

2015

MINUTES

of the

North Carolina

Yearly Meeting

of the

Religious Society

Of Friends

(Conservative)

The 318th Session

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

1. Opening of the Annual Session

The 318th session of North Carolina Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Conservative) convened at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in Wilmington, North Carolina, from the sixteenth of Seventh Month to the nineteenth of the same, 2015.

Tom Porter, Associate Dean of the Cameron School of Business, welcomed the yearly meeting to the campus and specifically to the Business School as our sessions are held in their building. He described some of the recent changes at UNC-W with new administrative leadership and student opportunities.

The sessions opened with the clerk, Nancy Craft, reading from I Peter 3:8 -11:

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lip that they speak no guile:

Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

(King James version)

2. Visitors

Visiting Friends introduced themselves and were welcomed:

Mark Wutka, Nashville Monthly Meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association

Sean Langberg, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Washington, DC

Toni Etheridge, American Friends Services Committee, Greensboro (NC) Office

3. Minutes of the Interim Body

The Minutes of the Interim Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) of Fourth Month 26, 2015 were read. Friends approved that the Interim Body minutes for both Fourth and Tenth Months be included in annual session minutes.

**Minutes of the Interim Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Tenth Month 25, 2014**

The Interim Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) convened at the Durham Friends meetinghouse in Durham, North Carolina on the 25th of Tenth Month, 2014. Following worship and lunch, the meeting opened with gathered worship, out of which the clerk read Malachi 3:1-3:

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.”

The clerk welcomed visitors, Ashley Wilcox, Freedom Friends Church, Salem, OR; Mark Wutka, Nashville Friends Meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting & Association; Mary Linda McKinney, Nashville Friends Meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting & Association; and Bonnie Arnold, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of New Bern, NC.

The clerk noted that the minutes of Fourth Month Representative Body were read during the yearly meeting sessions in Seventh Month and there was no purpose seen in reading them at this meeting. The body approved.

Financial Review Committee report was read by Susan Lees. It appears below: Report approved.

The members of the Financial Review Committee have reviewed the financial records of the yearly meeting for the 2013-2014 fiscal year, ending on the Sixth Month 30, 2014. We have found them to be in good order with needed documentation and detail. We thank the treasurer, Lloyd Lee Wilson, for his care in the yearly meeting's finances and record keeping, and for his availability in answering our questions.

The Hospitality and Registration Report of the 2014 Annual Sessions was presented by Ray Treadway and appears below. Report approved.

Hospitality and Registration Report of the 2014 Annual Sessions of North Carolina Yearly Meeting
Conservative

The yearly meeting held its annual sessions on the campus of Guilford College from Seventh Month 9 through 13, 2014. For these five days and four nights, 105 participants were registered, including 85 adults (including 65 members, five frequent attenders, and 15 visitors) and 20 children. The rooms in Mary Hobbs Hall were filled by the weekend and ten rooms in South Apartments were required to accommodate those staying on campus. There were 23 commuters who attended for one or more days.

Our income included payments of \$8,129.18 for staying in the dormitory, meals, and day fees and \$2,791.25 in registration fees, in addition to a generous \$1,446.94 in contributions. We spent \$266 for the

liability insurance; \$998.57 on program costs; \$429.62 on the activities for the youth program; \$9,089.10 to Guilford College for the use of the dorm, meals, and day fees; and \$1,270.67 to Guilford College for use of the meeting spaces and golf cart. The latter amount was the result of a discount \$606.62. We were able to provide \$856.78 in assistance to our children and youth, so that their costs were covered. While the registration fees did not cover the facility and program costs, when the excess in contributions and the discount are factored into the calculations, the net income to the yearly meeting exceeded the expenses by \$339.41.

Deborah Shaw and Judy Reece worked with Guilford College before and during the sessions to ensure smooth operations. Claire Koster provided essential help at the registration desk.

A detailed spreadsheet is below. On behalf of the Hospitality Committee,
Ray Treadway, Registrar.

NCYM-C 2014 Registration Accounts

Obligations and Contributions		Modifications	
Dorm/meals/day fee	\$9,126.61	Assistance	\$997.43
YM Registration	\$3,170.00	YM Adjustment	\$378.75
Contributions	\$1,446.94		
Total	\$13,743.55	Total	\$1,376.18

Total Deposits	\$12,367.37		
YM Refunds	\$0.00		
Income	\$12,367.37	Oblig-Adj	\$12,367.37
In Kind Donations	\$26.00		
Total Income	\$12,393.37		

Expenses		<u>Summary Attendance</u>	
Program Costs	\$998.57	YM Adults	65
Youth Program	\$429.62	Regular Visitor	5
Guilford Facilities*	\$1,270.67	Visitors	15
Liability Insurance	\$266.00	Children	20
Total Expenses	\$12,053.96	Total	105

Assistance for adults	\$140.65
Assistance for youth	\$856.78
Total Youth Expenses	\$1,286.40

Contributions/Assistance	\$449.51
YM registration-YM adj-Prog. Expenses	-\$173.61
Dorm and Day fees: Income-Costs	-\$959.92
Dorm and Day fees: Inc-Costs+Assist	\$37.51

Net income – Net Expenses

\$339.41

**Includes discount for \$606.62 from Guilford; Sales tax of \$740.23 paid and reclaimed*

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Lloyd Lee Wilson. He reminded Friends that we need to be vigilant about making additional contributions for youth attendance at yearly meeting sessions in order to continue our practice of allowing youth to attend without paying a fee. The report was approved and appears below.

NCYM-C Treasurer's Report
First Quarter, 2014-2015

Income during the first quarter this year included \$4,775.00 from monthly meetings. Income from the 2014 yearly meeting sessions is shown on this report, amounting to \$13,199.99. The checking account is reconciled through the 10/14/14 statement.

Expenses recorded during the first quarter included \$13,400.81 of yearly meeting program and site expenses. Guilford College charges the yearly meeting sales tax, which amounted to \$740.23. I anticipate receiving a refund for that amount after the end of this calendar year.

Donations to the scholarship fund for youth attendance received at the sessions, in combination with donations from monthly meetings earlier, exceeded the cost of providing those scholarships this year: the scholarship fund now has a balance of \$1,865.00.

Donations this quarter included the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund and Quaker House of Fayetteville.

Administrative expenses this quarter included the annual rental of our post office box in Greensboro. No requests were received this quarter for internships, scholarships, or general travel.

Fund Balances as of 9/30/14 are as shown on the Balance Sheet.

LLW, 9/30/14

NCYM-C Income and Expenses, 7/1 – 9/30/2014

Ordinary Income/Expenses			
Income			
Book Store Revenue			224.45
Individual Contributions			200.00
MM Contributions			4,775.00

Other Revenue			
Interest Earned		1.19	
Total Other Revenue			1.19
YMTg Sessions Income			
YMTg Other Contributions		606.62	
YMTg Registration Fees		2,791.25	
YMTg Room&Board Income		8,129.18	
YMTg Scholarship Contrib.		1,672.94	
Total YMTg Sessions Income			13,199.99
Total Income			18,400.63
Gross Profit			18,400.63
Expenses			
Book Store Expenses			224.45
Donations and Grants			
Donations to Organizations		1,350.00	
Total Donations and Grants			1,350.00
Operations			
Postage, PO Box		128.00	
Total Operations			128.00
Printing and Copying			
Directory Publication		246.56	
Total Printing			246.56
YM Sessions Expense			
Sales Tax		740.23	
YM Program Expense			
Insurance – Liability	266.00		
Youth Program Expense	429.62		
YM Program Exp. – Other	998.57		
Total YM Program Expense		1,694.19	
YM Room and Board		8,411.39	
YM Site Use Fee		2,555.00	
Total YM Session Expense			13,400.81
Total Expense			15,349.82
Net Ordinary Income			13,050.81
Net Income			3,050.81

NCYM-C Balance Sheet (as of 9/30/2014)

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Wells Fargo Checking	41,069.81
Total Checking/Savings	41,069.81
Other Current Assets	
Friends Fiduciary Fund	5,047.38
Total Other Current Assets	5,057.38
Total Current Assets	46,117.19
Other Assets	
Other Assets	
Pre-paid Website Expense	16.99
Total Other Assets	16.99
Total Other Assets	16.99
TOTAL ASSETS	46,134.18
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Prepaid MMTg Contributions	317.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	317.00
Total Current Liabilities	317.00
Total Liabilities	317.00
Equity	
Perm. Restricted Net Assets	
FWCC Jamaica Fund	571.20
Journal Publication Fund	2,300.20
Trust Fund for Travel in Truth	5,047.38
Total Perm. Restricted Net Assets	7,918.78
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	
Discipline Fund	2281.99
General Travel Fund	3,684.10
Special Projects Fund	5,563.74
YMTg Sessions Reserve	1,293.52
YMTg Sessions Scholarship Fund	1,865.00
Total Temp Restricted Net Assets	14,687.36
Unrestricted Net Assets	20,160.23

Net Income	3,050.81
Total Equity	45,817.18
TOTAL LIABILITY & EQUITY	46,134.18

Report of the Committee for 2014 Yearly Meeting Minutes was prepared by Gwen Gosney Erickson and presented by Nancy Craft. The report included a request for guidance regarding how many minute books and directories are actually needed. Meetings are asked to inventory what they need and have left over so further information will be available at our Fourth Month meeting. This report was approved.

The Nominating Committee recommended changes read by Toby Berla were approved.

Dave Hensler - Hospitality Committee

Richard Miller - YM Planning Committee

Replace Sid Kitchens with Lynn Newsom - for the web page committee. No convener has been named.

Bob Cooper - remove from web page committee

Charles Newlin - add to Travel Support Committee

Discernment Committee for Regional Youth Ministries Program

Andrew Wright - (Durham Monthly Meeting)

Goldie Walton - (Wilmington Monthly Meeting)

Jenna (Genevieve) Wilgen - (Durham Monthly Meeting)

Ian Grace - (Friendship Monthly meeting)

Rebecca Ruhlen - in an advisory capacity only (Davidson Monthly Meeting)

Discernment Committee for Regional Youth Ministries Programs – description

This discernment committee will be composed of representatives from NCYM-C and Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF). Representatives will commit to a one-year process of listening for the guidance of the Spirit in considering the possibility for a shared NCYM-C and PFF Youth Ministries Committee. Such a standing committee would work on an ongoing basis to bring forth consistent shared programs for Young Friends in the region.

AFSC Corporation: Ruth Anne Childres reminds Friends that we still need additional members to represent us to AFSC Corporation.

Robert Gosney, convener of the newly formed Travel Support Committee, asked Friends for clarification regarding the duties of that committee. The following minute was approved as a working description for this committee.

The Travel Support Committee is to make known generally that support is available for those representing the yearly meeting to organizations outside the yearly meeting. They would also work proactively with Nominating Committee so they can engage with prospective and current representatives to organizations outside the yearly meeting and help discern what support, spiritual and financial, may be needed for them to carry out the duties requested of them. Those concerns would then be addressed prior to a name being placed in nomination so that a person would be clear whether he or she is in a position to accept the opportunity to serve. Until we begin doing this in earnest we do not know whether this process will uncover a need to increase the travel funds available in the budget. The Travel Committee does have the authority to release funds up to the total Travel Fund budget.

Nancy Craft presented requests made by Gwen Gosney Erickson on behalf of the Friends Historical Collection of Guilford College. Friends approved digitizing the NCYM-C minute books pre-2011 provided that the monthly meeting directories found at the conclusion of the minute books be removed. The Journals are already in digital form on the yearly meeting website and there is no objection to them appearing in the archives.

Friends are reminded that our yearly meeting sessions are a week later than usual in 2015: Seventh Month 15-19, 2015 in Wilmington, NC. Thanks were expressed to Greenville for offering to host our spring Interim Body meeting.

Thanks were expressed to Marguerite Dingman for stepping in as recording clerk and to Durham Monthly Meeting for their hospitality today.

The meeting closed after a brief period of waiting worship purposing to meet again Fourth Month 25, 2015 in Greenville, NC if consistent with divine will.

Nancy Craft, Clerk and Marguerite Dingman, Assistant Clerk (Recording Clerk for the day)

Minutes of the Interim Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Fourth Month 25, 2015

The Interim Body of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) convened in Greenville, North Carolina on the 25th of Fourth Month, 2015. Following worship and lunch, the meeting opened with gathering worship, out of which the clerk read 2 Corinthians 5:20-21.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The clerk welcomed everyone and reminded Friends of several who are not with us. It was noted that no visitors were in attendance. Greenville Friends were thanked for their hospitality.

Minutes of the Interim Body meeting in Tenth Month 25, 2014 were read.

Anne Olsen reported for Nominating Committee that Susan Lees and Robert Cooper from Fayetteville Monthly Meeting have agreed to continue on the Financial Review Committee, which normally has two to three members.

Richard Miller presented the Travel Support Committee's report.

The Travel Support Committee (Bob Cooper, Robert Gosney, Richard Miller and Charles Newlin) began its work following the meeting of Interim Body in Tenth Month 2014. The members of the committee were confirmed at that meeting with the addition of Charles Newlin. The Interim Body also clarified the work of the committee with the following minute:

The Travel Support Committee is to make known generally that support is available for those representing the yearly meeting to organizations outside the yearly meeting. They would also work proactively with Nominating Committee so they can engage with prospective and current representatives to organizations outside the yearly meeting and help discern what support, spiritual and financial, may be needed for them to carry out the duties requested of them. Those concerns would then be addressed prior to a name being placed in nomination so that a person would be clear whether they are in a position to accept the opportunity to serve. Until we begin doing this in earnest we do not know whether this process will uncover a need to increase the travel funds available in the budget. The Travel Committee does have the authority to release funds up to the total Travel Fund budget.

The committee surveyed the current members of yearly meeting, who have been appointed to represent the yearly meeting with wider Friends organizations, inquiring as to any financial needs they expected for the remainder of the year related to their representation on behalf of the yearly meeting. There was no response from the majority of representatives. Of those responding, only one indicated an anticipated need for travel assistance. This need was documented and a request was made to the yearly meeting Treasurer to disburse funds for this purpose. In this one case, the process appeared to work well as an advancement of the funds were made so the representative could confirm travel plans without having to obligate personal funds and wait for a yearly meeting reimbursement.

Because of the lack of response from all of the representatives it is difficult to determine what the overall needs may be or to anticipate what level of budgeting might be prudent to anticipate the support needed for representatives. Communications will need to be improved to form some sense of what might be needed.

The Travel Support Committee has not explored ways to engage with prospective representatives to foster participation by removing financial or discernment obstacles, which may be hindering some Friends from considering this work.

The committee seems to be working as intended but still seeking way forward.

Treasurer Lloyd Lee Wilson provided a report for the third quarter.

Income

All monthly meetings except Davidson, Durham, and Virginia Beach have made their scheduled contributions to the yearly meeting for this fiscal year. Greenville Friends contributed an additional \$1,000 to the yearly meeting youth scholarship fund, in addition to their scheduled contribution to the general budget. Other income is also on track for this point in the year.

Expense

All budgeted donations to organizations for this year have been made, and administrative expenses are on track for the year. There has been one request for financial support for travel on behalf of the yearly meeting to an Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) event, in the amount of \$800.00. I have advanced the full \$800.00, as recommended by the Travel Support Committee. We have received a full refund of sales tax paid in connection with the 2014 yearly meeting sessions, as reflected on the Income and Expense report.

Changes in Fund Balances Year to Date

- *The FWCC Jamaica Fund has had no activity; the balance is unchanged at \$571.20. This money is held in trust for Jamaican Friends.*
- *The Journal Publication Fund balance stands unchanged at \$2,300.20.*
- *The Trust Fund for Travel in Truth's Service is invested with Friends Fiduciary. Not counting market value fluctuations, the cost basis balance of this fund is \$5,117.94.*
- *The General Travel Fund balance is \$3,684.10. This fund assists Friends who have travel expenses associated with representing NCYM-C on committees and organizations outside the yearly meeting, plus the travel costs of clerks within the yearly meeting.*
- *The Discipline Fund balance is now \$2,311.00. The Discipline Fund is earmarked for paying the expense of reprinting the yearly meeting Discipline.*
- *The Special Projects Fund has been charged \$600.00 for the contribution to the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund approved at the 2014 yearly meeting sessions. The Special Projects Fund is disbursed at the discretion of the yearly meeting in session. The current balance is now \$5,563.74.*
- *The Yearly Meeting Sessions Reserve is unchanged at \$1,293.52. This reserve fund is the cumulative net surplus of holding yearly meeting sessions over the years.*
- *The Yearly Meeting Scholarship Fund has been replenished by contributions by individuals and monthly meetings, and has a current balance of \$2,865.00. This fund provides financial assistance to pay for children attending yearly meeting sessions, and to other Friends needing help to afford coming to yearly meeting sessions.*

— *The Unrestricted Net Assets of the yearly meeting now stand at \$19,089.65, down by \$2,773.46 since this time last year.*

The treasurer requested clarification on how to apply requests for travel support. The yearly meeting has two travel expense line items: one for general travel by yearly meeting representatives and another for Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) travel to international gatherings. The latter has been used for travel to FWCC world gatherings but not for representatives' travel to other FWCC events, such as the historically annual Section of the Americas meeting. The Travel Support Committee is authorized to approve funds to be spent from both of these funds and to use the FWCC travel fund for FWCC travel requests other than international triennials.

To resolve difficulties with updating authorized signers on the yearly meetings checking account with Wells Fargo and institutional banking account changes, the treasurer requests opening a new checking account and transferring funds to close our current account. The yearly meeting treasurer and clerk shall be the authorized signers for the new account. This request was approved.

Lloyd Lee Wilson reported for the Discipline Revision Committee.

The committee notes with regret the resignation of Robert Gosney for personal reasons. He was a valued contributor to our work, and he will be missed. The remaining members of the committee (Andrew Wright, Deborah Shaw, Patty Levering and Lloyd Lee Wilson) are prepared to press forward on the work of the revision.

The committee has continued to meet approximately monthly, and to have email correspondence for particular issues. We begin in silent waiting worship and carry that worshipfulness into our work, including discerning the agenda for that day.

The revision that led to our current Discipline, as spelled out in its Introduction, says that it represents the efforts of members of the yearly meeting "to re-examine their doctrines and procedures and set them down in a way that is both faithful to their religious heritage and applicable in the contemporary world." This is the practice to which we also have been led. We have been updating Organization and Procedures to express what is current practice in the yearly meeting, leaving room for possible changes (such as the re-introduction of Quarterly Meetings), and presenting that material in language that reflects and speaks to the contemporary world while faithfully holding to our religious heritage. We have felt led beyond simple revision of the existing text in the 1983 Discipline and toward a more substantive re-visioning of the text in order to convey the living spiritual tradition that we have known through experience in our yearly meeting.

Most monthly meetings reviewed carefully the proposed draft for Section 2. We received 31 pages of comments, which committee members have poured over individually and collectively at length. Some were specific recommended word changes, some more general concerns. We have listened deeply to the specifics and the spirit of those comments and have made revisions. (Remember that Kent Wicker has agreed and been approved to make consistent grammatical,

punctuation, and capitalization changes in the completed Discipline.) A submission draft of Section 2 is being distributed, as always to the monthly meetings through their designated liaison.

As soon as we have received monthly meeting comments on Section 3, which are to be received by the time of this interim body meeting, we will begin that same process on that section.

At yearly meeting the agenda from our committee will include (1) a second reading of Section 1. You will find that document on the yearly meeting webpage. We also plan to make available an audio recording of that section in case you would prefer to hear what is being said, assuming way opens. (2) We plan to bring for approval the word "guide" to replace the word "train" to which the yearly meeting objected in Section 1. We will also (3) bring Section 2 for a first reading, and we hope (4) Section 3 as well.

