Funding Resources Committee reports to the Yearly Meeting at least once a year on the state of the funds, loans made available, and any other business conducted.

Friends **APPROVED** the deletion of misleading and erroneous wording, so that the section indicates this committee approves loans only – not grants. There is no need to take this item to annual sessions of BYM.

2. *Remaining Minor changes: pg 1 penultimate line in the Introduction, delete “or have been entrusted”:*

This *Manual* deals solely with the organizational structure the Yearly Meeting establishes to handle matters which are entrusted to it by the constituent Monthly or Quarterly Meetings or by individual Friends.

*pg 12 line 10 “Committees...” “bring “take” and line 12 delete “support and”:*

Concerned individuals desiring to establish a new committee or ad hoc committee take their idea to Interim Meeting, either themselves directly, through their Monthly Meeting(s), or through an appropriate committee if one already exists. If after due consideration there is general approval, Interim Meeting recommends to the Yearly Meeting that such a committee or ad hoc committee be established. If the Yearly Meeting approves, the committee or ad hoc committee is established.

*Pg 12 final paragraph delete “should. . . exercising the”; insert “has a”*

The Yearly Meeting has a responsibility to reject unsuitable names as well as to approve those found acceptable.

*pg 13 line 5, still in “Committees...,” replace period after “years” with comma; insert “nor should Friends serve the Yearly Meeting on more than one standing committee at a time” [adapted from pg 28]*

Unless other terms are set, approximately one-third of the membership of each committee is appointed annually for terms of three years, such terms to begin at the end of the Yearly Meeting sessions at which the appointments are made. Generally, no one may serve on the same committee for more than six consecutive years, nor should Friends serve the Yearly Meeting on more than one standing committee at a time. An individual may again be appointed after a one-year break in service.

*pg 26 in “Ministry and Pastoral Care,” 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, line 1 delete “and assists”  
line 2 delete “recognizing and” delete penultimate sentence entirely*

The Committee supports Monthly Meetings in fostering community and addressing the needs of individuals within their Meetings. Committee members are expected to visit a variety of Monthly Meetings throughout the year. Monthly Meeting committees will be encouraged to invite these visits.

*pg 26 {cont’d} 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph line 1 delete “supports and”*

The Committee assists the Yearly Meeting with programs, retreats, workshops, activities at Annual Sessions, and other activities as needed. The Clerk of the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee serves as a member of the Program Committee.

The Manual of Procedure Committee has been informed that the Voluntary Service Subcommittee no longer meets. The paragraph describing it should be eliminated from the Peace and Social Concerns Committee on page 30. This change does not prevent Peace and Social Concerns from encouraging voluntary service.

*pg. 28 line 1 change number of members; this number was relevant when the two Yearly Meetings consolidated. It has been years since 21 people served on this committee.*

The Nominating Committee is composed of 12 persons, with at least one from each Quarterly Meeting.

*pg 36 (Unity with Nature Committee) change number of members and delete hortatory 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph altogether*

The Unity with Nature Committee consists of approximately 12 persons nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Yearly Meeting...

*pg 52 line 1 delete “spiritually-centered” [falsely implies something unique to QEW]*

Quaker Earthcare Witness is an organization of North American Quakers seeking ways to integrate their concern for environment with Friends’ long-standing testimonies for simplicity, peace and equality. It has a policy-making General Committee to which Yearly Meetings name representatives. A smaller Steering Committee, drawn from the General Committee, oversees ongoing activities.

Friends were able to **APPROVE** the minor changes ‘in toto’, with thanks to the Committee for its work.

**I2005-10** Clerk Michael Cronin read aloud a document written on behalf of Andrei Israel, Annalee Flower-Horne, and Rebecca Haines-Rosenberg as letters of introduction for the 2005 World Gathering of Young Friends in Lancaster, England.

There is a need to raise a substantial sum—about \$9000—to assist our delegates, and those of other nations in this travel. A Friend mentioned the “Twinning Initiative” of Gunpowder Friends and Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting with young Friends in Mexico, with the goal of sending two Mexican young adults to the Gathering. Flyers are available, and Friends are encouraged to join in this effort.