Our expectation is that the fourth section of material we will work with in the fall will include the Introduction to the Discipline and/or the Historical Sketch.

The committee is willing to continue with four members (rather than the original five) and asked to let the yearly meeting know in advance if circumstances change and additional members are needed, either to return to five members or to replace other resignations. Appreciation was expressed for the committee's care and continuing work on this challenging task.

Bruce Arnold provided a summary of where the Program Committee is in planning for our 2015 sessions. The theme of "Living Into Our Gifts" has been selected and Kathryn Damiano is confirmed as the invited speaker on the theme for the Thursday and Friday evening programs. Elizabeth Wintermute and Toby Berla will be leading an intergenerational event for the Saturday evening program. Bruce Arnold is providing Bible study each morning and one of those mornings will be planned in coordination with the youth program schedule as an intergenerational Bible study. The schedule has been tentatively approved and will be posted to the yearly meetings web site soon. The committee asks for those with requests for a special interest group to contact the program committee. Only one special interest group has been confirmed at this time so time and space is available for those willing to coordinate these sessions. Susan Wilson will be asked if she wishes to convene an afternoon session on contemplative practice again this year.

Cheryl Fetterman shared for the Hospitality Committee that the yearly meeting registration form is not yet available as it is awaiting some final details but development is well underway. There is a new \$1 per day fee for cars. The full-time residential fee will be \$225 (for room and board but not including registration and parking fees). She is following up on dormitory set-up and has confirmed meeting spaces. The registrar requests that families using multiple surnames select a single family name for registration form filing purposes to ease room assignments and bookkeeping. Hiring of additional student support to handle set up and break down is approved as an expense to incorporate into the registration fee. Final fee will be set once program expenses and the golf cart charge are confirmed.

Andrew Wright presented a report of the Shared Youth Ministries Program Discernment Committee.

We have been slow to getting started. Personal circumstances have prohibited this group from beginning to meet. We do intend to get more active over the next few months and to report

back to both PFF and NCYM-C in the fall. Although the discernment committee has yet to meet, we are continuing to plan and hold events that draw Quaker youth from around the region. These include three middle school retreats in Durham each of the last two years, service projects in the Triangle, and youth programming at NCYM-C and PFF/PFYM annual sessions.

Toby Berla reported on the discernment process Durham Monthly Meeting has underway to consider their meeting's relationship with Piedmont Friends Fellowship and Yearly Meeting since PFF has reorganized to include yearly meeting status. This process has just begun. None of the conversation has included any intention to discontinue affiliation with NCYM-C but whether or not to have dual affiliation or some other relationship with Piedmont Friends.

Sid Kitchens presented travel letters Friendship Monthly Meeting has drafted for Lloyd Lee Wilson's travel in the ministry to Broadmead Meeting (Tiffin, Ohio), Community Friends Meeting (Cincinnati, Ohio), and Pacific Yearly Meeting sessions in California. Friends approved the yearly meeting clerk endorsing these three letters.

Friends World Committee for Consultation will be having their international plenary meeting in Peru in First Month, 2016. Nominating Committee is asked to coordinate with the yearly meeting's FWCC representatives to select the yearly meeting's two representatives.

A report by Bill Geary on behalf of the Southern State Worship Group from a gathering held in Woodland, NC, on 21st of Third Month about the Southern State Worship Group was read.

The meeting of a week ago Saturday proved to be a blessing to all who attended. Letters from eight inmates were shared. A group letter was also shared. We talked a bit about each man and held them all "in the Light." We shared out of the silence so it was as close as we could make it to actually having the men with us in meeting for worship. We had a circle of seven with Daisy (Jeff's Pit Bull) in the middle. Several NCYM-C meetings were represented. Jacob Geary (Bill's son) joined him for the trip and participated in the gathering. We did do some planning. I said I would send out a report and this e-mail is that report. Nancy Craft will be e-mailing out the letters to each NCYM-C meeting. Kristin Olson-Kennedy and Bob Cooper will be representing our group at yearly meeting.

Lloyd Lee Wilson shared an update on a former member of Southern State Worship Group who continues to have a deep interest in Quakerism and is now held at a prison in North Carolina.

Members were requested to ask their meetings to consider possible locations for the Interim Body meeting in Tenth Month. It was approved to plan on the 2016 yearly meeting session to meet at Guilford College.

Following a brief period of waiting worship, the meeting closed.

Nancy Craft, Clerk & Gwen Gosney Erickson, Recording Clerk

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

The following Friends volunteered to prepare epistles, letters, and the Summary of Exercises: Letter to Absent Friends – Deborah Shaw; Summary of Exercises – David Perry; Epistle to Friends Everywhere

– Barbara Gosney. Additional Friends are asked to volunteer to assist in these efforts, especially with the Summary of Exercises and Epistle to All Friends Everywhere, as those require multiple participants, and to take responsibility for drafting our epistles to Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and Ohio Yearly Meeting.

5. Epistles from Ohio Yearly Meeting and Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

Epistles from Ohio Yearly Meeting and Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) were read.

Dear Brothers and Sisters of North Carolina Yearly Meeting,

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth increasingly beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame and is seated at the right hand throne of God. Hebrews 12: 1,2

We send you loving greetings in the name of our loving Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose name Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends have gathered in Eighth Month 5th-10th for our yearly meeting in Barnesville, Ohio. We were blessed by the presence of our dear Friend Nancy Craft from North Carolina Yearly Meeting among us, and give thanks to God for you. Recognizing our historical ties, we pray that you, as we, would continue in faithfulness to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is in Him, our Hope of Glory, that we find meaning and purpose for our lives both individually and corporately as Friends.

Our gathering together in service to our dear Lord has been filled with times of Christ-centered, expectant, waiting worship; prayer; Bible reading; attention to the business of the yearly meeting and sweet fellowship with one another. Under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit Friends were prompted to consider,

- How do we, as a body, equip ourselves to meet the needs of current and future generations?
- How can we protect our children from harm (particularly predators) who might seek to gain access to our children?
- Do we have a loving ministry to our young adults that provides them with opportunities to question and mature as they grow in faith in our Lord?
- How faithfully are we expressing our love to our children daily?
- How do we both protect those around us who are vulnerable and in addition always keep our eyes open to God's redemptive healing love and forgiveness?

Darkness and enmity against God surround us. Nevertheless dear Friends in the face of such evil we are called to be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. (Ephesians 6:10)

One of our missions as a yearly meeting is to provide through our Walton Retirement Home here in Barnesville, Ohio, a loving and safe retirement place for seniors. The care provided there is excellent, indicated by a satisfaction score of the residents that is, we have been told, higher than any other retirement facility in the surrounding four counties. We give thanks to God for His work through the care-

givers of the Walton Retirement Home, and that God has given us this opportunity to provide this service as a ministry to seniors.

We were graced with sessions entitled “Hidden in Plain Sight: Slavery and the Slaves’ Spirituals” by dear Friend, Kim Palmer. The evening session and four morning sessions spoke to us of the deep travail slaves underwent through the horrific institution of slavery in our country from 1619 to 1865. Even though slaves were in physical bondage, many found hope in Christ for spiritual redemption and worldly liberation. We discovered that there was a double message in their songs: the obvious spiritual message of their relationship with God, but also the hidden message of the slaves’ hoped for physical deliverance from bondage. We explored through thoughtful reflection and small group discussion why we, as a religious body still exist. Various questions were addressed, such as

- What is our calling as a people of God?
- Why are we (still) a body today?
- Do we know why we are here?
- What are we here for?
- What is the Lord asking of us, that is, Ohio Yearly Meeting?

We, as Ohio Yearly Meeting, continue to wrestle with providing a faithful witness to current and, God willing, future generations. We pray that we might each grow and mature in Christ, and that this growth and maturity might result in not just a continuing, but increasing witness for Christ in the future.

Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we call us all to be bold for Christ, and to stand in faithful witness to Him. (Ephesians 6:13) It is our desire that when we stand before Him, we will hear Him say the words, “Well done, good and faithful servants.”

On behalf of Ohio Yearly Meeting,
Seth Hinshaw

To Friends in North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative):

Greetings from Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative where Friends from nearly a dozen states in the US and visiting Friends from Canada gathered on the campus of Scattergood Friends School for a week in late July to attend the 137th annual session of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative. “Let Your Life Speak” was our theme as we explored and celebrated the ways our lives spoke through song, story, service, stewardship of nature, spiritual practice and activism.

We enjoyed hearing your epistle, and we appreciate your gracious hospitality for Friends Alice and Ruth Hampton during your annual session, holding them with care and nurturing this relationship between our yearly meetings. We are sorry that way did not open for a visit from one of your members this year to our yearly meeting. We miss your presence, and we hope someone will be able to join us next year.

Our first evening we put our attention to Pastoral Care sharing in small groups ways that we nurture each other within our monthly meetings. Some practices included inviting new visitors to a meal, supporting parents of young children, intervisitation of other monthly meetings, and listening without judgment or trying to solve. Carrie Newcomer, a Friend from Bloomington, Indiana, assisted us in writing our sacred and simple stories, then in the evening ministered us with a concert of her own sacred stories through song, poetry and music. Each day at Yearly Meeting began with the tradition of early worship before breakfast followed by Bible study after breakfast. Friends enjoyed this special time of reflection and inquiry. Other programs included a walk in Scattergood’s prairie to learn more about native prairie plants and their importance in maintaining healthy ecosystems; a climate change presentation; reports from FCNL and AFSC offering their projects and concerns; a sharing of the spiritual roots of activism; then we ended each day with banjos, guitars and group singing. Committee meetings and meeting for worship with attention to business involved each of us in the practice of caring for our monthly and yearly meetings.

The Yearly Meeting’s Young Friends and Junior Yearly Meeting blessed us yet again this year with their presence. They attended Meeting for Worship every morning, and joined us for some of our programs. They also did many of their own activities including pottery, candle making, hosting a talent show, and having a meeting with attention to Capture the Flag. The energy and light that they bring to our Yearly Meeting is always a joy.

We deeply enjoyed time to share the ways we speak in this world with our lives, and are ever grateful for the continued guidance and inspiration of Friends past and present. Our annual session brings us into the fold of God’s love and helps us strengthen our relationship with the Divine through knowing and being with each other during this cherished time.

In warm Friendship,
Deborah Dakin, clerk
Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

6. Travel in the Ministry Trust Fund Report

David Perry presented the following report:

Yearly Meeting Trust Fund Report – Travel in the Ministry		
Balance on Hand 6-30-2014		\$4,822.73
Reimbursements for the Year		None
Additional Receipts for the Year:		None
Interest/Dividends for the Year:		\$ 400.07
Balance on Hand 6-30-2015	(Cost Value)	\$5,222.80
	(Market Value)	\$5,300.01

Payments for “Travel in the Ministry”

Although there have been no requests for assistance from the “Travel in the Ministry” fund for the year, the yearly meeting needs to continue to search for other avenues of income to support this important commitment.

Friends are encouraged to apply for assistance from the “Travel in the Ministry” fund. A brief history and an application are posted on the yearly meeting website.

Funds were transferred to the Friends Fudiciary Corporation in Eighth Month 2014. Approval for this transfer was given during yearly meeting session in 2014.

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

Submitted by:

W. Carey Reece, Jr. Trustee
David Perry Trustee

7. Reports from the Monthly Meetings

Reports from the monthly meetings were read and are included in the minutes.

Davidson

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: David Perry

Recording Clerk: Jan Blodgett

Treasurer: Barbara Gardiner

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2015 Sessions

Patty Levering, Anne Olsen, Kristin Olson-Kennedy, David Perry

Ministers and Elders

Davidson Monthly Meeting recorded no ministers or elders.

Membership

Davidson Monthly Meeting has eighteen adult members.

We gained one new member, Pat Kett, this year by application, none by transfer.

We lost no members through laying down of membership or transfer.

There were no births or deaths to report or new marriages under the care of the meeting.

Durham

Memberships

New Members - Christine Houghton, Nate Houghton, Toby Berla, Lynne Berla, Deborah Wallace, Jennifer Chapman, Larry Chapman.

In process: Ryan Nilsen, Elizabeth Wintermute

Transfers - Jen Walker, Bonnie Oulman, Heidi Hannapel (on hold due to family concerns)

In process: Carole McCleery, Richard McCleery

Marriages

Bethany Kell and James Chappel

Memorials

Doug Price, Phil Arcuni (Cheryl Wicker's brother), Andrew Eisan

Fayetteville

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Susan Lees

Recording Clerk: Robert Cooper

Treasurer: Susan Lees

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2015 Sessions

Susan Lees, Robert Cooper, Melidy Poole and Lynn Newsom

Membership, Children and Marriage

Fayetteville Friends Meeting has seven adult Members and five Attenders, two of whom are Quakers elsewhere.

We gained no members this year.

We lost no members through death or laying down of membership.

There were no births of children to report and no new marriages under the care of the meeting.

Ministers and Elders

No ministers or elders were recorded this year.

Advices

The Advices were read on 6-14-15.

Friendship

The changes in our membership rolls were as follows:

We lost two members to death: Ruth Bailey passed away on Sixth Month 24th, 2014; Clarence Parker passed away on Tenth Month 9th, 2014

Two members transferred their membership to other Meetings:

Martha Lang to Northampton Mtg. Massachusetts on Eighth Month 10th, 2014; Rebecca Sullivan to Atlanta Mtg. Georgia on Twelfth Month 14th, 2014

Three members were released from membership: Craig Fox on Second Month 8th, 2015; Anne Marie Taber on Third Month 8th, 2015; Steve Hayes on Fifth Month 10th, 2015

We welcomed one new member this past year: Juliet Smith on Tenth Month 12th, 2014

Friends from other meetings had their memberships transferred to Friendship: Betty and Brian Poynton (as sojourners) from Worcester Mtg., Massachusetts on Eighth Month 10th, 2014; Judy Purvis from Chapel Hill Mtg. NC on Eleventh Month 9th, 2014; Lloyd Lee Wilson (as sojourner) from West Grove Mtg., NC on Eleventh Month 9th, 2014

One friend changed from sojourner to regular member: Susan Wilson on Fifth Month 10th, 2015

Our membership total is now 103 (including eight sojourners).
Claire Koster and Hannah Logan Morris, Membership Recorders

Greenville

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Bruce Arnold

Recording Clerk: Richard Miller

Treasurer: Guy Burgess

Representatives to 2015 Yearly Meeting Sessions:

Mary Miller, Richard Miller, Bruce Arnold, and any other member attending sessions.

Finance, Nominating, and Records Representatives

Finance: Guy Burgess

Nominating: Richard Miller

Records: Rachel Miller

Changes in Membership

There were no changes in membership this year. We welcomed Clay and Anna Steinwinter as regular attenders. Clay is a member of Tower Street Meeting in Raleigh, NC.

Ministers, Elders, and Overseers

Bruce Arnold is a Minister of the Gospel. Richard Miller, Mary Miller, and Joanne Holden are Elders. Mary Miller is Overseer.

Advices and Queries

The Advices were read and the Queries were answered.

Rich Square

42 members.

Active attenders [Six adults, two young adults (18-35), two children].

Two former members requested to reinstate their membership

One member lost by transfer.

Three distant young adult members chose to discontinue their membership as they no longer have family members in the meeting.

No marriages, births, or deaths.

Recorded ministers and elders:

Minister - Robert E. Gosney

Elders - Edward Pearce and Joseph P. Brown

Officers:

Clerk - Barbara C. Gosney

Recording Clerk - John G. Parker

Treasurer - Robert E. Gosney

Named representatives to Interim Body: Edward Pearce, Robert E. Gosney, Barbara C. Gosney, Judith V. Reece, W. Carey Reece

Records committee representative - Barbara C. Gosney

Nominating Committee representative - Edward Pearce

Finance committee representative - Robert E. Gosney

The Advices were read in our meeting in First Month.

Virginia Beach

Monthly Meeting Officers

Clerk: Nancy Nixon

Recording Clerk: Patrick Goold

Treasurer: David French

Representatives to Yearly Meeting 2015 Sessions

Tom Bertrand, Nancy Craft, Dave French and others of the meeting who are able to attend.

Representatives named to Interim Body Meeting

Ruth Anne Childres, Nancy Craft, David French and, Keith Williamson

Members named for these Yearly Meeting Committees

RECORDS NOMINATING FINANCE

Nancy Craft Ruth Anne Childres David French

Changes in membership

Transfer of members: Two members transferred to other Friends meetings. Patricia Swan transferred to Chatham Monthly Meeting, New York YM (minuted 12/14/2014). Inga Rothrock Erickson transferred to Herndon Friends Meeting, Baltimore YM (minuted 2/8/2015).

Deaths: Myra Macaully Smith Brown 2/15/2015 (minuted 3/8/2015) and Benjamin Frazier Brown 3/29/2015 (minuted 4/12/2015)

New member: Joanne Gingrich Crass (minuted 11/9/2014)

No births

Total Membership: Active Members 60, and 50 Inactive Members.

Ministers and Elders

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting has no newly recorded ministers or elders. Current ministers and elders:

Ministers

Paula Justice

Elders

Nancy Craft

Andrew Young

Patricia Phalen Young

Advices Read

We have read the Advices and responded to the Queries. The query responses are attached. The State of our Meeting is also attached.

West Grove

Meeting Officers

Clerk – Charles Ansell

Recording Clerk – Charles Newlin

Treasurer – Janis Ansell

Representatives to Yearly Meeting – Dora and Corena Owens

Changes in Membership -- One member transferred his membership to Friendship Monthly Meeting. – Seven active members.

Ministers and Elders

Dixie Newlin, Janis Ansell, Charles Ansell – Elders.

Lloyd Lee Wilson, Minister, transferred his membership to Friendship Friends Meeting.

The Queries were answered and the Advices read in the face of meeting.

There were no births or deaths.

Grace surrounds us.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting

Wilmington Friends Meeting did not record any deaths or births, this year. In First Month we held a clearness committee for Daylen Moore and David Bushnell who we cleared for marriage under the care of WFM. The marriage will take place in Pennsylvania in Seventh Month 2015. On Easter Sunday we welcomed new member, Tricia Odum who had requested membership in Third Month. The advices were read and the Queries answered. No ministers or elders have been recorded by WFM and no new elders and ministers were recorded this year. Goldie Walton continues to serve as clerk with Tom Dareneau agreeing to serve as co-clerk for the next year, David Hensler as treasurer and Daylen Moore as recording clerk. We have 23 members and 35 attenders at last count with approximately 12 to 15 members and attenders faithfully attending services each first day.

Goldie Walton and Cheryl Fetterman are named representatives to Representative Body.

Clarification was sought regarding how much guidance to provide to monthly meetings on the content and format of their annual reports. It was felt that additional guidance is needed to insure that the yearly meeting receives all information needed while also recognizing that our meetings may handle some elements differently. Clearer instructions regarding required details will be provided prior to the 2016 sessions. 2015 meeting reports found to have essential information provided elsewhere but not in the reports as read during sessions are to be included in the printed minutes.

8. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Report

Tom Bertrand provided a report on his experience as the newest yearly meeting representative to FCNL.

I rise to speak about the work carried on, day by day, year by year on our behalf in Washington DC by a grassroots network of Quaker volunteers from across the nation and by our dedicated staff of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the oldest faith-based lobby group on Capitol Hill. A few reminders: FCNL was established on June 12–13, 1943 in Richmond, Indiana by Quakers from 15 yearly meetings. As a Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest, it has as its mission these few compelling words:

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war

We seek a society with equity and justice for all

We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled

We seek an earth restored.

FCNL's building is at 245 2nd Street NW, just down the street from the Supreme Court and adjacent to Congressional Offices is the only certified Green Building on Capitol Hill. FCNL's effectiveness there over the past seven decades has been largely due to its commitment to working with everyone, no matter their party or history, to effect change. Its big wins come from coalition building and reaching across the aisle. This nonpartisan foundation strengthens our credibility with members of Congress of all parties.

FCNL has worked for decades to change federal policy to advance social and economic justice, peace, and good government. It is governed by a General Committee, a board of nearly 200 Quakers from around the country who represent a range of organizations, perspectives and theological traditions within the Religious Society of Friends. Our yearly meeting has six representatives to this General Committee – Charles Ansell, Caroline dyer-Gunn, Eric Ginsburg, Michael Glancy, William Jeffries, and Peter Klopfer. As of this year I am trying to step into the shoes of one of those.

I come to you from Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, where I have been a member almost four years by transfer of membership from the Brevard (NC) Monthly Meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA), and previously the Atlanta Meeting, SAYMA, and previously the Charlottesville Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, where Barbara and Bob Gosney and I became members together in 1974. Through the past 41 years as a Friend, my peace and social justice work at the local level has been hugely reinforced by the publications and supportive staff of FCNL. A good example of this was the 2014 white paper entitled Shared Security developed by FCNL and AFSC which served as the focus of our Virginia Beach Peace & Social Justice retreat in February of 2014. FCNL's compelling policy document, *The World We Seek*, arrived at with input from all the constituent monthly and yearly meetings, provides our local committee with our primary vision statement for our approach to federal legislation.

On your behalf, I have attended the last two four-day annual meetings of the General Committee in Washington DC, which have coincided with the annual Quaker Institute for Public Policy, gathering Friends from across the nation to meet with members of their congressional delegations about issues of concern. Over the past two years, the number one lobbying priority of FCNL has been the sustained diplomatic effort to achieve a nuclear arms deal with Iran. Adding my small effort to the larger FCNL

effort to keep Congress from derailing that diplomatic effort has been the single most rewarding work of my 42 years of being part of the grassroots support for the work of FCNL. That agreement was concluded two days ago, but Congress could still get in the way of this historic opportunity.

And the most exciting single event for me in that FCNL work? It is witnessing the energized reports each year by the young FCNL program assistants on the last evening of the annual meeting, which outshone even sessions led by Parker Palmer. One of those staff members, Sean Langberg, has come down from Capitol Hill to meet with us this week. Sean is a recent Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill in Global Studies and Geography, who wrote his senior honors thesis on Mapping the Ontology of Mass Killing. As a student he was National Education Coordinator of STAND, a national anti-genocide organization. At FCNL he serves as the Program Assistant for Peacebuilding Policy. By leave of our clerk, Nancy Craft, I have asked Sean to tell us a bit about his work on our behalf.

Sean Langberg described the work of FCNL staff as they share the Quaker message with the United States President and members of Congress to encourage “the World We Seek.” Recent successes include the Iran negotiations to further diplomatic rather than military methods for bringing change.

9. Report from William Penn House

Margie Dingman read a report prepared by our yearly meeting representative Eric Ginsberg on the work of William Penn House in Washington, DC.

William Penn House is a Quaker center on Capitol Hill that engages people from all walks of life with issues of peace, reconciliation, social and economic justice, and environmental awareness, through inward reflection, hands-on experience, education, and community building. Penn House sponsors a variety of programs focused on peace and peace education, Quaker spirituality, social and economic justice, race relations, environmental concerns, community needs, homelessness, and the HIV-AIDS crisis. They offer one-day, weekend, or week-long service-learning programs for youth and young adults through Washington Quaker Workcamps, where direct service to the poor, disenfranchised, and marginalized is combined with education, opportunities for individual and group reflection, and advocacy.

Other Penn House activities include connecting groups that come to Washington to learn about government and government policy with local institutions and resource people; promoting dialogue, reconciliation and community-building around painful and divisive issues and concerns; and serving as a resource center and meeting place for Quakers, both locally and nationally. Following their ministry of Radical Hospitality, Penn House welcomes travelers from around the world in a simple, affordable community-based setting. More information about specific programs follows this report.

Over the past year, William Penn House has experienced significant visitation from Friends and others from around the world. Participation in service projects locally and elsewhere have expanded as well. Brad Ogilvie, the projects director at Penn House, has expressed interest in working with yearly meetings to develop relevant programs and projects, particularly for and including young Friends.

In October 2014, William Penn House director Byron Sandiford received a notice from the Office of Tax and Revenue of the District of Columbia informing him that the property's tax exemption had been changed from 100% tax exempt to 30% tax exempt. The auditor had decided that hosting groups of students and others seeking a better world was a for profit business and not a ministry. The effect of this decision would be to impose a tax on William Penn House of over \$18,000 annually. The decision has attracted a lot of attention and as a result of local media coverage, an attorney with one of the District's largest law firms offered to help appeal this decision, providing her services as a tax expert on a pro bono basis. Thus far, Penn House has received many letters of support from around the nation challenging the auditor's conclusions. At this point, Friends remain hopeful that the decision will be reversed.

Finally, after many years of faithful service and effective leadership, Byron Sandiford has announced his intention to retire from his position as executive director of William Penn House within the next year, but has not announced a specific date yet.

Respectfully submitted by Eric Ginsburg

10. Southern State Prison Ministry Report

Kristin Olson-Kennedy provided a brief overview of our yearly meeting's long relationship with the Southern State Prison ministry. William Geary first visited North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) in 1996 and has for many years served as a connection between the men at Southern State Prison in New Jersey and our yearly meeting through his intervisitation. He is no longer able to attend our sessions annually but several yearly meeting members are actively writing and visiting with the Southern State group to continue this connection. Kristin noted that the prison group maintains an active prayer ministry and appreciates receiving prayer requests. She described some of the questions she had when she began writing to the prisoners and what kinds of letters are appreciated. Letter writing opportunities are available during yearly meeting sessions. Friends were encouraged to write as this makes a huge difference in the lives of the Southern State prisoners.

11. Visiting Friends

A letter from Old Chatham Monthly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, introducing members Sarah Miller and Nathaniel Corwin was read. It was approved for the clerk to endorse.

12. Treasurer's Report

David French of the Finance Committee presented highlights of the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Lloyd Lee Wilson.

Income and Expense Report

Income

Total regular income for the 2014-2015 fiscal year was slightly above budget. The yearly meeting received \$200.00 in unbudgeted contributions from individuals, and another \$200.00 from Salem Creek Monthly Meeting in Winston Salem.

The yearly meeting also received special donations of \$2,440.00 earmarked for the Youth Scholarship

Fund, which underwrites the cost of attending yearly meeting sessions for youths under the age of 18. \$1,300.00 of this amount came in donations from Durham Friends Meeting, and \$1,000.00 from Greenville Monthly Meeting.

\$600.00 was withdrawn from the Special Projects Fund to pay the donation to the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund, as planned.

Expense

All budgeted donations to organizations for this year have been made, including the special donation to the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund. Administrative expenses were slightly below budget due primarily to efficiencies in publishing the minutes. There have been no requests for financial support in the form of internships or scholarships.

Requests for reimbursement for general travel on behalf of the yearly meeting amounted to about \$350.00. Requests for FWCC-related travel on behalf of the yearly meeting amounted to \$800.00. For each of these line items, the unspent balance was transferred to the appropriate restricted fund for use as needed in future years.

Net Income(Loss)

The yearly meeting experienced a net gain for the year, counting all sources and uses, of just under \$680.

Income & Expense Fiscal Year Ended 6/30/2015

Ordinary Income/Expenses			
Income			
Book Store Revenue			224.45
Individual Contributions			200.00
Interest Earned			74.36
MM Contributions			11,275.00
NonMember Contributions			200.00
YMtg Sessions Income			
YMtg Other Contributions		606.62	
YMtg Registration Fees		2,791.25	
YMtg Rm&Board Income		8,129.18	
YMtg Scholarship Contrib.		1,672.94	
Total YMtg Sessions Income			13,199.99
Total Income			25,173.80
Gross Profit			25,173.80
Expenses			
Book Store Expenses			224.45
Donations and Grants			

Donations to Organizations		5,350.00	
Total Donations and Grants			5,350.00
Operations			
Bank Charges		148.19	
Postage, PO Box		153.55	
Website Expenses		256.99	
Total Operations			558.73
Printing and Copying			
Directory Publication		246.56	
		954.03	
Total Printing			1,200.59
Travel and Meetings			
FWCC Travel		2,000.00	
Travel – General		2,500.00	
			4,500.00
YM Sessions Expense			
Sales Tax		0.00	
YM Program Expense			
Insurance – Liability	266.00		
Youth Program Expense	429.62		
YM Program Exp. – Other	998.57		
Total YM Program Expense		1,694.19	
YM Room and Board		8,411.39	
YM Site Use Fee		2,555.00	
Total YM Session Expense			12,660.58
Total Expense			24,494.35
Net Ordinary Income			679.45
Net Income			679.45

Balance Sheet

Assets

Checking

The checking account balance at year-end was \$56,993.62. This amount includes \$14,016.00 collected in advance for the 2015 yearly meeting sessions, \$27,455.66 held in various restricted funds for particular uses, and \$20,689.65 in unrestricted funds.

Current Liabilities

The yearly meeting has collected about \$14,000 from individuals for registration, room and board,

and gifts for the 2015 annual sessions. This is a liability because if these individuals ended up not coming to sessions or we did not hold annual sessions for some reason, we would have to pay this money back.

Changes in Equity

Permanently Restricted Funds

The FWCC Jamaica Fund has had no activity; the balance is unchanged at \$571.20. This money is held in trust for Jamaican Friends.

The *Journal* Publication Fund balance is unchanged at \$2,300.20.

The *Trust Fund for Travel in Truth's Service* appears for the first time on the balance sheet for the yearly meeting. This fund is controlled by the yearly meeting trustees and appears as an "Other Current Asset" in the upper portion of the balance sheet. The value shown in both instances is cost basis rather than current market value.

Temporarily Restricted Funds

The *Discipline* Fund received \$30.00 in donations this year. The balance is now \$2,311.00. The *Discipline* Fund is earmarked for paying the expense of printing the yearly meeting *Discipline*.

The FWCC Travel Fund received the unspent portion of this year's budget for FWCC-related travel, and now has a balance of \$1,200.00.

The General Travel Fund received the unspent portion of this year's budget for general travel, and now has a balance of \$5,833.06. This fund assists Friends who have travel expenses associated with representing NCYM-C on committees and organizations outside the yearly meeting. It also assists the yearly meeting clerks with their expenses for travel within the yearly meeting.

The Special Projects Fund has been charged \$600.00 for the contribution to the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (originally approved at the 2013 yearly meeting sessions). It has a year-end balance of \$4,963.74. The Special Projects Fund is disbursed at the discretion of the yearly meeting in session.

The Yearly Meeting Sessions Reserve balance is unchanged this year at \$1,293.52. This reserve fund is the cumulative net surplus of holding yearly meeting sessions over the years, and is used to cover any deficit incurred by the yearly meeting sessions.

The Yearly Meeting Scholarship Fund has been replenished by the special gifts mentioned earlier and donations by individuals at the time of yearly meeting sessions. After paying the eligible expenses of youth attending the 2014 yearly meeting sessions, it has a year-end balance of \$3,865. This fund provides financial assistance to pay for children under 18 attending yearly meeting sessions.

Unrestricted Net Assets of the yearly meeting now stand at \$20,689.65.

Balance Sheet As of 6/30/15

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Wells Fargo Checking	56,993.62
Total Checking/Savings	56,993.62

Other Current Assets	
Friends Fiduciary Fund	5,117.94
Total Other Current Assets	5,117.94
Total Current Assets	62,111.56
Other Assets	
Other Assets	
Pre-paid Session Program Expenses	729.20
Total Other Assets	729.20
Total Other Assets	729.20
TOTAL ASSETS	62,840.76
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Pre-Paid Session Registrations	3,060.00
Pre-Paid Session Room & Board	7,895.00
Prepaid MMtg Contributions	1,817.00
YMTg Scholarship Commitments	1,244.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	14,016.00
Total Current Liabilities	14,016.00
Total Liabilities	14,016.00
Equity	
Perm. Restricted Net Assets	
FWCC Jamaica Fund	571.20
Journal Publication Fund	2,300.20
Trust Fund for Travel in Truth	5,117.94
Total Perm. Restricted Net Assets	7,989.34
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	
Discipline Fund	2,311.00
FWCC Travel Fund	1,200.00
General Travel Fund	5,833.06
Special Projects Fund	4,963.52
YMTg Sessions Reserve	1,293.52
YMTg Sessions Scholarship Fund	3,865.00
Total Temp Restricted Net Assets	19,466.32
Unrestricted Net Assets	20,689.65
Net Income	679.45

Total Equity	48,824.76
TOTAL LIABILITY & EQUITY	62,840.76

The trustees of the yearly meeting have recommended that the trust fund “for travel in Truth’s service” should be included in the treasurer’s financial reports. The trust fund is now entirely invested with Friends Fiduciary Fund; its current balance is shown under “Other Current Assets” and “Permanently Restricted Funds” on the Balance Sheet. The value shown in both instances is cost basis rather than current market value. Procedures for donating to or requesting support from the trust fund are unchanged from previous years.

With the approval of the Interim Body, the yearly meeting has closed the previous Wells Fargo checking account and opened a new Wells Fargo business checking account. This change enabled Wells Fargo to remove some constraints imposed on our old account, including a prohibition on adding or removing persons from the list of authorized signers. In keeping with the minuted policy of the yearly meeting, the current treasurer and clerk are now authorized to sign on the new account, and the previous clerk and treasurer have been removed.

13. American Friends Services Committee (AFSC) Report

Ruth Anne Chillardress shared that she was able to attend the American Friends Service Committee annual meeting sessions as one of our yearly meeting’s representatives. She was enthusiastic about the good work and positive momentum the AFSC has experienced over the past year. She stressed this inspiring work is our work too as it is a Quaker organization working in the world on our behalf.

Toni Etheridge presented on the programs operating out of the AFSC Area Office of the Carolinas in Greensboro, N.C.

- AFSC’s NC Peace & Economic Justice program (NCPEJ) has an ongoing focus in organizing local youth against racial discrimination. On January 15th, we held a major march and community discussion on police issues in Greensboro. We continue to support the NAACP’s Moral Monday movement and conduct civic engagement trainings with youth groups of color in Greensboro.
- AFSC’s NC Immigrant Rights Program (NCIRP) has prioritized tuition equality and drivers’ licenses for NC undocumented residents this legislative session, is collecting surveys for a report on immigration detention, is developing a bridge building program for African American and Latino youth, is part of a coalition working to develop a Central Carolina Workers’ Center, and continues to work with our immigrant ally groups.
- Together, our NC programs recently held a “Human Rights Through Digital Storytelling” camp for Spring Break and are increasing our outreach to local Quaker meetings to build stronger relationships.

NC Peace & Economic Justice Program (NCPEJ), led by Toni Etheridge

The Peace and Economic Justice program this January supported a South regional initiative, called SOAR (South Organizing Against Racism). The goal is to find common concerns throughout the AFSC

South region (from Washington, DC to Miami and beyond) and to help equip young people with the tools to organize around their local community concerns. While each state has specific issues, we seek opportunities to link common concerns, like police brutality and racial profiling among other unjust social conditions. We held a major day of action on January 15 in Greensboro and across the South. In partnership with NAACP and Moral Monday Movement, we advocate passing of Medicaid expansion or to substantially modify it to reflect equitable and moral policy that supports social and economic justice. We took a van to the NAACP's mass march "HKonJ" in February and led a group of Quakers marching behind the AFSC banner. We intentionally work to integrate projects with our AFSC colleagues overseas and at home, including as a member of Israel–Palestine Coordinating Committee, with which we presented No Way to Treat a Child campaign. We held two gatherings at Guilford College and through discussions, raised awareness about the mistreatment of children while detained in military detention facilities. We support AFSC's national Wage Peace coalition work. This work looks to broaden and diversify a movement of people who support policies that challenge militarism and support the well-being of communities. In August 2015, we will host a traveling art poster project, titled All of Us or None (allofus.org). The posters illustrate the impact of militarization in our lives, and shares the responses and resistance to militarism. Guilford College students collaborated with us to produce an AFSC intern-volunteer survey to capture pre- and post-skill capacity of interns and volunteers, plus provide data about the impact and richness of their internship with AFSC. I continue to work on civic engagement and leadership development with local youth groups of color. I am also building relationships with local activist groups, such as Black Lives Matter, groups focused on LGBTQ rights, and with groups like Alamance Peace Action. I recently received recognition from the Center for Principled Problem Solving at Guilford College – called the Higher Education in Prison Program Selfless Contributor Award (HEIPP) for the ongoing work raising awareness around prison culture, education and their families.

NC Immigrant Rights Program (NCIRP), led by Lori Fernald Khamala

Our program was awarded an AFSC donor-funded Fellowship for our Ending Deportation and Detention (ENDD) campaign work in FY 2015. Adamou Mohamed worked with us through January and Leticia Benitez has joined us through September 2016 in this position. The position was extended by one year thanks to an anonymous donor. ENDD, collaborating with a Guilford College class, is conducting surveys to learn more about immigrant experiences in detention (jail), and is planning a campaign around ending the Detention Bed Mandate, a congressional quota mandating that 34,000 immigrants remain in detention beds at all times.

Our Fellow Leticia has organized four community forums (including one at a local Mosque) to discuss pros and cons of a bill which includes driving privileges for undocumented immigrants, but troubling provisions as well. She is collaborating with other local groups to organize a major Know Your Rights forum targeted at African and Latino undocumented immigrants. In addition, Leticia is helping to coordinate a new curriculum for a bridge building workshop between African American and Latino youth. We hope to pilot the project in August. We already held one bridge-building session that included a video shoot for a short film to be used in the full workshop, and the session was an incredibly moving

experience for participants who shared personally and deeply about their own perceptions of relations between African Americans and Latinos.

Our major legislative priority currently is a statewide campaign for tuition equality for all NC students regardless of immigration status. AFSC recently launched a Triad chapter of Let's Learn NC, a coalition which works for educational access and in-state tuition for immigrants, and it has grown significantly in the last few months, and twice we have led groups of around 15 students to Raleigh to lobby for in-state tuition for undocumented students. We have also conducted presentations to Quaker meetings and the League of Women Voters state convention on tuition equality.

We continue to work with our immigrant ally groups, the Immigrant Solidarity Committee of Charlotte (based in the Charlotte Friends Meeting), which is focused on outreach to churches about immigration, and the Immigrant Rights Working Group in Greensboro. Our staff Lori Khamala was a leader at an FGC Gathering workshop on immigration for the full week.

Joint Projects between NCPEJ and NCIRP

Responding to recent tragedies: We are coordinating with others locally to build understanding and reduce Islamophobia following the killing of Muslim students in Chapel Hill. We are also working to support BlackLivesMatter organizers following the racist violence which killed nine African Americans in a Charleston church. We are still developing an overall response to hate-based violence.

"Human Rights Through Digital Storytelling" Spring Break Camp: We continue to utilize digital storytelling as a way for people whose voices are not often heard to tell their own stories in their own words. We organized a Spring Break camp for refugee and immigrant high-schoolers called "Human Rights Through Digital Storytelling", following the success of a summer camp of the same theme. This effort was funded by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS group), which awarded a \$3,000 grant to further establish work with young refugees, immigrants and people of color. The campers engaged in participatory human rights education and media/digital storytelling. We held one community screening of their short films, and have since coordinated follow-up advocacy actions including meeting with a congresswoman and taking some of the youth to a Moral Monday event.