**I2005-11** *Report of the General Secretary.* Frank Massey expressed gratitude for the work of David Hunter, Jane Megginson, Hope Braveheart, Gene Klinger [Administrative Assistant], and Linda Ricci Brown [Bookkeeper]. It is a pleasure to work with these professionals. He has less to report as a result of their assumption of these roles. Frank did have several items to bring before Friends – mostly announcements:

- a. Monthly Meetings were encouraged to return their Apportionment Forms promptly – the Stewardship and Finance Committee needs these for its work; Frank reminded Friends of the Stewardship and Finance Committee’s ‘threat’ to place a surcharge on tardy reports.
- b. Meeting Information Forms are also needed.
- c. Frank expressed appreciation to Jim Rose for redoing the web site. Friends may send him information for posting, and feedback is welcomed. He may be reached at **webmanager@bym-rsf.org**
- d. Annual Sessions begin in less than four months. The next issue of the *Interchange* will be mailed in early May, and will be available on the web at that time. Friends may be able to register online for the first time.
- e. Stan and Karen Bauer of Iowa YM (FUM), and Clerks of the FUM 2002 Triennium Meeting will be present at Yearly Meeting, and will be leading Bible study sessions.
- f. A reminder of the BYM offer of two free nights of Annual Session for three new attenders from each Meeting.
- g. Advance reports from committees are requested soon – these will be available both in paper copies and on the website.
- h. Three new worship Groups have been identified:
  - a. Shepherdstown, West Virginia is now an Allowed Meeting under the care of Frederick Meeting
  - b. Berkley Springs, West Virginia is under the care of Hopewell Center Meeting,
  - c. Western Virginia, under the care of Maury River
- i. Interim Meeting in June will be at Richmond Friends Meeting 6/18

Clerk of Interim Meeting had words of praise for the staff members Frank had mentioned, and reminded Friends that these wonderful people had at least one thing in common – that they were recruited and trained by the General Secretary. Friends **UNITED** with the Clerk in offering thanks for the work well done of all concerned, and Frank in particular.

**I2005-12 Nominating Committee:** Ruth Flower

- a. first reported on the appointments to the **World Gathering of Young Friends** :  
Andrei Israel, Rebecca Haines-Rosenberg, and Annalee Flower-Horne.
- b. She next offered a correction to the minutes of Yearly Meeting: YM2004-75

**Assignments**

**Nominated**

Education Funding Resources Liza Bruce, Richmond

Friends Peace Teams J E McNeil, Washington

c. and brought forward for a second reading the following:

**Assignments Nominated**

Advancement and Outreach Deborah Haines, Alexandria

Education Funding Resources Liza Bruce, Richmond

Friends Peace Teams J E McNeil, Washington

Friends **APPROVED** these nominations.

d. Ruth brought forward for first reading nominations to fill Betsy Meyer's term on the following:

**Assignments Nominated**

Friends House & Friends Nursing Home Board Deborah Boggs, Sandy Spring

e. and brought forward for first reading other nominations from the committee for first reading:

**Assignments Nominated**

Friends World Committee for Consultation Sheila Bach, Langley Hill

Peace and Social Concerns Harold Saunders, Annapolis

FUM General Board Nominating Committee Walt Fry, West Branch

Friends **APPROVED sending this first reading forward**, pending Walt Fry's acceptance of his nomination.

**12005-13 Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee.** Miriam Green, clerk read the following minute, which had been approved in committee:

At the Meetings of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee, Michael Jeffrey of Richmond Friends Meeting presented a letter from the Monthly Meeting. Richmond Friends ask for embracement of Linda Heacock and her leading to use her gifts of Alternatives to Violence Education. Her hope is to share her knowledge and skills through Friends Peace Teams now active in parts of Africa. Friends at Richmond have prayerfully considered Linda's request, and are comfortable with her going forward. The Committee of Ministry and Pastoral Care recognizes the potential this ministry can bring to Baltimore Yearly Meeting by the gain in understanding of ways of reconciliation as practiced in Africa. We also sense that this ministry will further our concern for Intervisitation among the wider Quaker community.

We trust Richmond Friends' process of Clearness that has brought them this far.

We recommend Baltimore Yearly Meeting take this request into consideration using the protocol set forth by Yearly Meeting's Nurture and Recognition of Ministry Committee in the approved "Guidelines for Embracing the Ministry of Friends."

Friends **APPROVED** embracing Linda Heacock's ministry.

**I2005-14** *Ad hoc Committee on Gender and Sexual Diversity Concern*. Committee Clerk Aron Teel presented the revised proposed minute in opposition to the Federal Marriage Act:

The faith and practice of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has always been to seek that of God in everyone. From this, we have come to know that God's love extends to all of Creation. All children of God regardless of their perceived or identified sexual orientation are beloved of God who created them, and all are deserving of love and compassion in accordance with the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Within our Baltimore Yearly Meeting, we have not yet come to unity on the question of marriage for same-sex couples. However, it is surely not the Federal government's role to prefer one religious definition of marriage over another, much less to codify such a preference in the U.S. Constitution. To the contrary, the great contribution of our Constitution is to protect the rights of all faiths and all citizens. Throughout its history, the United States Constitution has been amended toward equal treatment for all. Even though the practice has always fallen short of the ideal, changes to the Constitution have always been made to favor including more citizens with equal treatment, rather than fewer. We see this trend to be in accordance with God's will for a just social order.