Quaker Outreach: With the goal of increased outreach to Quaker meetings, we have established a Quaker Liaison volunteer position. This volunteer ensures that area meetings receive copies of our newsletter each month, and plan forums with local meetings. So far, we have held one forum with two more in the planning stages. We are always looking for opportunities to visit local meetings and would be pleased to offer forums. In addition, AFSC nationally has started a new Meeting/Church Liaison program as a way to better connect with Friends, as well as an Acting in Faith blog (<http://www.afsc.org/friends>).

Interns: This summer we have a full office with six interns working with us from Guilford College, Elon, UNCG and a student unable to attend college because of her undocumented status.

Connecting with AFSC-NC: We send out a monthly newsletter and also daily updates from our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/afscnc). Please also check out our digital storytelling projects at www.youtube.com/afscnc. To be added to our newsletter list, email LKhamala@afsc.org or call 336-854-0633.

14. Update on Committees to Write Epistles, Letters, and the Summary of Exercises

Darlene Stanley agreed to draft our epistles to Ohio Yearly Meeting and Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Deborah Shaw will assist. Additional Friends are still needed to work with the Summary of Exercises and our general epistle.

15. State of the Society Reports

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

Davidson Monthly Meeting

Christianity is a religion of paradoxes. Perhaps, then, it is fitting that our description of the state of Davidson Friends Meeting carries contradictions. We can report that we remained blessed with deep and rich vocal ministry and an awareness that the grounding of our worship carries out into the ministry of our daily lives at home and at work. We were delighted as a long-time attender became a member and as college students have found a home with us. Our First Day School program remains well-organized, if less populous than previous years.

At the same time, we puzzle over why we are not engaging and retaining visitors. Our meetinghouse is well-used and is an invitational space. We have served both outside groups using the space and attenders who have found our community a haven. We accept the ministry of accompanying spiritual journeys and know that sometimes a sojourn with us will be temporary. We have been a place of respite and healing. Regular attenders and members joyfully sing and celebrate together at our Christmas gathering, Talent Café and game nights. Yet we sense that there is more for us to do. We seek to be a community that invites deeper commitment to Quaker practice and to be a growing community.

We have experimented with outreach using advertising and hosting workshops and retreats. We have not gained many attenders through them but are aware that a “Sound and Spirituality” retreat developed for us is now reaching more Quakers as it is offered elsewhere. Our building is a safe space for interracial book discussion group made up of members of two other churches in the community. Their lively discussions are not matched by similar adult education programs in our meeting.

We were able to host a FWCC committee, whose numbers almost matched our usual first day attendance and are grateful for the active involvement of members in the yearly meeting, FWCC, and School of the Spirit. Our meeting is fed by these connections but also drained by them as we find ourselves sometimes spread too thin. We find that a small core of people are carrying most of the meeting’s work but have also experienced that way will open showing new ways of doing what is needed.

We wish to be larger to make more of a difference in our communities and in individual lives and we wish to be obedient to God and live in the knowledge that the fruits of the Spirit we have been given are enough, that faithfulness will bring the right growth and ministry to us.

Durham Monthly Meeting

I have felt a deepening within Business Meeting over the past year. It is a worshipful space that allows differing perspectives to arise with love and tenderness. I think we are at a strange crossroads in Meeting and I wonder if other Meetings have weathered similar changes. We experience both abundance and scarcity. The image that comes to me is that of pruning a tree. Many of our committees have vacancies and key positions are a challenge to fill. Nonetheless, our worship together is Spirit-filled and vibrant. We are trying to listen to how the Spirit would have us grow in coming years. Can we prune our branches in such a way that we strengthen our roots and promote healthy growth?

- reflection about the past year from a Friend of the Durham Monthly Meeting

This year has brought much growth extending from the trunk of DFM's history. As our community grows in numbers so does DFM in many enriching ways. The theme of our meeting's retreat in February was Building Community in our Growing Meeting.

Over the past year, we have seen increasing numbers of first-time attenders to our Meetings for Worship, which usually involve 80 to 90 people even after the children leave for the First Day School program. We recognize that we are first and foremost a community that is drawn together and nurtured by its spirit-led worship. We are thankful for a holding of silent space during meeting for worship which has left room for voices moved by the spirit but who previously felt hesitant to speak. These newer and sometimes younger voices have enriched our meeting with their Spirit and our silence.

The verdant branches of new growth also manifest in other meaningful ways. Our First-Day school program continues to be active with 150 youths. A significant number of members and attenders are young adults and whatever circumstances each brings, the energy and passion they bring to our community is a constant reminder for loving celebration. We continue to work on integrating newer Friends into the ways of Quakerism through Quaker 101 classes and offering informal question and answer sessions twice a month at the rise of meetings for worship. There is a dynamic mix of age groups at Durham Friends Meeting and this has established fertile ground for the following activities:

- Outdoor worship at Eno River
- Light up your winter - a winter program of nurturing activities and simple crafts
- Weekend camping gathering at Jordan Lake
- Feeding the homeless
- Friendly Food (providing food and a friendly presence to people who mourn the murder of a family member)
- Vigils
- FGC Yearly retreat
- Numerous Forums

- Spiritual Formation Groups - gatherings of several friends who explore a particular spiritual topic or interest

The new growth does not come without challenges, however. We encounter difficulties in filling roles for several standing committees and positions in the meeting. With little more than faith, we face a dilemma of balancing serious questions of in-reach and outreach under the concern of being able to sustain education programs, the management of meetinghouse upkeep, and the administration of our meeting's records and communications. The need for space to accommodate our Youth Programs, adult programs, and our committee work is compelling and we continue to discern way forward to building out the lower level of our meetinghouse for safe and useful space. Some members and attenders prefer a smaller, more intimate meeting for worship - we are grateful for the proximity of the Hillsborough Worship Group, which remains active and under the care of DFM, and provides a small-group worship of about 10 to 15. These challenges make us ever more aware of our spiritual connections and the relationships, networks, and affiliations, both local and beyond, through which we sustain ourselves inwardly and do our work in the world.

We hold all of this and ourselves with a spirit of love and a sense of trust that it is our journey together that helps everyone one of us turn and face the light of what is meaningful, true, and right.

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting

Fayetteville Monthly Meeting is a small, active, and dedicated faith community meeting weekly in the living room of Quaker House. Our unprogrammed worship members and attenders wait upon Divine Guidance to speak through us, which happens occasionally during worship and frequently afterwards.

As a smaller meeting, we usually have three to six people in attendance. We enjoy the presence of new attenders who attend worship, business, and adult discussion. While we currently have no minors attending Meeting, we do have childcare options should the opportunity arise.

Adult Discussion: We completed the book *How to Believe in God (Whether You Believe in Religion or Not)* by Clark Strand. We are planning a Quakerism 101 class for this fall as another way of growing our understanding of Friends and each other, and possibly reaching farther out into the community. When Meeting offered a Quakerism 101 class in 1996-1997, it resulted in the current clerk's attendance at Discussion, Meetings, and later requesting membership. We held another Quakerism 101 class in 2002-2003; perhaps it is time for another class.

We welcomed Richard Miller, member of NCYM-C Ministry and Oversight Committee, and other travelers this past year; we are glad to be a stopping point in their journeys. We appreciate the intense work the Discipline Revision Committee is doing; we continue to grow in our understanding of the historical words and in how we wish to express ourselves in the present, while also looking toward the future. We created 10-inch quilt panels for the Drones Quilt Program, recognizing the civilians who have died as a result of United States military use of drones. We have enjoyed and appreciated times when our Adult Discussion was not structured; we learn from and enjoy each other.

Outreach: Corporately and individually, members and attenders are active in prison ministry, Piedmont Friends Fellowship, Representative Body Meetings, Yearly Meeting committees, workshops hosted by Quaker House, in other faith communities, and in community service groups and political actions. Bob Cooper has spoken several times at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship; some members attended Adam Beyah's discussion about Islam at the St. Paul's-in-the-Pines Episcopal Church in Fourth Month. In addition to the Drones Quilt Program, Meeting supported Quaker House in sponsoring the Alternatives to Violence Training and in sponsoring a public viewing of the "Cracking the Codes" documentary regarding race relations.

Meeting members and attenders have enjoyed the presence of fellow Friends from Yearly Meeting's smaller or isolated Monthly Meetings in eastern North Carolina; Fayetteville will be hosting this group in Eighth Month. Susan visited Ames Monthly Meeting and Iowa City Monthly Meeting last year Seventh Month. A recent attender to Meeting, Melidy Poole, brings word back from Brevard Friends Meeting when she spends time there.

In Third Month Susan Lees and her partner of 22 years were finally able to legally marry in the state of North Carolina. It's hard to believe that so much has changed regarding same-gender marriage in the past few years, in North Carolina and throughout the country. In Fifth Month Darlene Hopkins spent a few weeks in Indonesia through the Wycliffe Bible Translators Organization helping individuals learn English. She spent additional time visiting Southeast Asia before making it safely home.

As a smaller faith community, we continue to recognize the importance of our connections with each other as well as in the wider community; our Light continues to shine.

Friendship Monthly Meeting

A theme of this past year at Friendship Friends Meeting has been growth. For example, the attendance at our meeting for worship has grown noticeably over the past year. We have been blessed with new attenders, faithful Guilford College students and frequent visitors because of events at the college or in the area. Similarly, we have experienced increased participation in monthly meeting for worship with attention to business. It is a pleasure to have involvement from a wider cross section of the meeting.

As a result of this growth, we occasionally overflow the available seating in the worship room and spill out into the anteroom. Space is also an issue during our monthly potlucks that precede meeting for business.

These impacts have lent greater urgency to the work of the Meetinghouse Planning and Meetinghouse Fundraising Committees. After a joint meeting of these two committees in the fall, the Meetinghouse Fundraising Committee offered three informational forums about the new meeting room concept that was approved by the meeting. They also gave an overview of the fundraising model that they were considering for this project. After they completed these presentations, the Fundraising Committee began

contacting members of the meeting to conduct a feasibility study. The results of this study will inform the meeting whether the concept of a new meeting room is a financially realistic one.

New members and attenders have also brought fresh perspectives and ideas to a number of different areas of the meeting. For instance, questions were raised about the process by which Friendship Meeting allocated funds for donations to organizations, especially at a time when the meeting was starting to raise money for a meetinghouse project. As a result, an ad hoc committee was formed which suggested a new process for prioritizing a smaller number of donations. An Ad Hoc Emergency Procedures Committee was formed to examine the meeting's protocols for emergencies at the meetinghouse. We were able to approve and implement many of the suggested protocols and processes that came from both of these ad hoc committees.

Similarly, initiatives from new members and attenders led to the formation of a men's group that meets twice per month. A book club was also formed to discuss Barbara Brown Taylor's *An Altar in the World* as well as other works. We have continued our participation – cooking and sharing meals quarterly and collecting and contributing needed household items – with Pathways, a local institution which provides food and shelter for families who have become homeless.

This fresh energy has also contributed to our standing committees. For example, the Peace and Social Concerns committee has enriched our meeting with regular forums on topics such as one member's trip to Cuba last November with Witness for Peace, including the effects of the embargo, current immigration issues, the shared security document and Friends Committee on National Legislation priorities. They have also continued collecting food for the food pantry at First Friends Meeting, as well as organizing an Angel Tree for a needy family at Christmas time.

The increased number of children attending meeting has also allowed the Religious Education committee to organize a monthly kids' meeting for business. These sessions are not only a valuable opportunity for the children to learn about Quaker decision-making, but also a chance for them to take ownership of a service project. For instance, this past year the children raised money for Heifer International. Under the guidance of the Religious Education Committee the children have taken on the 5th first days of the month to do everything from greeting at the door before meeting to breaking meeting and making the general announcements.

In the midst of these changes and growth, we have also been mindful of continuing to refresh the spiritual center of our meeting. For example, our gathered time together on First Days continues to be enriched by our new process of sharing joys and concerns out of the silence before the breaking of meeting for worship. We also continue to gather for sessions of Deepening the Spiritual Life of the Meeting on fourth First Days of the month. Similarly, we are nurtured by opportunities to worship with experienced Friends at midweek meeting for worship at Friends Homes at Guilford. We have organized periodic meetings for worship at a local health and rehabilitation place, which has provided an opportunity to meet with one of our members there who often cannot physically join us at the meetinghouse on First Days.

While our meeting has been blessed this past year with new members, new transfers of membership and new sojourning members, new marriages under the care of the meeting and new births, we have also experienced loss as well. The deaths of Ruth Bailey and Clarence Parker brought sadness, but also recognition of the many contributions these long-time members brought to the meeting.

Greenville Monthly Meeting

This has been a rich and varied year for Greenville Friends, as we work and worship and seek to love one another more fully.

Our membership remains at nine, having neither lost nor gained any members. We welcomed Clay and Anna Steinwinter as regular attenders. Clay is a member of the Tower Street meeting in Raleigh, NC.

Our meetings for worship are deep and gathered as we wait upon the Lord together. Mostly, we wait in silence, but members offer vocal ministry that is as welcome as it is fulfilling. Bill Baker's offerings become more tender and heartfelt all the time, and are always received with joy. Clay Steinwinter often offers vocal ministry, and occasionally ministers through song. Bruce Arnold continues to speak regularly in vocal ministry as well. Other members contribute from time to time as they feel led.

Our meeting dog, Summer, still looks forward to coming to worship every Sunday. She welcomes everyone, and enjoys visiting with residents of the retirement community where we meet while arriving and leaving.

We have endured illness with several of our members and sought to comfort them for the duration. Bill Barker was very sick this winter, and had to be hospitalized at one point. We feared we might lose him. Yet he overcame the illness and, while more frail than before, having to use a wheelchair rather than a walker now, he still comes to worship and takes part in our events. We are grateful to our dear friend and attender Carroll Webber, who accompanies Bill to worship and then transports him to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship for their services. Joanne Holden was also laid up for some time, and was unable to attend worship during the worst of the winter weather, but is now back among us, to our considerable relief and enjoyment.

We have delighted in participating with Friends from other Meetings in worship and fellowship, in informal quarterly gatherings, held twice at Rich Square and twice in New Bern. Hoping to encourage Friends from various areas to attend, we are moving the gatherings around. Fayetteville Friends have agreed to host the gathering on the first Saturday of August. We have treasured these opportunities to be with Friends from other Meetings more often than at Yearly Meeting or Interim Body.

Kristin Olson-Kennedy visited us again this year on behalf of the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, as that body seeks to renew its mission among us in the 21st century.

A new attender of Core Sound Friends, Mark Kremer, hosted a 5th Sunday gathering for worship and potluck at his home in New Bern. The opportunity for Greenville and Core Sound Friends to gather together is always refreshing.

Rich Square Monthly Meeting

Friends in Rich Square Monthly Meeting are thankful for the opportunity to share good news with our yearly meeting. Our meeting community is showing signs of new life! *“The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”* John 3:8 (NRSV)

As reported last year, a young family living east of Woodland has continued attending regularly. Now, a second young family from 30 miles west of Woodland has begun attending. Our newest member, who was reported last year, continues to travel three hours one way to Woodland at least twice each month, sometimes bringing his wife and college age sons with him. They actively participate in meeting events and have just become the new owners of the “Parker homeplace” nearby where they hope to move in just a few years. Four members have left the meeting. One moved her membership to another meeting in this yearly meeting where she has been sojourning for several years. The other three were recorded members by their parents who are no longer meeting members, having moved away several years ago. Those three young adults decided to discontinue recorded membership as they live at a distance and have no family connection to the meeting or local community. We remember these former members when they were among us and hope that they will thrive spiritually wherever they live. To summarize, we have 42 members, only five of whom live within a 30 mile radius. In addition, we have six active attenders, plus two college-age and two young children attending our meetings. Most First Days we have seven to ten people present for worship and at least eight to twelve Friends present for business meetings.

We have continued our annual Homecoming at Cedar Grove on the second First Day in Tenth Month. Following worship we have a catered meal and share fellowship, pictures and memories of the meeting during the past 255 years. This event brings together distant members and people in the local community who feel connected to the meeting through family and friendship. The Homecoming follows the Seventh Day meeting of Cedar Grove Friends Meeting, Inc., the non-profit corporation which supports the meeting in caring for the property and other assets.

Other than the Woodland Children’s Community Garden and the work of Salem Black River Friends with developing the Goodwill Parochial School Community Center, we cannot point to activities in which we as a meeting make a public witness. We assume all members and attenders are mindful of our testimonies in their personal lives. We know that members are actively volunteering in their local communities with youth activities, delivering Meals on Wheels, advocating for peace and justice concerns as well as working with the yearly meeting. The monthly meeting wrote travel minutes for three members who visited Ireland Yearly Meeting while traveling among Friends in Ireland and another travel minute to Friends in Hungary as two members continued their travel to visit Friends in Hungary and Serbia.

The online and face-to-face dialogues on topics related to the Yearly Meeting Discipline Revision and our new Ministry and Oversight quarterly project of sharing “George Fox Openings” have helped clarify and ground us as to how we see ourselves in 2015. We value our heritage, but Rich Square Monthly Meeting is looking to the future. With our distant members who grew up in the meeting, members and attenders who came from other meetings, and those who are new to Friends, we all are learning together what it means to be part of Rich Square Monthly Meeting in this time and in this place. To quote Paul in Galatians 5:22-23 (NRSV) *“By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. There is no law against such things.”*

Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting

Ninth month 2014 to Sixth month 2015 has brought much joy and sadness to the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting. Our school is growing and flourishing during these tenuous economical times. Young leaders partnered with Tandem Friends School to host the 2015 Quaker Youth Leadership Conference. The meeting and the School Committee are working together on a master plan for the entire Campus. Relations between the meeting and the school were energized by joint events that increased the focus on the school’s achievements. The Young Friends Committee has looked for more ways to engage the meeting and school thru different events. We are excited to have quite a few more children attending meeting this days. It brings us all joy went we hear their laughter.

Our losses have been great, with the passing of our founder Louise Brown Wilson last summer, and her brother Ben Brown, and his wife Myra this spring. For many of us, they were the Friends we saw every first day and could call upon for anything. They will be greatly missed! Others have moved on to other Meetings in other cities. We have sent them with our well wishes, but miss their presence, love, and energy.

The work of the committees in the meeting is amazing. Buildings and grounds has continued to care for and improve our meeting house. Members share their homes with others as they travel thru or need the space to visit the area. Students from Warren Wilson College stayed in the meetinghouse while they did volunteer work at the Virginia Aquarium.

Our Peace and Social Justice Committee is continuously working in the community. They hosted a “Social Justice University” for other faith communities at the meetinghouse. An outgrowth of that was a jointly sponsored “Walk for Peace” with the Baha’i Faith. Committee members continue stay active with the FCNL General Committee and witness to outside organizations. They put on a program for Martin Luther King Day to the US Navy’s Center for Personal and Professional Development. Six Peace and Social Justice members lobbied and attended a “Day for All People” in Richmond, VA. We sent a letter of support to the Federal Court in Washington, DC in support of a local peace activist awaiting sentencing for civil disobedience.

The nurturing of our spirit has continued with retreats like the “Deeping our Relationship to Spirit through Contemplative Practices” given by Susan Wilson of West Grove Meeting. We held “Discovery

Dinners” with selected queries, which invite us to “discover” each other through conversation and sharing over a meal together. Our adult First Day School continues to meet each third First Day, it is a wonderful way for newcomers to learn more in an open forum. Our mid-week intercessory prayer meeting has grown in numbers this year. This provides a very intimate sharing for those who are open to this opportunity.

The business of meeting, along with the committees, work of MEO, Communications, and the revision of the Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice have kept us all working to make it easier for newcomers to access and understand information about Quaker history and traditions. This has taken these committee hours of work and collaborating, along with many rewrites and prayers.