The proposed Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) reverses this long march of history toward equality and compassion for all under the constitution. By denying same-sex couples the right to marry, the FMA obliterates the family rights that many same-sex couples and their families now have under various state laws. Thus the FMA reverses the Constitutional tradition of protecting individual freedoms, and forces states to adopt discriminatory policies.

As God's children, as members of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, and as U.S. citizens, we do not support the proposed Constitutional amendment, known as the Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) which would curtail the right of our brothers and sisters who are gay and lesbian to make loving commitments to each other within the same fundamental social and legal net by which everyone else is now supported.

Friends united in **APPROVAL** of this Minute.

Aron also brought forward to Friends the concern for endorsing or uniting with the FGC Central Committee "Minute on Our Experience of and with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Friends" read at Interim Meeting in 10/2004 [I2004-34]. Friends were united with the spirit of the minute, but wished to use this as the inspiration for our own language, sharing our own experiences. The Committee will return with a proposal at a later Interim Meeting. Monthly Meetings might be invited to share their experiences with the Committee in its preparation of a proposed minute.

**I2005-15** *Peace and Social Concerns*. J.E. McNeill asked on behalf of Peace and Social Concerns if Baltimore Yearly Meeting could co-sponsor with the Committee on Conscience and War the National Lobbying Day 5/16/05. Lobbying in support of the following issues will be the focus: support of

conscientious objectors, opposition to the military draft, support of military COs, and support of the Peace Tax Fund.

Friends **APPROVED**, with a request to remember to use the full Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society Friends listing in all materials.

**I2005-16 Indian Affairs Committee.** Susan Lepper reported for the committee that during their morning meeting they had decided to undertake sending a letter to monthly meeting clerks as a fund-raising activity to fund the \$1500 transportation costs for four Torreon Star Lake campers and their adult chaperone to attend Camp Opequon again this year. Three of the campers will be returning, and one will be new to the program. At the end of the summer, the committee plans to evaluate benefits to BYM children and to the Torreon community. In response to a question, Susan said this plan had not been vetted by the Stewardship & Finance Committee, as is the normal procedure before such an activity. It became clear that Friends were united in the desire to support bringing these members of the Navajo nation to our camp as a continuation of work begun 3-4 years ago. Friends wondered whether the Ethel Reynolds Fund might be a source of this revenue.

Friends gathered **APPROVED** the dispersal of funds for this project.

**I2005-17 Closing.** Friends heard and approved the minutes as read. As the meeting closed, a Friend shared the news of the death of Pope John Paul II, and asked Friends to hold in the Light the world-wide catholic fellowship, and all who would mourn his loss. Moments of silent, worshipful stillness ensued.

Friends arose to gather again at Richmond Friends Meeting on Saturday, June 18.

Michael Cronin, *presiding*

Frances Preston Schutz, *recording*

## **AD HOC INTERVISITATION COMMITTEE OF INTERIM MEETING REPORT OF INITIAL MEETING--MARCH 5, 2005**

### **Introduction**

On March 5, our committee met for almost five hours and had the goal of taking the first steps in bringing into being an intervisitation program between Baltimore Yearly Meeting and other yearly and monthly meetings that are part of Friends United Meeting. We met after two of the three 2005 meetings had been held to discuss a recommendation on how BYM should allocate funds for Friends United Meeting.

Through our March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, we drafted a mission statement for an intervisitation program, discussed what an intervisitation program would look like, considered requests regarding intervisitation projects that we have already received, shared our collective knowledge of Friends' history and practices, and enjoyed getting to know one another better.

### **The mission of an intervisitation program**

The intervisitation program of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting is being planned because of BYM's concern for Friends United Meeting's policies on sexual diversity and sexual conduct in community. This concern has awakened us to the fragility of the relations among the yearly meetings and monthly meetings of FUM. We encourage, prepare, and support Friends to travel

with the faith that we can listen, strengthen our relationships, offer care for each other, build our faith community, and lay a groundwork for discussions around sexual diversity and other issues as they arise. This plan assumes that intervisitation will be in all directions, and those interested will offer and receive hospitality.

We recognize that diversity raises issues and opportunities within all the FUM monthly meetings. Our purpose is to strengthen the Religious Society of Friends in the hope of leading us toward a clear sense of what it means to know and live in the beloved community of Friends.

This mission statement can best be understood in the context of the full report of this ad hoc committee's initial meeting of March 5, 2005. We propose that this mission statement be reviewed in five years.

We expect that our committee will receive traveling minutes specifically for those visiting under our program and that we will consider and present them to interim or yearly meeting for endorsement.