We are facing many unknowns with city officials regarding roadwork and our joint property with the school. These challenges continue to help us to grow together in community for the better life of the school and the meeting.

West Grove Monthly Meeting

We know God is present in our meeting. Faith, Hope and Love in and for God and one another brings a quiet joy. We seek to be vessels for the living water and endeavor to share our blessings with those around us. West Grove is dwelling in a living peace.

Gathering for Bible study before meeting continues. It is a rich time which settles us for worship.

We are thankful for visitors. The 100th anniversary of the first meeting in the West Grove Meetinghouse will be celebrated with a Meeting for Worship for Thanks on 7th Month 26, 2015 at 10:00 AM. All are welcome.

Wilmington Monthly Meeting

Wilmington Friends Meeting has stood for another year as a testament to the faith and practice that define Friends. We meet each first day at 10:00 at 202 North 5th Street in Wilmington NC. We welcome our regularly attending members and attenders, considering everyone part of our community.

We have established a stable budget that meets the needs of our organization and are grateful for the modest amount of funds we are able to put aside for the ongoing needs, inevitable repairs and improvements we anticipate for our physical building. Since the loss two years ago of Voces Latinos with whom we shared space toward a common goal, we continue to look for and prayerfully solicit compatible organizations and/or NGOs with whom we can again donate, not only space, but spiritual support. We are grateful that a local Buddhist group continues to use our building and participate in the shared responsibility of the upkeep of our facility.

During the past year, in addition to our weekly worship services, we have enjoyed twice monthly discussions, ably initiated and organized by Sandy Hopper, of Wilber Cooper’s *Faith and Practice*, a truly enlightening discourse on the history and theological precepts of Quakerism which helps us both to understand the underpinnings of Quaker faith and its implications for the future.

Perhaps the most important undertaking of this past year was the commitment of nine Friends and attenders to the completion of training for the Alternative to Violence Program which took place over three weekend long sessions in ninth and tenth month. Aply led by our dear Friend Rubye Braye, we experienced the joy and hard work of learning to listen to and understand more about how we can better relate to others. We all feel that the more experience we gain in nonviolent problem solving, the greater the probability we can all expect and appreciate peaceful outcomes. Said one participating Friend: "AVP training was an enjoyable, educational, sometimes intense and personally enriching experience all punctuated by light and lively joyous moments." Another said:

The training instills insightful thoughts, an approach to enhanced listening and a non-judgmental approach to problem solving crucial to preventing violence. How we react determines in large part the outcome to uncomfortable and potentially explosive situations. If one overreacts, matters often intensify. On the other hand, should we be able to react with calm assurance and a measured approach, deconstruct and identify sensitive issues, (this) approach more often results in a favorable positive and peaceful solution.

We look forward to completing apprenticeships so that we may bring AVP workshops to our community as a healing balm to the shared conflicts experienced during these times.

As much as AVP training was uplifting for us, we were also gratified in the completion of the Betsy Johnson memorial garden which was finally installed and dedicated in 11th Month with much thought and love going to the memorializing our dearly departed Friend. In addition, we are uplifted by the long anticipated installation of our new Quaker Meeting sign on the front entrance to our building. Declaring our presence in town means a lot to us.

Happily we welcomed Tricia Odum into our membership in 4th Month this year. We recognize her deep faith and are grateful for her decision to join us in walking our path of faith.

We end the year holding in the Light our long time attender, Mark Reilly and his wife, Nancy, who are currently working teaching English as a second language in Viet Nam, and looking forward to hosting Yearly Meeting here in Wilmington. We appreciate our Friends involvement in Communities in Schools, animal rescue organizations, the Topsail Turtle Watch, Grandmothers For Peace, Good Shepherd Ministry, the Board of Friends School of Wilmington, as well as the Facilities and Quaker Life committees, Cape Fear Hospice, and Habitat for Humanity. Looking forward, we are also considering how we can be a source of support and resource for the residents of Creekwood neighborhood which is part of the Wilmington Housing Authority system. It is our hope to be able to help them develop resources for their community in the coming year.

We send this with faith in the Spirit that unites us all as Friends.

16. Update from the Discipline Revision Committee

Deborah Shaw provided an overview of the process the yearly meeting approved at prior sessions for revision of our discipline. Section One (the first section revised by the committee rather than correlating with the initial section of the discipline) was given provisional status at yearly meeting sessions in 2014. It is now ready for full approval. If there is not unity for this second fuller approval, then the section will

remain in practice with provisional status except for the portion remaining under discussion. Andrew Wright and Patty Levering from the Discipline Revision Committee joined Deborah in clarifying and answering questions. The committee is engaging with our monthly meetings to observe current practices of our monthly and yearly meetings and update our discipline to reflect those practices. As the committee gathers there are suggestions for new policies arising from perceived needs. Therefore the committee strives to communicate to monthly meetings those items that are articulation of existing practices and those that are arising.

Kent Wicker from Durham Monthly Meeting presented a report from Durham's Faith and Practice Revision Committee suggesting alternative language regarding potential for monthly meetings to have dual membership in our yearly meeting as well as another body. Durham would like the discipline to reflect a more mutually collaborative process between the monthly meetings and yearly meeting in determining the rightness of any potential dual membership affiliations. As further reflection is needed, second approval of Section One was not given at this time. Durham's request includes a need for careful discernment regarding the relationship between our monthly meetings and our yearly meeting, Durham's report will be shared with the monthly meetings. The Discipline Revision Committee will communicate with our monthly meetings to give further consideration to this specific paragraph. Section One will be brought back for yearly meeting approval next year.

17. Report from Quaker House of Fayetteville

Lynn Newsom, Co-Director of Quaker House, presented a report covering key initiatives and areas of work over the past year.

Quaker House, a manifestation of the Friends' Peace Testimony, is based in Fayetteville, NC, home of Fort Bragg, one of the largest United States military bases. Founded in 1969 to support draftees who opposed the Vietnam War, Quaker House has for over 45 years provided counseling and support to service members who are questioning their role in the military; worked to educate them, their families and the public about military issues; and advocate for a more peaceful world. Today, under Directors Steve and Lynn Newsom, the Quaker House mission continues to grow.

Counseling Soldiers and Veterans: We worked with many soldiers, veterans and their families in need of help. One soldier became a regular attendee of Fayetteville Friends Meeting and our Mindfulness Classes. Our GI Rights Hotline Counselors, Steve Woolford and Lenore Yarger, counseled 2,659 service members during the year. Each of these calls involves hundreds of hours in response and support, often helping prevent a suicide.

Alternatives to Violence Project Training: We conducted four trainings with a total of 26 different participants in one or more of the workshops. Participants were military, VA, civilian social workers, counselors, a military chaplain, Quakers, and teachers. One of our graduates is starting an AVP program

in South Carolina. The NC Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and the Licensed Professional Counselors Association of NC provided contact hour credits for these.

Connecting with the Military: We belong to five organizations that bring together military mental health professionals and civilians to help our service members and veterans. Because of these connections, we are invited on base for and to give various programs: domestic violence, traumatic brain injury, sexual assault, moral injury and chaplains' meetings. We hold weekly Mindfulness classes, which are helpful for victims of PTSD and moral injury. We host house concerts, music jams, and educational forums regularly to raise our profile in the community and attract service members to Quaker House. We have received excellent publicity in the press as a result of these activities: full color, whole page articles, as well as TV and radio interviews.

Quaker House Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in the Military Program: Joanna, our Domestic Violence coordinator, provided domestic violence and sexual assault therapy to over 30 victims, family of victims, and perpetrators. At the request of a military chaplain, she now also counsels victims of moral injury. She gave presentations on domestic violence to several organizations. Referrals to Joanna come frequently from Victim's Advocates at Ft. Bragg. Human Rights Watch lawyers visited us to interview some of our clients about the retaliations suffered by sexual assault victims who report their abuse. We were thanked for our help in the acknowledgements of their report: *Embattled: Retaliation against Sexual Assault Survivors in the US Military*. Lynn serves on the board of the city CARE Center for Domestic Violence.

Moral Injury: A service member can suffer moral injury if he or she must participate in, or witness, a morally unconscionable situation, i.e. war. It is a wound to the soul, leading to shame and grief. The recognition of moral injury opens conversations with the military and chaplains about the morality of war and the need for conscientious objection. We gave presentations in North Carolina and Florida as well as at conferences and retreats we attended throughout the country this year. Military and VA chaplains and mental health professionals attended these programs. After each presentation, we often comfort veterans and/or their families who know that they suffer from moral injury.

Torture: We continue to work with North Carolina Stop Torture Now to educate the public about the United States' and North Carolina's role in the use of torture. North Carolina Stop Torture Now is credited with playing a major role in convincing Senator Burr to vote to release the Torture Report. We continue to press for accountability and full disclosure of the contents.

The Drone Quilt Project: We displayed the Drone Quilt Project at Quaker House and several conferences and provided information and materials for making blocks to create new quilts. Each block is a memorial to an innocent victim of a drone strike.

Conscientious Objection Education: We began doing workshops and presentations on conscientious objection to provide information for our youth to help them discern whether or not they are pacifists and, if so, how to document it in case the draft is reinstated. We developed this also to help meetings understand how to help their young people develop and document their beliefs.

18. Finance Committee Report

David French presented the proposed yearly meeting budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He explained rationale for income and expenses. Donations to organizations were increased with modest increases for most groups we have historically supported. Meetings and individuals are encouraged to give additional support directly if desired. A larger increase was given to Quaker House and contribution reduced to the North Carolina Friends Historical Society. Budget for travel was reduced as the travel reserve fund now has about \$6,000.00 available and there are also funds available in the FWCC Travel restricted fund. Annual budgeted amount for travel is therefore reduced with assumption that reserves will cover any needs beyond budgeted amount. The budget was approved with thanks for a clear presentation.

	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	2016 Budget
Income	11,875.00	12,349.36	13,183.33
<i>Monthly Meeting</i>			
<i>Contributions</i>	<i>11,275.00</i>	<i>11,275.00</i>	<i>12,583.33</i>
Davidson	400.00	400.00	750.00
Durham	3,600.00	3,600.00	3,600.00
Fayetteville	500.00	500.00	500.00
Friendship	0.00	0.00	1,700.00
Greenville	525	525.00	333.33
Rich Square	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Virginia			
Beach	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
West Grove	750.00	750.00	200.00
Wilmington	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
<i>Other Income</i>	<i>600.00</i>	<i>600.00</i>	<i>600.00</i>
Individual			
Contributions			
– unrestricted	0.00	200.00	0.00
Individual			
Contributions			
– Directory	0.00	0.00	0.00
Individual			
Contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00

– Journal			
Nonmember			
Contributions	0.00	200.00	0.00
Misc.			
Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
Prior Year			
Contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest			
Income	0.00	74.36	0.00
Transfer from			
Journal			
Restricted			
Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Transfer from			
Unrestricted			
General			
Reserves	0.00	0.00	0.00
Transfer from			
Special			
Project Fund	600.00	600.00	600.00
Expenses	13,254.00	11,609.32	12,004.00
<i>Administrative</i>			
<i>Expenses</i>	<i>1,904.00</i>	<i>1,759.32</i>	<i>1,904.00</i>
Operating			
Expenses	300.00	301.74	300.00
Website Costs	257.00	256.99	257.00
Publication of			
YM Directory	247.00	246.56	247.00
Publication of			
Minutes	1,100.00	954.03	1,100.00
Publication of			
Memorials	0.00	0.00	0.00
Publication of			
<i>Journal</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Donations to</i>			
<i>Organizations</i>	<i>5,350.00</i>	<i>5,350.00</i>	<i>6,100</i>

AFSC	250.00	250.00	300.00
Indian Affairs	250.00	250.00	300.00
FCNL	250.00	250.00	300.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	250.00	250.00	300.00
Quaker House of Fayetteville	750.00	750.00	1,000.00
RSWR	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends Center at Guilford	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends Historical Collection at Guilford	250.00	250.00	300.00
FWCC	250.00	250.00	300.00
NC Friends Historical Soc.	250.00	250.00	0.00
Pendle Hill Guilford	250.00	250.00	300.00
College Carolina	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends School New Garden	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends School Wilmington	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends School Virginia Beach	250.00	250.00	300.00
Friends School School of the Spirit	250.00	250.00	300.00
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	600.00	600.00	600.00
<i>Other Expenses</i>	<i>6,000.00</i>	<i>4,500.00</i>	<i>4,000.00</i>
Internships/ Scholarships	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00

Travel (General)	2,500.00	2,500.00	500.00
FWCC Travel Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00

Budget Summary

Total Sources of Funds	11,875.00	12,349.36	13,183.33
Total Uses of Funds	13,254.00	11,609.32	12,004.00
Net Sources and Uses of Funds	-\$1,379.00	\$740.04	\$1,179.33

19. Ministry and Oversight Report

Kristin Olson-Kennedy shared that she is stepping down as clerk of Ministry and Oversight at the end of yearly meeting. The body, with a called meeting during yearly meeting sessions, is in the processing of discerning who the next clerk will with more than one name under consideration. Nan Bowles must discontinue being recording clerk due to health issues and a new recording clerk is being sought. Ministry and Oversight will be holding a workshop in Durham in 9th Month for Friends who serve in ministry and those who support them. There will be threshing sessions in 10th and 4th Month Interim Body Meetings regarding the purpose and responsibilities of the body of Ministry and Oversight, which operates as a separate body from North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

20. Letter to Absent Friends

Deborah Shaw read a draft of this year’s Letter to Absent Friends. Friends approved sending this letter, along with the Summary of Exercises, General Epistle, and Youth Epistle.

Dear Friends,

As we gathered for the 318th session of our beloved Yearly Meeting we felt you present in the unity of spirit spoken of in 1 Peter 3:8-11, with which clerk Nancy Craft opened our gathering: “...have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind.”

As we considered the theme, “Living Into Our Gifts” we keenly recognized, through your absence, how dearly we have cherished gifts the Spirit has sent through you and that you have faithfully exercised in our gatherings in the past.

Enclosed you should find our Summary of Exercises and the Young Friends epistle to give you a fuller sense of our time together.

You remain in our thoughts and prayers. We send you our loving greetings. Know that you were missed.

On behalf of North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative
Nancy Craft, clerk

21. School Reports

Margie Dingman read reports received from Virginia Beach Friends School and Carolina Friends School.

Friends School of Virginia Beach

I send you greetings and best wishes from the faculty and students of Friends School of Virginia Beach. As we wind up the 2014-15 year and begin preparing for next year, I would like to give you a brief overview of some of this year's highlights at Friends School and a glimpse of what is in store for next year.

Sadly, in June 2014, our beloved T. Louise, founder of our school passed away. I consider myself truly blessed by having known her these past five years and the students, faculty and I have missed her presence and light on campus.

The 2014-15 school year has been an exciting ride. The school grew in population throughout the year ending with a total enrollment of 201 students and we hope that this positive trend in enrollment will continue.

We have continued to refurbish our older facilities and beautify the campus. Louise's Cottage, the most recent building to be refurbished, has become a multi-purpose venue for Art, Health, Cooking and Spanish classes as well as early and after school programs and events, including our Holiday Alumni gathering.

Earlier this spring we hosted our first ever all school STEM Challenge Fair. We piloted an Upper School STEM Challenge class this year and under the leadership of a strong science team, the school will continue to deepen and widen its focus on STEM during the 2015-16 school year. Classes added to Upper School this year included Comedy Theater, Personal Finance and Statistics. A formal Middle School Sustainability class has also been introduced into our program. Next year we will be adding an Introduction to Psychology and a Theatrical Arts class which will incorporate stage management and set design.

We continue to integrate technologies into the classroom setting and we will be rolling out a one-to-one Chrome book program to the rising 9th graders as we move towards fully equipping our upper school students with Chrome Books.

During the final week of the school year, we received a grant from Friends Council on Education to fund a wind turbine project to power the greenhouse. This project will be implemented in the fall.

Our High School Young Leaders worked hard this year enhancing the spiritual life of the school. They organized and ran workshops for Peace and Social Justice Day, worked at the Mattaponi Indian Reservation and ran both a food drive for the reservation this spring and adopted a family for Christmas.

This February, they co- hosted the Annual Quaker Youth Leadership Conference in conjunction with Tandem Friends.

Sustainability and environmental stewardship are alive and well at Friends. Trees have been planted replacing some we have lost. Early school students created a butterfly garden with the help of the sustainability class. Middle School Science students placed bird feeders around campus, attracting many new species of birds including hummingbirds. We are pleased to announce that our campus has been officially designated a *National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat and an advanced Bird-Friendly Habitat*. The school received the *Lynnhaven River Now* Foundation's *Pearl School Award* once more for our environmental work and oyster gardening and we were recently deemed a *River Star Model Level School* through the Elizabeth River Foundation.

We ended the year with two theatrical productions. Upper and Middle school students presented a thoroughly entertaining version of *Peter Pan*; while Early and Lower School students' *A Midsummer Night's Dream* production was a joy to behold. As you can see from the great things going on at the school, we have an amazing group of talented students and dedicated teachers at Friends.

As a small school that is almost completely tuition driven, we do everything in our power to enhance the educational experience of our students. The Annual Fund is often the means for us to offer the wide range of programs we do. We are very grateful to those who continue to support our school with their time, talent and treasure helping us to continue to offer this empowering, transformational Quaker education to our students.

I would like to thank North Carolina Yearly Meeting for continuing to support and take an interest in Friends School of Virginia.

In peace,
Linda Serrette, Head of School

Carolina Friends School

Carolina Friends School is a vibrant and inclusive learning community empowering students to think critically, creatively, and independently. We foster active exploration and quiet reflection, individual endeavor and collaborative engagement. Inspired by Quaker values -- pursuit of truth, respect for all, peaceful resolution of conflict, simplicity, the call to service-- we teach our children that it is possible to change the world.

As Carolina Friends School celebrates its 50th year of teaching, it is our pleasure to report to the local Quaker meetings on how the school continues to live into our mission (printed above). Below are just a few ways in which, over the past year, we have lived into that mission.

From its simple beginnings in 1964 with one classroom, a handful of children, and one teacher, the school has grown tremendously. We now serve approximately 495 students, over 90 staff members, a main campus of 126 acres, and an annual budget of nearly \$10 million. But we have not

outgrown the sense of wonder in tending to the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of the children entrusted to us. From Lower School students discovering tadpoles in the creek to Upper School students discerning how to answer a Senior Seminar question such as “What is a Just Society?” the CFS community is constantly seeking new knowledge.

The questioning is not limited to students. During the 2013-14 school year, CFS launched a self-study process that focused on “Bringing our Mission to Life: how should we walk our talk.” The study centered on three topics: inclusivity, assessment, and Quaker philosophy and pedagogy. The school is sharing the self-study results with staff, the board, and the community this fall, as well as with accreditation committees from the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and Friends Council on Education (FCE).

The self-study has been an opportunity to celebrate successes – such as our continued incorporation of service and silence into the daily life of the school – as well as some of our challenges. Both the Board and the staff continue to struggle in particular with the challenge of diversity. Although we receive more applications than we can accept, we wrestle with the knowledge that the tuition is still too much for many whom we would like to serve. We also recognize that our student body and staff do not reflect the community in which we live. In addition to staff work informed by the self-study, the board has created an ad hoc committee on Affordability, Sustainability, and Accessibility to discern possible ways to meet these often competing priorities.

The 2013-14 school year ended with the sad news of allegations by five alumni of sexual misconduct in the late 1960s and 1970s by former staff members. The board and principal Mike Hanas worked closely together to respond to this issue in a way that supports alumni and brings discussions of sexual misconduct out of the shadows. The school has received an enormous outpouring of support and gratitude from the school community, alumni, and other Quaker and non-Quaker schools for the manner in which we pursued this issue. It was not been a journey we would have chosen, but it has afforded us an opportunity to live out the values we profess.

As the 2014-15 school year began, we welcomed students back to an enlarged Middle School, with new space for teaching science and art. This was the latest enhancement to the CFS campus funded by our “Building Friends” capital campaign. To date we have raised approximately 88% of our \$7.75 million goal. As we head toward the final stretch of this ambitious capital campaign, we are in the process of planning the final two projects – the expansion of the Lower School to provide a larger library and dedicated space for Spanish language instruction, and the building of a Performing Arts Center.

On September 13, 2014, we began our year-long 50th anniversary celebration with a meeting for worship at the Durham Friends Meeting. More than 200 people gathered for worship, song, and celebration, including Barbara Boineau, who was the first teacher at CFS. We look forward to more celebratory occasions this year, including a Thanksgiving event, the annual Alumni performances in December, and a special MLK day celebration in January. The 50th Celebrations will end with a Friends Fest in April.

We thank you for the ongoing support of the school from the Chapel Hill and Durham Meetings and invite you to join us in celebrating the past – and the future – of the school as we look forward to our next 50 years.

22. Guilford College Report

Gwen Gosney Erickson and Deborah Shaw shared their observations on and appreciation of the leadership of Jane Fernandes during her first year of service as Guilford's president. Jane worshiped with our yearly meeting in 2014 when we met at Guilford during her first weeks on the job. She has continued to engage with Quaker opportunities both on and off campus and is able to articulate the college's values and Quaker heritage to others. Yearly Meeting Clerk Nancy Craft and leaders of Quaker organizations and institutions are invited to Jane's inauguration in August. The college faced challenges with a climate of change and fiscal uncertainties this year. Jane's leadership has focused on how to maintain and grow strengths, such as our engagement as a community and our Quaker heritage, to position the institution as an excellent liberal arts college with a sustainable future ahead.

Max Carter is retiring from his position as Director of Friends Center this summer and C. Wes Daniels, most recently pastor at Camas Friends Church in Washington, has been hired as the William Rogers Friends Center Director and Professor of Quaker Studies. Friends look forward to welcoming Wes as he and his family relocate to North Carolina and join the Guilford community.

23. Joint Youth Programming with Piedmont Friends Fellowship

Andrew Wright gave an update on the work to coordinate the youth programs of NCYMC and PFFYM. Both bodies approved a one year trial of youth programming. Desire remains for such collaboration but no events or specific programming has been done at this time. Therefore, it is intended to continue this work for another year.

24. Discipline Revision Committee

Andrew Wright presented on behalf of the Discipline Revision Committee. A clean printed copy of the most recent draft section on membership was distributed. An annotated version was simultaneously shown on screen to show how feedback from the monthly meetings was incorporated and changes made between the latest version and the earlier one provide to our meetings for consideration. It became clear that each of our meetings is different. For example, a proposal to offer associate membership for children did not match how all meetings viewed membership. Therefore, the section was revised to offer options but leave the specifics of membership to our monthly meetings.

Minor changes were made, such as adding that membership may be terminated by request of the member. More substantial changes were made specific to the membership of children and Young Friends. The committee originally proposed a category of associate membership but monthly meetings responses made it clear that a descriptive spectrum rather than exclusive approach was needed regarding membership of children and YF.

Recognizing that there are many different individual and family circumstances and experiences and not all can be anticipated, the membership process is presented by providing recommended guidelines that may be applied by monthly meetings as best meets specific needs.

Some specific changes were suggested for consideration. It was felt that care needs to be taken to ensure that membership options are not interpreted as proscriptive or limited and presented as guidelines. It was agreed that the content of the section was one that is appropriate for provisional approval. The section of Membership will return for further consideration based on our living with the provisionally approved section for a year. Friends granted approval for the draft and process as presented with deep appreciation for the continuing work of the Discipline Revision Committee in collaboration with the monthly meetings.

25. Letter from Durham Monthly Meeting

Margie Dingman read the letter received from Durham Monthly Meeting regarding their current discernment process regarding affiliation with Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting.

Durham Friends Meeting has been asked by Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting (PFYM) if we would like to become members of the new Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. We have enjoyed a deep relationship with Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF) since its inception decades ago.

Our meeting has been pondering this invitation for about a year and has now formed an “Affiliations Committee” to delve into what this new affiliation as members of PFYM might mean to Durham Friends Meeting. The Affiliations Committee has met twice so far and we are excited about using this opportunity to learn of the history with our current affiliations, to engage our meeting in studying the relationships between Quaker organizations, and understanding of what it means to be in affiliation with another Quaker body. At this point we are identifying many of the affiliations our meeting currently has, the primary one being North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Other affiliations at different levels include Carolina Friends School, AFSC, FCNL, PFF, Quaker House, and several local affiliations in the community. We hope that our path will lead us to discern what affiliations mean to us while we learn more about our roles with these different groups.

David and I, co-clerks of Durham Friends Meeting, would like to express our meeting’s interest in engaging with NCYM-C in this discernment journey through communicating along the way and sharing wisdoms between each other. Our intention is to deepen our relationship with NCYM-C and other affiliations and to eventually discern what would a membership in the PFYM mean.

We have no timeline and no attachment to outcome except to be open to the Spirit as we walk this path of discernment. We would be delighted to walk this path with NCYM-C as we proceed.

Karen Stewart is clerking the Affiliations Committee. She, David, and I are happy to speak with you or others from NCYM-C about this journey.

In the Love that binds us,

Cathy Bridge and David Bridge
Co-clerks, Durham Friends Meeting

Yearly Meeting Ministry and Oversight was asked to be mindful of the process Durham Monthly Meeting is undertaking and hold them in prayer. Bruce Arnold, Barbara Gosney, and David Perry agreed to serve as yearly meeting liaisons to Durham to support continuing conversation and relationship during this discernment process. The yearly meeting clerk will write a letter to Durham expressing appreciation for their invitation to maintain and grow their relationship with our yearly meeting and report the yearly meetings actions as described.

26. Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Report

Kristin Olson-Kennedy shared as one of our yearly meeting representatives to FWCC. She attended the Section of the Americas Annual Meeting in Mexico City, Mexico in March. There the FWCC staff and Executive Committee proposed a new strategic plan that restructures the section operations to focus work in three areas: Communications, Finance, and Visitation. The financial focus has shifted as the staff is greatly reduced from past years. The publications outreach program formerly known as Wider Quaker Fellowship was laid down as energies are shifted to other forms of communication. Kristin is clerk of Traveling Ministry Corps which is developing a mission and structure for a new traveling ministries program directed at visitation of Friends between our different branches. This new effort will work with yearly meetings and monthly meetings to identify traveling ministers, support them in ways to engage cross-culturally, and cultivate opportunities amongst our meetings to receive these visitors. Kristin encouraged our yearly meeting to use her role on this committee to directly engage with visitation work to benefit our meetings.

The next major FWCC gathering will be in Peru. This location provides an exciting opportunity for African Friends to engage in cross-culturally traveling ministries with Bolivian and Peruvian Friends. Kristin Olson-Kennedy and Emily Stewart will be our representatives and Rachel Miller may also be able to represent our yearly meeting as well.

27. Request to Explore Possible Response to George Fox University's Policy

Kristin Olson-Kennedy updated the yearly meeting that there is no report on the concern raised at last yearly meeting's sessions regarding the university's policy on transgendered students and that further response is not being undertaken at this time.

28. Epistles to Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and Ohio Yearly Meeting

Darlene Stanley read the epistles to Ohio Yearly Meeting and Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), which were then approved.

To our dear Friends of Ohio Yearly Meeting,

‘And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:29-31

We are gathered on the campus of the University of North Carolina-Wilmington for our 318th annual session, Seventh Month 15-19, 2015.

Our theme this year is “Living Into Our Gifts” and we are humbly aware of the gifts of the Spirit that have nourished and fed our yearly meeting throughout the years. We felt you present in the unity of spirit spoken of in 1 Peter 3:8-11, with which clerk Nancy Craft opened our gathering: “...have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” In our daily Bible study we were reminded that prayer is the cornerstone of deepening our relationship with God so that we might be more aware of His will for us.

As always the sharing of our query responses and the State of the Society reports gave us a richer sense of connection with one another. Friends spoke of a deepening of their worship, creating fertile ground for the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit present in each community. Through the reports we heard that the Spirit is moving in our meetings and is tending particularly to what’s needed in each community.

Our yearly meeting is two years into the process of revising our Book of Discipline. This process is helping us to both articulate our current practice as well as discern what we hold dear and wish to preserve about our conservative traditions. Exploring the Faith and Practice of our yearly meeting is reaping fruit within our monthly meetings through prayerful discussion on our theology and ways of being together.

Visiting Friend Kathryn Damiano was invited to lead us in the exploration of living into our gifts. On Fifth and Sixth Day evenings Kathryn shared personal experiences of how she and others have been faithful in exercising God given spiritual gifts. As Kathryn spoke of the distinctives of the spiritual life of Conservative Friends, we were delighted to hear several stories of her opportunities with Bill and Fran Taber and how they taught her through word and example. Her deeply grounded and grounding presence invited us into sharing our own experiences and into an exploration of what speaks to our condition as a yearly meeting. She encouraged us to consider how to nurture our culture of listening and to be faithful to God in everyday life. As Friends shared in this discussion they named spiritual gifts that had been experienced in the monthly meetings and at yearly meeting. Trust and risk were recognized as integral parts of being in community – that the power of the Lord was about God’s grace in allowing us to be open and vulnerable with one another. We were grateful for Kathryn’s presence and her faithfulness to God’s leadings in her life.

We are glad that way has opened that our dear Friend Nancy Craft will be with you again for your annual sessions. With her we send our prayers for your time together to be fruitful according to God’s purposes. We know that you will enfold her in your tender Christian care.

We welcome continued visitation between our yearly meetings and pray that it might be in accordance with Divine Will that one or more of you would join us next year when we intend to meet at Guilford College, Seventh Month, 13-17, 2016.

On behalf of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Nancy Craft, clerk

To our dear Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting,

‘And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:29-31

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experienced in the monthly meetings and at yearly meeting. Trust and risk were recognized as integral parts of being in community – that the power of the Lord was about God’s grace in allowing us to be open and vulnerable with one another.

We very much enjoyed having Alice and Ruth Hampton visit with us last year. We are also sad that way did not open for some of us to visit with you as you gathered at Scattergood. We welcome continued visitation between our yearly meetings and pray that it might be in accordance with Divine Will that one or more of you would join us next year when we will meet at Guilford College, Seventh Month 13-17, 2016.

On behalf of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Nancy Craft, clerk

29. Documents Committee Report

Susan Lees provided a report with a summary of excerpts from epistles from around the world.

We were more global this year in the gathering of epistles to read. In our readings we went from Britain, Ireland, Belgium and Luxembourg, Sweden, and Switzerland, to Europe and Middle East, to Australia and New Zealand, to Central and South Africa, to Monteverde in Costa Rica, to Cuba and Jamaica, to the continental United States from Northwest YM and North Pacific YM through the Plains States, South Central, Baltimore and SAYMA, and returned to North Carolina. We were reminded that there are cultural differences within the continental United States. We have read and heard of conflict and growth; monthly and yearly meetings have made some tough decisions. New Association of Friends, in Indiana, celebrated their second year with an epistle; they currently have fifteen monthly meetings. Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting celebrated their first year with an epistle.

EMEYF (Europe and Middle Eastern Young Friends) Gathering in Macedonia (Spring 2014) “Go with the flow. There is a different sense of time in Macedonia.” Since we are all strangers in Macedonia, we were all put in the same position from where we then started to explore. This gathering felt active, buzzing. We overcame our worries of going to an unknown country and not being able to plan every detail. Sometimes it was difficult to pinpoint what was happening, but we could sense that a lot was going on. Some of us came to the gathering feeling we must overcome borders and tear them down. Then we worked on our theme “Borders within and without” in workshops and discovered other aspects. Borders keep us together. We have them for structure, but must remember that they need to be permeable. Impassable borders tear and keep communities apart. Misha from Georgia could not get a visa to come to Spring Gathering. This felt very significant to our gathering. It even was eye-opening for some of us, because many young Friends never experienced an impassable border.

Ohio YM (August 2014) Under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Friends were prompted to consider: How do we, as a body, equip ourselves to meet the needs of current and future generations?

Quaker Youth Pilgrimage to Bolivia (August 2014) The pilgrimage makes us understand that it is God's purpose that we are not alone. Whether our worship is programmed for a whole morning one day a week, or an un-programmed spiritual moment that lets the silence work and enables us to listen to the voice of God or sometimes a semi-programmed union of the two, we are united in faith to praise God.

Cuba (2013) In the midst of our diversity we are called to work hand in hand for the growth of the truth which frees, nourishes, and strengthens our faith.

FWCC Europe and Middle East Section Annual Meeting (June 2015) We have explored what this means to us as individuals, meetings, and as the world family of Friends. In plenary, in pairs, and in groups, we have asked: where have we come from, where are we going and how can we support one another as we travel?

We were struck by his (Ben Pink Dandelion) suggestion that the Amish query – *does this action build community?* – can be an excellent way of testing discernment about things great and small.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting (August 2014) In so much of what we do as a worshipping community, we are wandering in the wilderness together, seeking Divine guidance, or we are in exile together, struggling to articulate a common understanding based on our experiences of the Divine. We feel frustrated when we cannot see where we are going or agree on the end product. But we have to realize that the journey is more important than the destination. It is the journey together that makes us a worshipping community. And on the journey we are healed and transformed.

Barbara Gosney read from the 2014 Illinois Yearly Meeting epistle:

Poignant and powerful stories were told which brought profound honesty before us. This calling of truth-telling encourages us to grow to meet one another where we are. We seek to listen and accompany one another, allowing any change that comes to be from the Spirit. This work of faithfulness is like that of Jacob's wrestling with the angel, perhaps being wounded in the process and yet receiving a blessing.... We labored with each other passionately and lovingly about gender identity and sexual orientation concerns. We agreed to continue to wrestle, knowing we may suffer wounds, but also recognizing we may receive a blessing. We know that there is a gospel message here in our topic of inclusivity.

It was noted that we did not receive an epistle this year from our sister yearly meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Friends United Meeting). We were once one body and separated in 1904. NCYM-FUM is now in a time of struggle. May we hold them in prayer and share their burden.

30. Interim Body Meetings

Davidson Monthly Meeting has agreed to host Interim Body on the 24th of 10th Month. Durham is able to host the Interim Body on the 23rd of 4th Month.

31. Future Yearly Meeting Sessions

The 2016 yearly meetings sessions will be held at Guilford College. Wilmington Monthly Meeting will coordinate arrangements for the 2017 sessions to be held at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington with the understanding that others may need to help with hospitality. Virginia Beach may also be explored as a potential host site for a future date if a facility is located there to meet our needs.

32. Proposed Eastern Quarterly Meeting

There was a special interest group held at yearly meeting sessions in 2014 to discuss the needs of our smaller isolated meetings, most of which are located in the eastern part of the state. Friends gathered twice in Woodland hosted by Rich Square Monthly Meeting and in 2nd Month and 5th Month in New Bern. Fayetteville and Greenville Monthly Meetings have minuted their desire to establish a quarter to provide a recognized structure to continue these gatherings so that they may support and know one another more fully. There is a call to take care to insure that creation of something new not create a burden for already small groups. Friends spoke of rewarding experiences they enjoyed in these gatherings that focus on fellowship rather than business. The yearly meeting endorses these gatherings as they have been held in practice. However, it suggests that name other than “quarterly meeting” might be selected so gatherings are not confused with an established term for an additional administrative level with the yearly meeting’s organizational structure historically more focused on decision-making. Our monthly meetings can be of greater support and in closer fellowship with one another. There is a need for Friends to gather together though the exact form may not be known at this time. Fayetteville and Greenville are asked to further clarify what they are requesting and invited to bring a proposal back to the yearly meeting as way opens.

33. Friends Historical Collection Report

Librarian and archivist Gwen Gosney Erickson presented a report from Guilford College’s Friends Historical Collection.

The Friends Historical Collection (FHC) at Guilford College serves as the archives for NCYM-C. Meetings are reminded to deposit minutes and core permanent records there. In addition to NCYM-C, FHC also cares for the records of meetings affiliated with NCYM-FUM, Piedmont Friends Fellowship, and Southern Appalachian YM. While primary financial support is provided by Guilford College, FHC has historically received annual donations and sponsorship of a part-time archives assistant position from NCYM-FUM. Due to financial challenges this support has been significantly reduced. Further reductions and loss of the assistant position are a very real possible outcome if NCYM-FUM undergoes a split and/or reduction of affiliated monthly meetings. Monthly meetings and individuals are asked to contact FHC regarding donation and support opportunities.

In addition to the meeting records, FHC also maintains a comprehensive library of Quaker publications, manuscript and artifact collections, Quaker organizational records, and the Guilford College Archives. Summer projects this year include initial efforts to make the college's theses available online and receipt of a grant providing access to a much needed digital media management product. The grant enables FHC to make key oral history interviews available through online access for the first time.

Friends are invited contact FHC at archives@guilford.edu and/or learn more about our collection and resources at library.guilford.edu/fhc.

34. Answers to the Queries

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

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

Davidson: Members do sense a living silence that supports our worship as a community and as individuals. We experience this as people coming with open hearts. There is a balance between deep silence and deep vocal ministry. There is a sense that vocal ministry is appreciated and supported, but also a question regarding how that can be done by individuals. Some feel a need to encourage vocal ministry more from a larger group of people. There is a sense that we often are moved by the same messages, and hearing the perspective of others is helpful. Today in meeting for worship we heard ministry that included the challenge to consider sharing what questions or queries we are asking ourselves currently.

Durham: Many Friends were led to consider the last sentence of the query, and a variety of perspectives were offered. There is concern that some feel inhibited from offering vocal ministry due to perceptions of a hierarchy within the Meeting, the belief that some are privileged to speak and others not, or a sense that some ways of speaking are appropriate and some not. Friends may also hesitate to speak due to unfamiliarity with the tradition of vocal ministry, or inexperience with recognizing the leading to convey a message during worship.

Friends were uncomfortable with the notion that a gift for spoken ministry is the property of an individual alone. Spoken ministry arises in the context of worship and may flow through any person present. Given that we are a large meeting, it may be important at times to allow a message to season and be spoken by someone else. We can support vocal ministry by participating together in a gathered

community, expressing appreciation to Friends when their messages speak to us, and orienting newcomers in a way that encourages and enables them to speak during worship when they feel so led.

While recognizing the need to examine ourselves and broaden participation in vocal ministry, Friends appreciate the richness of vocal ministry that exists. We celebrate the integral experience of silence, prayer, and vocal ministry during worship. It is this living silence that draws Friends to the meeting and keeps them here. Friends come to worship with hearts and minds open and deliver messages in words of their choosing. There is much evidence that the inspiration gained in worship is carried into our daily lives.

Fayetteville: We follow this query, but feel if people are not gifted with vocal ministry it is hard to encourage them. It was felt that when people give vocal ministry it is appreciated. It was also felt that inspiration received in worship was carried over into the remainder of our worship time and is carried over into our daily lives.