## **Background**

The idea of an intervisitation program first arose in the summer of 2004 when BYM Friends began to realize how deep were their concerns were about FUM's employment policy on sexuality. While the idea of visiting was discussed at Annual Sessions, a committee to come up with a formal plan did not come into being until the Fall Interim Meeting in October 2004. The Ad Hoc Committee on Intervisitation was formed with representatives from the four committees which hold the concern over BYM's financial commitment to FUM, which are Ministry and Oversight, the ad hoc Committee for Gender and Sexual Diversity Concerns, Finance, and Advancement and Outreach.

## **Visiting – what it is**

Because of the diversity of needs, concerns, and interests of the meetings, yearly meetings, and individuals involved, we thought it would be best to keep an open view of what visiting means. Each visit will likely be unique. We discourage the idea of visiting in the role of ministers who travel to impart a truth, but rather to build relationships so that the sharing of truth is done with respect and in an atmosphere of trust. On the other hand, friends traveling may have the intent of only listening, but feel led to share their ministry.

There are meetings among FUM friends who have suffered because of decisions about their members who have come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. With those meetings our purpose would likely be more pastoral. Other meetings may want simply to know more Friends, and so our purpose is more of traveling to build community. Visitors may be asked to share their faith and experience, and at times this will likely become more like the visit of a minister. We ask traveling Friends to be open to all these possibilities. We trust that visiting Friends will be open to the leadings of the Spirit as they travel.

The purpose of traveling is to share our life experiences and faith experiences. Those who travel should expect that they will in ways be changed. In addition, traveling Friends may have to be present to people who really believe that being against GLBT Friends is right, and promotes

Gospel Order. We hope that this program will change people's hearts and their lives. We may find that we don't agree on some important things, but that we can live together.

### **Who visits and how prospective visitors are prepared**

A visitor can be any Friend in Baltimore Yearly Meeting who feels they want to travel. Friends can volunteer, or can be recognized and encouraged. It is our hope that Friends of a wide age range will want to travel. We recommend that Friends consider serving as visitors over a three-year period so that they gain experience with this process.

A person who is interested in traveling should request a clearness committee with their own meeting first. If traveling seems right, then the friend would receive a traveling minute from their monthly meeting. The next step would be to meet with members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Intervisitation of Interim Meeting and be endorsed by this group.

All those traveling would receive an orientation from the Ad Hoc Intervisitation Committee to help them learn about FUM meetings and some of their practices, and learn about practices for listening in potentially divisive situations.

All of these steps are necessary for anyone who wishes to travel as a visitor. After traveling, each visitor would be asked to report back to the Intervisitation Committee to let us know how the visit went, the major concerns of the visited meeting, and what kinds of things were accomplished.

We recommend that people travel in pairs or in larger numbers. It would be best if one of the travelers could be a GLBT Friend, or one who has first hand experience with GLBT Friends and can speak from this experience and another be self-identified as a straight person.

To date, we have focused more on preparing members of BYM to be visitors, but we also hope to receive visitors from other yearly meetings. Shaping this part of the program will be on the agenda for future meetings.

### **Role of Ad Hoc Intervisitation Committee**

We recommend that our committee be kept going for five years, and then have next steps for the program be considered. We would help Friends discern their leadings and help them prepare for visiting. We would receive requests for visiting and seek to fill them. We would support those who visit over the period of time that they serve as visitors, and keep visitors informed of each other's experiences. We would also regularly report experiences of visiting back to Interim Meeting.

As we proceed, we will be learning more about FUM, the diversity of Friends generally, historical facts, and other information that we would like to share with BYM and other FUM Friends.

### **Requests for support of programs in 2005**

By the time we met in March, our committee had already received three requests regarding intervisitation. Two were for funds to cover programs that are being planned, and one was our

first request to have BYM Friends visit a monthly meeting. Joan and Rich Liversidge are planning a marriage enrichment program with a Kenyan couple, and travel and other expenses need to be met. Aron Teel and the Ad Hoc Committee on GLBT Concerns is sponsoring a workshop at Annual Sessions that will include travel expenses. And finally, Winston-Salem Friends Meeting in North Carolina has invited Friends to visit them. All three requests seem important to support.

### **Big Dreams**

It is not known where this program will take us. It might be good to plan a conference for all Friends on the topic of sexuality, or on the topic of the diversity and core of our faith and practice. We may find many ways to gather Friends, share our faith experiences, and strengthen the Religious Society of Friends.

Everyone is invited to participate in this program in some way. Some Friends may want to start a correspondence with another FUM Friend, visiting a meeting can be on the agenda of a vacation, there are workshops and other gatherings to attend that include a diversity of Friends. We encourage all members of BYM to consider how they can learn more about other FUM Friends and help deepen the relationships among Friends everywhere.