Friendship: The meeting for worship at Friendship Friends Meeting is based on silent, expectant waiting for a glimpse of the Divine and is at the core of the life of the meeting. Vocal ministry arises from seeking what God might have us share with others, in spoken ministry or sometimes in song. Frequently only one or two messages are given and on occasion our meetings are completely silent, although alive and enriching. When engaged with distracting thoughts, we try to return to the presence of God in our meditation. There is a focused time at the end of worship, before the meeting is formally ended, for those present to share joys and concerns, thus involving the entire community in these personal matters. The Worship and Ministry Committee sponsors forums and an annual all-meeting retreat to engage members of community in enriching our spiritual lives. Once a month there is an opportunity for those who are so led to come together to consider a query or scripture and share in an effort to deepen the life of the meeting. We do feel we are encouraging of those who may have a gift in vocal ministry as well as those persons who may rarely speak. We are aware that those who speak are spoken to encouragingly by attending persons regarding their message.

Greenville: We do meet in a gracious and obedient waiting for the power of the Spirit to move among us. We find that the meeting begins to gather even before we are physically present with each other, and we sense the presence of some who are with us in spirit if not in the flesh. We do not always have vocal ministry, but find evidence that when we do, it is Spirit-led and heartfelt. We do support those who offer vocal ministry and prayer.

Rich Square: We uphold the practice of silent waiting in free and unprogrammed worship with ministry shared by all. We feel drawn together in a living silence. We trust we come to meeting with hearts and minds open to the Spirit. Yes, we do encourage spoken ministry.

Virginia Beach: We say "yes" this is our way. Newcomers add that our meetings feel welcoming, and they are embraced by our silence and worship. Louise's legacy of Spirit remains alive to us as an inspiration and joy. We value the silence that does carry forward into our daily lives.

West Grove: We feel that we are generally clear under the various outward heads of this query, though we feel that it would be very helpful if there were more opportunity for us to discuss our faith. A pre-meeting Bible study on First Days has been helpful in this regard.

Wilmington: Silent waiting and living silence are not passive. Both require spiritual discipline, practice and focus in order to strengthen spoken ministry. To assist in this process, seek its purpose and accept responsibility to be present, "It is something holy and wonderful we are trying to build together - the consciousness of the Presence with us here and the reality of communion with God." We can practice everyday and come to meeting with this expectation. Most of us feel we leave with more than we came with, and it can come out in surprising ways during the week. We show up to meeting, and if it happens, that is okay, but if not for me, perhaps for someone else. We accept and encourage vocal ministry.

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

Davidson: Members found the timing of this query challenging given daylight savings time change on the day of consideration. But many are faithful in attendance, even on this day, and the quality of the vocal ministry has been good. The challenge of submission has been met as Friends enter ready to be open. Even latecomers are able to enter with manner and presence that are not disturbing, ready to worship. Our sense is that concern for late arrival is in part a cultural tenet; coming in prepared to worship is more important than when you enter meeting.

Durham: Friends gratefully affirmed the Spirit that is present and strongly felt during Meeting for Worship, in spite of – or perhaps because of – the large number of attenders. Worship has been deepened by long periods of silence and meaningful messages from Friends who do not speak as frequently. Friends appreciate the work of the Greeters as they welcome attenders and engender silent, worshipful energy upon entry into Meeting for Worship. Appreciation was also expressed for individual Friends who are consistently present and radiate a joyful spirit during meeting. Some Friends find that modifying particular phrases in this query helps them to respond more positively to it. For example, worship might be seen as opening dialogue with one's true identity, or melting into the connection with the Divine. Friends expressed that when two or more are gathered together in worship, the Spirit cannot truly be disturbed. So-called interruptions that occur due to late arrivals or other causes can be welcomed as coming from God and attended to in that way. Individual Friends feel responsible for settling themselves in preparation for Meeting for Worship. At the same time, the words of the query need not be interpreted

as "shoulds," but rather as an invitation to open our hearts and enter into communion with the ever-present Spirit and with each other.

Fayetteville: We do attend regularly when we are able to and since we are so small we try to contact each other when unable to. Our behavior does seem to be in submission to God in silent communion.

Friendship: Most Friends are faithful in attending meetings for worship and other activities intended to strengthen the spiritual life of our meeting community. The meeting room is often filled to very near capacity on First Day morning. Many Friends arrive early in order to share in a short time of fellowship before settling into worship. Those who arrive after meeting has settled are careful not to disturb the worship. The tenor of worship is that of open submission to God in silent communion, enriched by the vocal ministry of those Friends who are so led.

Greenville: We find that faithful attendance is an important expression of faith and community. We feel that a rigid view of attendance would detract from the spirit of love which flourishes among us. Some come late, some must leave early, and this is a way for us to help each other rather than something that interferes with our communion.

Rich Square: We are grateful for the faithfulness of those who live close in caring for the spirit of the meeting at all times, while those who live at a distance are faithful in being present and on time on a regular basis. We all cherish our times of silent communion and trust that we are constantly seeking God's presence through vocal ministry and quiet worship.

Virginia Beach: We find the spirit of the meeting is less often disturbed by late arrivals than the silence. Many of us enjoy seeing additional folks arrive, no matter what the time. Do we need to better reach out to members not regularly present so they may find it more meaningful? If we are following our Guide, we will be led here.

West Grove: We feel that we are generally clear under the various heads of this query.

Wilmington: We believe that we are faithful in our attendance at meetings for worship and careful not to arrive late to meeting. Most of us feel that a prompt arrival is respectful of each other's worship time. We work to settle down our thoughts at the beginning of meeting, and are mindful that late arrival could disturb that spirit. Many of us hold a personal goal to get to a level of concentration that would make late arrivals unknown to us. We strive to find that place in ourselves where the spirit cannot be disturbed by any other's actions. We discussed that by engaging fully in silent communion that the submission to the inner light is a personal responsibility.

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

Davidson: We are clear on this query in terms of the life and workings of our Meeting. Friends spoke of the love, humility, kindness, and appreciation they have seen and experienced within our Meeting. While many of us do not identify as Christian, we all embrace the Quaker testimonies, many of which are seen to arise from Jesus's example and teachings, and we value all paths that point in much the same direction, whatever their label. We were led to reflect further, in silence, how this query is reflected in our daily lives, outside of this Meeting.

Durham: Yes, we try to follow the example of Jesus in our individual lives and in our community. We cultivate a spirit of love and unity from which we strive to promptly deal with conflict and discord.

As our meeting grows, we continue to find ways for Friends to deepen their understanding of each other. In being known, we find and resolve conflict amongst us. Nonetheless, we are an imperfect community. None of us have the full measure of Light, but the part we have is complete. When we are able to turn toward the Inward Teacher, we can live together in a spirit of love, honesty and humility.

Fayetteville: As a faith community we seek to follow the leading of The Spirit. Love and unity are maintained among us and we try to avoid any unneeded criticism. Our differences are rare, but when they arise, we do try to resolve them in a spirit of love and honesty.

Friendship: We see this query as a good reminder of our desired intentions. Our community is made up of members and attenders who strive to live conscientious and Spirit-led lives. Love and unity are characteristic of our corporate life. If differences arise we strive to face the challenge or the conflict honestly believing if demonstrating an effort, love and unity or a compromise with positive results, may be the final outcome. It is our hope that we can be inspired by God's leadings to reconcile and practice forgiveness arriving on the other side of conflict with humility and grace.

Greenville: We believe that one of the greatest strengths of our meeting is the tender love that is maintained among us. We are supportive of each other and haven't felt the need to forgive each other recently.

Rich Square: We look to the teachings of Jesus and to the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance in our daily lives. As far as we know, we do cultivate a forgiving spirit and do not engage in needless, destructive criticism of others. Should differences arise, we hope to be open to promptly resolving them in a spirit of love, honesty and humility.

Virginia Beach: We experience love and unity as a community and have seen it especially this summer in the absence of our clerk as members have stepped up in a spirit of trust to work together. Personally, the query is a reminder of work to be done and some find it easier to practice in the presence of the meeting.

West Grove: We feel that we endeavor, as best we can, to follow Jesus' teaching and inspiration in our daily lives, and we feel that our members are in unity with each other.

Wilmington: The place of wisdom is found by making decisions that are motivated by love. We endeavor to do better and strive to meet the challenges of this query. In the meeting, we find that meeting the requirements of this query is simple. Outside of meeting the challenge of treating those with love and unity becomes more difficult. Others can see forgiveness as a weakness when it in fact leads to wisdom. We are in the business of being taken advantage of because proceeding in love encourages the individual to seek a forgiving spirit. We endeavor not to let the actions of others change who we are. It is also important to not let the judgments and criticisms destroy our character. We all had to learn at someone else's expense, it is our responsibility to understand that others may have to learn at ours. Our discussion also lead us to speak about *The Four Agreements* – Don Miguel Ruiz's code for life. These include “be impeccable with your word,” “don't take anything personally,” “don't make assumptions,” and “always do your best.” We found that these agreements are vital to living life in the spirit of love. If forgiveness is from the heart, disagreements can be resolved with love, honesty, and humility. Forgiveness may never be expressed aloud, but when we reach that point, we can release it to God and be healed. The Lord's Prayer says “forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.” We need to hold each other in the same light as we hold ourselves in order to live a life of love and unity.

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

Davidson: We value and acknowledge all contributions, whether they be money, talent, or time. Monetary contributions have been generous and there is a real sense of unity that the type or amount of contributions is not an issue. We have fewer individuals contributing time than we might like, but while this stretches us, we are able to function well. We share our building freely with the local community, and the meeting has chosen to view ourselves as stewards of the meetinghouse.

Durham: We are grateful for the many Friends who contribute money, time, talents, and interests to Durham Friends Meeting and its work in the wider world. In particular, it is heartening that these contributors include youth and young adult Friends. We appreciate Friends who give with ease and without undue attachment to the outcome. When Friends share and educate us about what they are doing,

it adds vibrancy to our community. We continue to discover a myriad of gifts and talents within the meeting, and many Friends step forward to share their gifts with joy. Through this process of asking, giving, and receiving, we draw out that of God in each other.

At the same time, there is concern that participation is not as broad as it could be. If everyone who attends contributed to the expenses of our meeting, we could realize more of our dreams for in-reach and outreach rather than barely covering our budgeted expenses. We experience challenges in filling committees and crucial positions. We often wonder how we can do better, given the size and the gifts of our meeting community.

To invite broader participation, we must "see each other anew," recognizing and celebrating the Light and the potential within each individual. Greeting each other with open hearts and expanding our expectations can energize us to give freely, with generosity of spirit.

Fayetteville: We each serve to the best of our abilities, some able to give more money and others by using their talents. We do tend to give freely to help others.

Friendship: An annual letter from the meeting's treasurer gently reminds us of our responsibility to financially support the meeting, and there is a sense that most are giving as they are able. Our plan to build a new meeting room has challenged and encouraged us to examine our discretionary spending. Friends consider their time, talents, and possessions as given them in trust responding generously and cheerfully to requests for assistance of various kinds in the meeting community and beyond.

Greenville: We do look for opportunities to use our time and energy freely for others. We are aware of the great needs that surround us and, mindful that we cannot meet every need, are open to serving others as we are led. The financial needs of the meeting are small and easily met at this time.

Rich Square: The meeting's financial status is sound and Friends share in ensuring this happens. Talents and possessions are shared in trust and used freely for the needs of others.

Virginia Beach: Much of this meeting's individual and collective resources are given to our Friends School, one of only a few under the care of a single meeting. We feel we generously share our time and talents in upkeep of the property. The meetinghouse itself is shared most often with the School, but also made available to a large number of outside organizations as well. Each of us also has an individual ministry devoted to others within and outside of the meeting. Children who have grown up in this meeting return to worship with us and begin outreach to others on their own. Like most organizations, it is true for us that most of the work is done by a few hard-working and faithful members.

West Grove: Our members are generally faithful in supporting the meeting financially, and we trust we are clear under the other heads of this query.

Wilmington: We do assume the responsibility for the rightful share of the expenses for the meeting. We frequently discuss the use of our building and seek out opportunities to share this resource with others in our community. While it can be difficult to identify other's needs, once we are aware of this need, we take the steps needed to help. Our work with the Alternatives to Violence Program demonstrates the meetings commitment to using our time and talents to address the needs of our community. Individually, we all give what we can, but we know that there is more to do. All of us give in different ways. We do what we can, as we can.

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

Davidson: This query asks us what our intentions are, but it's hard to know how well we actually do these things. It's much easier to want our own way in business matters that come before Meeting than to truly seek and submit to Divine will. Also, it must be noted that attendance at Meeting for Business is always less than at Meeting for Worship. We recognize there is room for growth in our business process, while also feeling gratitude for the degree to which we are clear on this query.

Durham: In so far as the queries can be seen as a report card on how we are doing, on this one we are doing really well.

We have had increasing participation over the years and we are pleased to see new faces as they come to meeting for business. A Friend expressed that it is a relief and a joy to be among Friends after long experience in other church bodies where it was common practice to manipulate parliamentary process to overpower those with another view. Friends feel deep gratitude for our sense of an underlying unity, which does not depend on agreement on an item of business or on the words used to express our beliefs.

Although we do experience impatience with the process – and even with each other – we do not doubt that each of us seeks to be grounded in love, understanding and a spirit of forbearance and that we are seeking together the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth. Indeed, we experience business meeting held in this way as practice for our way of living; as an inspiration that anchors us as we live the rest of our lives.

Fayetteville: We are fortunate that both members and attenders are willing to come to our business meetings and fully participate.

Friendship: While our general attendance at meetings for business has grown to the most it has been in a great many years, we continue to encourage more participation from all. We have worked on challenging issues together such as plans and fund raising for a new meeting space, serious budgetary changes, questions of how we are associated with the larger Quaker world and our statement regarding the treatment of undocumented refugee children, just to name a few. We have sought the right course of action in our various deliberations and have done so, for the most part, in a spirit of patience and tolerance for one another. There have been times when perceptions of “the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth” varied widely. We have worked toward the sense of unity under Divine guidance.

Greenville: We come to meeting for business to set aside our own opinions and best judgment and listen for guidance from the Spirit in arriving at our decisions. Those of us who attend yearly meeting business sessions find that business is conducted in a similar way there.

Rich Square: We have faithful attendance of 8 to 12 people at business meetings, despite long travel distances. We feel that our meetings are held in the spirit of love, understanding and forbearance while we are seeking unity.

Virginia Beach: While those of us attending meeting for business may be small compared to our membership, we are able to accomplish the work of the meeting. The time we spend together is fruitful and under divine guidance. While we may struggle with issues from time to time, we gather in open worship for the best solutions.

West Grove: There are generally five or more Friends who are consistently present for meetings for business, and we feel our meetings are owned by the presence of the Head of the Church.

Wilmington: We regularly attend meeting for business and hold the meeting with tolerance and acceptance for all. We attempt to keep with the faith of God by avoiding picking on petty differences. Our business meetings are run knowing that beliefs that exclude or judge are not of God not submit to the Authority of Truth. There is a patient search for unity, and we are open to elegant solutions from all participants. We strive to continue making decisions with unity and tolerance because consensus is like rowing a boat; all members must be in exact unison to accomplish the required task.

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

Davidson: No answer provided for this query.

Durham: Friends appreciate the presence of children in our meeting. During worship, their vocalizations call our attention to the love that sparked their lives, the hope for the love that will surround them in the future, and the power of love as all of us move through life. We hope that all children can experience the quiet peace of gathered silence. We seek to connect with children on their own level and honor each one as a unique child of God, giving them a sense of fearlessness in the context of the love and safety offered by our community, and beyond.

Both youth and adult members are grateful for the benefits they and their children have received as members of a loving multigenerational community. Children and youth have many opportunities to cultivate a sense of openness and develop their religious insights, through interaction with youth from other faith communities, support for the questioning that typically occurs during adolescence, and participation in retreats and larger Quaker organizations. Parents feel that the meeting is a good place to raise children, and the meeting appreciates the nurturing and guidance that parents provide.

Important questions also arise as we consider the example and the teaching we offer children and youth. How much responsibility should children have for managing their own behavior and experience during Meeting for Worship? Is it of concern that some youth do not participate in meeting activities? Do we teach children enough about Quaker history and beliefs? How can we best present an inclusive view of the Divine, given the prevalence of the view that God is male in our culture? We strive to build relationships and communicate the value of openness while also giving children the knowledge and confidence to articulate positively what it means to be a Quaker.

Fayetteville: Our children are grown, but we try to follow this query with our extended families.

Friendship: The children of the meeting are such a gift to our community. When they return to the meeting room shortly before the close of worship there is an expansion of our hearts and beings as we receive them with joy. The cultivation of openness and expectancy about life seems to be a mutual seeking between the children and the adults in the meeting. Those who work most closely with the religious education for the children do seek to aid them in their spiritual growth and moral discernment, as do others of us as we have opportunity. We seek moments to share with them the faith and practice of Friends as best we can. We hope to create and nurture safe space for them to be led by the Spirit in their own religious understandings. Evidence of that has been apparent as they have shared in joys and concerns at the close of meeting for worship and as we have watched them grow.

Greenville: Our children are all adults but they are still precious to us. At this point in our lives actual caring for children involves caring for our grandchildren or other people's children.

Rich Square: We now have two young children attending our meetings fairly frequently. Their youthful exuberance helps us respond to encourage their sense of openness and expectancy. We seek age appropriate ways to share our faith and encourage them in their spiritual growth.

Virginia Beach: We reflect on opportunities, both seized and missed, not only in how we've raised our own children, but also in the ongoing outreach and ministry of our school. We take comfort that no matter whether those children joined this meeting or not, their lives reflect our values.

West Grove: We feel we do endeavor to share our faith with our children as best we can.

Wilmington: The members of the meeting who are parents believe that this is very true within their homes. As a meeting, it is more difficult to speak to because we do not have a large amount of regular attending children. The children who do attend meeting are met with a sense of openness regarding their spiritual growth process. Many of the members have adult children who were raised in a meeting to aid growth in moral discernment and cultivate a sense of openness. Recently, we have had more interaction with the local Friends school, in which members got to participate in the whole-school meeting for worship. They witness the values testimonies that are shared through the Friends school, and families have come to meeting as well. We continue to work developing methods to be an example for children and focus on the ideal of Light within everyone.

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

Davidson: No answer provided for this query.

Durham: We do endeavor to live in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all war. We are challenged to move inward, surrendering to that Life and Power that unites us all. During Meeting for Worship we witness powerful vocal ministry. Friends' voices resonate with us as they relate the experience of a nurturing, all-encompassing love that has the power to deliver us from violence.

As we carry this experience outward, we recognize that renewable forms of energy can foster peace rather than furthering preparations for war. We are also deeply moved by the Spirit's work in meeting, bringing Friends of all ages together to explore opportunities for racial justice in our larger community.

Fayetteville: We do what we can with the limited resources we have. We do pay taxes that support war, but try to balance that by how we spend our other money. In looking at the work of reconciliation, we feel

while we look globally, we can start by acting locally, in how we respond to individuals. While we are small and unable to do much as a meeting, we do support and are active with Quaker House and in several other Quaker organizations that promote peace. Some of us do sign petitions and do some writing when able.

Friendship: We recognize that poverty, ignorance, and injustice all contribute to war and violence and we see the meeting's activities as contributions to reconciliation and peace. These efforts reflect lives grounded in the spirit of love that takes away the occasion of war and violence.

We do maintain our testimony against all military preparations. Our concerns have widened as we see military actions increasingly involve technologies that distance us from the impact of war and that creep into civilian police work.

The meeting has participated in providing meals and fellowship to homeless families in Greensboro and spoken up on behalf of unaccompanied migrant children seeking refuge from violence in their home countries. Several members and attenders have traveled to Raleigh to join in protests of state legislative decisions that increase the burdens of poverty, decrease access to medical care, and contribute to the disenfranchisement of those on the lower end of the economic spectrum.

Greenville: We do not all understand the peace testimony in the same way, but each of us is faithful to that testimony as according to current Light we have been given on it. We do work towards reconciliation in our community as Way opens.

Rich Square: We can point to a few activities in which we as a gathered meeting engage as a public witness. Through slow steps we seek to work with young people in the Woodland Children's Community Garden and our Salem Black River members work with the Goodwill Parochial School as a cultural center in their community. We assume all members and attenders are mindful of this testimony in their personal lives. We seek ways to witness to this testimony as a meeting as well as individually. We need to challenge ourselves to find better ways to reach out to our local and our wider communities in the work of reconciliation.

Virginia Beach: We struggle with strong and confusing feelings when we hear this query. It is tempting to become overwhelmed, making it difficult to stay in the work of reconciliation. To keep ourselves centered, we listen for that still small voice that tells us we can make a difference. Whether we work within our families or at the national level, we seek ways to make the world a better place.

West Grove: We feel our meeting maintains our testimony for peace and against war to the best of our ability.

Wilmington: The Advices were read. Our meeting has hosted Alternatives to Violence Program training sessions. This had demonstrated our commitment to the peace testimony. We are watching over our corner of the world by offering individuals training in reconciliation. We believe that it is important, even if impractical, to maintain this testimony. It would be easy to believe in peaceful solutions if all others did as well. We see our task is to 'let peace begin with me'. One way to have peace is to have social justice in our communities and address the causes of war. We are an ocean of peace and every drop counts.

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

Davidson: As a meeting, we have built a building that we can manage, and operate it in a manner that encourages its use without incurring a lot of cost. We are prompt in paying our mortgage payment and ensured that we could manage those costs. We have chosen activities that strengthen us spiritually by hosting Yearly Meeting Interim Body as well as Friends World Committee on Consultation nominating committee. We find it challenging to be honest with ourselves about our interests and time and how we make choices in light of this query, particularly in being honest about what we can reasonably take on without becoming overcommitted. We support each other by being examples to each other in our daily choices, caring more about who we want to be and how we commit our time and energy rather than material status.

Durham: While it may seem easy initially to answer yes to these questions, we recognize that if we reflect deeply, we may find, for example, that although we may be honest, we may neglect to say what needs to be said, with difficult consequences. We also recognize that there may be times and places where we really are not strengthening our physical, mental, and spiritual lives. When at home do we spend too much time on the internet? When at work, do we bring our full spiritual selves to our tasks? Many of us struggle especially with the tenet of simplicity, which is often complicated. One needs to do a lot to invite sustainability. We are reminded that by replacing something simple with something that might seem more luxurious or privileged, we are not necessarily straying from the value of simplicity. The internet can be helpful, just as replacing a meeting's outhouse with indoor plumbing was helpful. Our busy lives sometimes seem in conflict with simplicity, and we keep trying. Sometimes in holding very strictly to simplicity we create complexity for others. When thinking of the value of respecting an individuals' right to make individual choices, no matter how supportive or harmful, we might recall the way that Christ looked upon humanity from the cross, with love and light, compassion not pity, no looking down. We must work out our own destiny. We must allow others to make their own choices, regarding the simplicity of their lives and all else. We don't all need to live the same. We appreciate this query, not because we feel we ever achieve it, but because we cannot imagine our lives without trying.

This query is about choices, and priorities, and the more we pray, the more settled we are. This and other queries help us to become more fully awake in the Light.

Fayetteville: In observing simplicity and honesty in our manner of living, we find we are also trying not to harm others. Not having a building to maintain is helpful to us in our maintaining this testimony. We support activities which strengthen physical, mental and spiritual life.

Friendship: As far as is known, individual Friends and Friends families are clear under the various heads of this query. Being just in all our dealings includes being welcoming and invitational to newcomers and strangers, and being able to share our activities as a faith community with them. We believe the larger worship space we are planning to build will allow us to more fully share our activities and to welcome newcomers. We continue to be sensitive to the balance between living within the bounds of our financial circumstances and addressing the real need for a larger worship space to accommodate the increasing number of people who share our worship and other activities. Discerning the right level of financial support we should offer to the many outside organizations whose missions we support is also a challenge. We do not want to outrun our Guide by spending beyond our means, but also don't want to lag behind through timidity or undue anxiety over finances.

Greenville: Those of us who still work for large organizations find that the expectations put on us sometimes force us to seriously consider the extent to which we can be cooperative employees without compromising our integrity. Meeting informally for breakfast and conversation allows us to help each other come to clearness about how to deal with issues that arise in our personal lives outside of meeting.

Rich Square: As far as we know, we do observe simplicity and honesty in our living. The meeting does pay its bills on time, living within the bounds of our financial circumstances. We are mindful that a balance is necessary among the diverse activities which strengthen our physical, mental and spiritual lives.

Virginia Beach: There are many demands that modern life puts on us. The perception that technology, fashion trends, and expedience are needs, rather than wants, makes it very tempting to complicate our mode of living. We are grateful our school teaches the values that this historic Quaker query extolls, and that our meetinghouse exhibits simplicity to all who enter. In our personal lives, we continually attempt to balance those conflicting demands in a way that helps us meet the challenges posed by these questions.

West Grove: We trust that the choices that we make as a meeting are such as will strengthen our spiritual lives.

Wilmington: In answer to the question of simplicity and honesty we shared methods we have used to declutter our homes and noted that simplicity is a relative term. Simple it seems, is wanted until it becomes complicated and inconvenient. To the question of living within our bounds, being punctual and just, we say yes, we are to the best of our ability. Some of us have interpreted the term ‘dealings’ as interpersonal dealings in our personal lives and work lives. To the third question about our choice of activities one person mentioned that sometimes we do too much for others and it can cause harm rather than good. We question whether unnecessary TV watching, and the way we plant our gardens could be more harmful rather than good. Several Friends have noticed that carrageen is a common ingredient in milk products and other foods and studies have shown it to be potentially harmful to our health. Sometimes it is hard to find balance as we seek to avoid foods that might be harmful. Corporately and generally, we can say yes to these queries.

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

Davidson: We hear in this query a call to limit our consumption of material things for our spiritual benefit. In choosing not to indulge, we can become free to live more abundantly. We recognize that we need to look carefully at our lives and see what may be harmful, distracting or addictive. Being clear about what is truly important opens the way to help one another live more deeply.

Durham: No answer provided for this query.

Fayetteville: The meeting does not have a problem with alcoholic beverages, tobacco and harmful drugs as we don’t have any of them at our meeting. Some of us may have a glass of wine or buy a raffle ticket for charitable purposes.

With the Electronics Age it is harder to avoid things that can be demoralizing. As a meeting and as individuals we do operate with fiscal integrity. We do affirm rather than swear, but find we often are not asked to decide between them, as language is often inclusive to ask if we affirm or swear.

Friendship: The underlying concern of the first part of this query is stated in Query 8: Do we choose those activities which will strengthen our physical, mental, and spiritual life; and do we avoid those harmful to our ourselves and others? The meeting assumes that our way of life is in the spirit of this query, although individual members may carry it out in different ways. Inasmuch as we have several new members and attenders, it may be that not all are aware of the testimony to abstain from all addictive

substances. Some members do not agree with the assumption of this query that abstinence is the best and most faithful practice. As far as is known, no one abuses alcoholic beverages and no one indulges in illegal drugs, gambles, or frequents places of diversion that tend to be demoralizing. The meeting does not allow the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco in the meetinghouse or at meeting functions.

There is concern to avoid the exploitation of others to our advantage and to stand against it wherever it occurs. As far as we know friends adhere to a single standard of truth in all their dealings.

Greenville: We continue to hold that moderation is a good practice for most people but that abstinence is a necessity for some. Avoiding growing rich at the expense of others is still meaningful in these times and it requires that we are mindful of how we spend and invest. While we recognize the need to pay attention to our personal financial choices we also are aware of our responsibility to stay involved with the large powers in the world and see what we can do to influence them in the right direction.

Rich Square: We read this query as asking us to be mindful of the many ways we can say “No” to common practices of the surrounding culture and society in order for us to live fuller lives and to serve as positive examples of wholesome living. For the most part, we believe we are mindful.

Virginia Beach: We remind ourselves that the advice to refrain from taking oaths ought to be taken in a broader sense than referring only to the formal swearing of oaths. We are to speak directly and with the intent always of speaking truly. The alcohol clause strikes some as too absolute and that ‘abstinence’ could be softened. To others the trap that alcohol is for many makes this word seem appropriate. The investment culture raises worries about profiting from the loss of others. In its more speculative forms it may involve us in a form of gambling. We take the query to call us to thoughtfulness about all our speakings and doings. How this thoughtfulness plays out in individual lives will vary. The challenge remains valid.

West Grove: We are mindful and strive to incorporate these testimonies into our lives with varying degrees of success.

Wilmington: Friends noted the many specific questions embedded in this query. We struggled to answer these inquiries concretely but this proved futile as Friends hold many different views of the questions posed and many degrees of agreement on what, if any, hard and fast conclusions and/or guidelines can be established from this query. Friends did reach consensus, though, on the intent of the query to keep us mindful of the need to live lives of perspective, moderation, and careful consideration of how our actions and choices affect not just ourselves but our communities and culture.

Query #10: Do we endeavor to live in harmony with nature? Are we careful in our stewardship of the earth's irreplaceable resources?

Davidson: As a nation we could do more to address environmental impact, and individually our tendency to seek comfort through indoor climate control could use more attention. We notice that little choices as a community in regular operations could impact the environment to different degrees.

Durham: No answer provided for this query.

Fayetteville: When we acquire First Day materials we buy only what we feel we need plus some for visitors. Sharing facilities with Quaker House allows us to reduce our carbon footprint. We come together to consider ways to follow this query so we can follow it as individuals

Friendship: As a meeting there are several things we do to live in harmony with nature and yet find that to be an ongoing challenge, materially and spiritually, in the culture in which we are embedded. Through meeting workdays our members take care of our grounds and the plants which make up our landscape without the use of products harmful to the environment. Our small garden, tended sustainably by a member and her children, helps us to be more aware of nature.

As a meeting community our endeavors are shown in purchasing recycled paper products and eco-friendly cleaning supplies. The ongoing plans for the new meeting room and necessary changes in our existing property are considered with the realization of our ecological footprint. We are all made aware of the ways to live in harmony with nature by the testimony and witness of individuals in the meeting.

Greenville: We make our personal and individual efforts to conserve water and energy resources, but we do not want to be complacent. We try to remain open to new ideas about ways to live more simply. As the problems facing the environment are large, we are also aware of our responsibility to join with others to make the larger scale changes that are needed.

Rich Square: We see much around us which threatens nature's balance and leads us to be discouraged. Nevertheless, we join in hope with others who are striving to care for our earth and its resources as a gift from God for the well-being of all God's creatures. We do seek ways to live in harmony with nature and to be careful stewards of the earth's resources. Our Woodland Children's Community Garden continues to be a sign of our respect for nature and care for the environment. We trust this has been so for the children and neighborhood adults who are involved with the garden. In considering our use of resources at the meeting house and lunch room, we have sought to limit our use of energy for heating, cooling and lighting as well as our use of disposable items. We acknowledge the resources we use in order for us to be together as a spiritual community. We are grateful for those resources and seek to use them wisely.

Virginia Beach: Stewardship in this complex civilization requires vigilance. Our shiny devices do not proclaim openly the resources of the earth and the labor they require. Our abundant food supply hides the

chemical interventions it is based on. Harmony with nature also means preparation for the storms and cataclysms with which nature will present us, and for the turmoil in our own human nature.

West Grove: West Grove Friends take this query to heart. We see the presence of God in all things and seek to live in harmony.

Wilmington: In answer to the question of harmony with nature, we are feeling led to live in ways that are respectful of the whole of creation realizing that we are only one part. We are not in control. To the question of stewardship of the world's irreplaceable resources, we seek to minimize, conserve, recycle, restore, and maintain. We seek not to waste or blame. We acknowledge that individual actions are important and so are corporate actions, as they are larger scale and affect more people and larger portions of nature. We must all act local and think global. Living this way is noble.

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

Davidson: As a meeting we do well with the first part of the query, in the ways that we welcome all who attend or visit our meeting and in the way that our children and their parents know that they are valued and well cared for. As individuals we have found ways to live out responding to that of God in others, even in stressful times and have seen that it changes behavior. We have also recognized times when our own prejudices and biases confront us and require reflection and prayer. We acknowledge that this is not our work alone but part of our ongoing relationship with God.

We are challenged as a meeting to respond to social injustice. While individual members are doing this work in various ways, we are still seeking what we are called to as a meeting.

Durham: Yes, as individuals and as a community we seek to understand and rectify social injustice and racial discrimination in our community and in the world at large. We are growing in the number of ways we reach out to our community. We are also learning how to be present with others. This query reminds us that the presence of another person is a gift. We share in a moment of reverence as we experience God among us.

Fayetteville: While answering this query, we remembered three of our community were visiting a prisoner to let him know we cared about him. It was mentioned that it is often hard to follow this query when dealing with someone who has hurt us.

As a meeting we have been seeking to rectify social injustices both as individuals and as a meeting in attending demonstrations and rallies.

Friendship: Our friends in the meeting do reverence that of God in all human beings and model that in their individual lives and in the meeting activities. Friendship Meeting has an active Peace and Social Concerns Committee, which provides forums and announcements to our Meeting community of events happening in both social justice and racial discrimination areas. This committee keeps us informed of events and issues in our community and the world. In addition, various members/attenders through employment or active volunteer work have opportunities to faithfully work toward change. This work is a witness to the presence of God in all people. Among the things the meeting does are: donations to First Friends Meeting's food pantry; providing meals and hospitality at Pathways Shelter for families in crisis; staying aware of immigration issues both locally and in the world thru local AFSC staff; continuing to provide support for resettled refugees; providing help to a family at Christmas time with food and gifts.

Greenville: We recognize that the world at large has a wide streak of injustice running through it. In our personal lives we find opportunities to recognize the needs of many different individuals around us and to respond to them according to the Light that we are given in the moment.

Rich Square: To the extent we see how to do so, we reverence that of God in each person. At times we may be unaware and lack the vision to see other ways we could respond.

Virginia Beach: We say, "yes" to reverence and seeking! Being involved at levels beyond the local community can lead to discouragement at the enormity of the world's problems, yet many of us have persisted working in larger spheres. Our own Peace and Social Justice Committee is seeking a forum for the meeting to bridge the differences among people. The meeting also holds membership in other organizations active in rectifying injustice and discrimination. There will always be limitations to the effectiveness of our work. Let us not let guilt over what we have not gotten done discourage us. We feel that getting to personally know individuals different from us helps us to work harder in the wider world.

West Grove: Within the bounds of our human limits and with the grace of God we do.

Wilmington: The presence of this query at this time in our culture seemed especially appropriate. At this time, we discussed and reflected on the violence that is present in our country specifically referring to the events in Baltimore, Maryland. There is a sense of relief that voices are being heard and that we are reaching a tipping point in which social injustice and racial discrimination are sparking discussions across the country. We noted that democracy is fragile in the face of injustice, and we must work to increase training, housing, and opportunity equality to adequately address social injustice. The powerful conversation needs to be continued, but charity begins at home. With mindful recognition, we must address that of God in everyone because impacting the community at large begins with the self. The recognition of privilege is paramount in rectifying social injustice and racial discrimination. In order to alter the community in which we live, we need to address the basic needs of that community.

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

Davidson: We are clear that we are welcoming to newcomers and non-members as we have intentionally developed welcoming practices and attitudes as we moved into our new space. We also see that our young participants are included in meeting activities and responsibilities, particularly greeting and work days. We are aware that more people belong to the meeting than are members. We support that sense of belonging even as we recognize we can do more to encourage consideration of membership. Members are less aware now than in the past of how much pastoral care is going on. Concerns were also raised about more direct outreach to the surrounding community to let people know about our meeting and Quakerism.

Durham: Friends reflected on the abundance of introductions and announcements following Meeting for Worship this First Day. Many visitors and returning members were recognized, each receiving a resounding “Welcome!” There were multiple opportunities announced for volunteers to care for those within and beyond our meeting. We are also noticing more young Friends joining meeting, and we are experiencing a record year for requests for membership.

At the same time, our growth challenges us. In a small meeting, Friends are seen and known by each other. Caring flows naturally from this connection. In a larger meeting, it is easier to overlook one another. Keeping in touch with those in need can be more complex and we wonder how best the meeting can care for the whole community.

We are known to each other in part by our common interests. Friends divide between young and old, those with young children or not, those drawn to activism or contemplation. We encourage this diversity among us. We also recognize that to the extent to which we can build bridges across these sub-communities, we will become a stronger more cohesive meeting.

Fayetteville: We do welcome newcomers and non-members to our meetings and encourage them to participate in meeting activities. We don’t visit often in person but keep in touch with each other. As we have no younger members we do not feel we can answer this part of the query. We presently have others visiting people who are lonely, even beyond our own meeting

Friendship: Meeting has benefitted by having a committee devoted entirely to the care and counsel of our members and attenders. We are encouraged to undertake visitation, to welcome newcomers, to follow up with new members and sojourners. Care and Council has developed a process for approaching long time attenders to encourage them to consider membership when appropriate. Each First Day a member of

the meeting is designated to meet with those who might want to ask questions about the meeting and Quakerism in general. At the close of but still within the spirit of each meeting for worship, those present are encouraged to tell of joys and concerns so that the entire meeting community can share in both the burdens which individuals carry and the good news. Two of our members in assisted living facilities are visited regularly. Those who live at the nearby Friends Homes Retirement facility are visited and assisted by other members who live there.

On most fifth First Days the children are responsible for the meeting for worship, staying for the entire time and breaking the meeting. The recent nomination process has resulted in both the appointment of a number of younger members and those who have been attending for a short period of time to committees and appointments. Although we try to involve more of our newest attenders with the work of the meeting as well as to meet the needs of those who need assistance, we know we can always do more.

We trust that this visitation and caring extends beyond the members of our monthly meeting.

Greenville: We are welcoming to visitors when we have them, which is not as often as we would like. We are mindful of the need to visit those who feel isolated and acknowledge that we do not visit them as often as we should.

Rich Square: We strive to welcome visitors and newcomers, being aware that to be truly welcoming we should consider what it feels like for those who come among us for the first time. The majority of active members live at a distance, therefore we focus many activities on the second First Day of each month. On other First Days we have fewer people at meetings for worship. We are grateful the meeting is experiencing a renewal with increased involvement of distant members who participate through email and trips to Woodland. We feel we are building a foundation for wider outreach as we participate in this renewal.

Virginia Beach: Some of us are better than others at visiting. We feel we are welcoming to newcomers. There are fewer young people than there used to be, though the School population is an abundant resource. This query challenges us that if we reach out and draw energy and vision from our School; perhaps more young families will come. We would benefit by encouraging those younger to share their new and fresh ideas by being more open and receptive to them. This means reaching out and learning more than just a new person's name, but truly finding some answers to the question, "Who are you?"

West Grove: We feel that we are welcoming to visitors when they are present at Meeting for Worship but we feel we could be more mindful in visiting one another.

Wilmington: When newcomers attend meeting, we feel that the meeting is very welcoming because we have an interest in them without having overbearing expectations. Different members speak with newcomers, but we feel that we are missing an opportunity to engage newcomers in the principles and

practices of Friends. We discussed that during the introductions held after meeting for worship that members could offer more information about ourselves to encourage more shared information. Also, sending an email to newcomers to follow up and make ourselves more available. Young members are in positions of leadership in our meeting. The definition for visit may need to be defined for the times, but we discussed the time spent extended beyond the meeting. We would like to foster an environment where we are more available to one another to foster an atmosphere in which we offer each other support and create more connections. There is more that we could do and each of us needs to take responsibility. We are interested in starting to organize the meeting to offer more chances for socialization.

35. Nominating Committee Report

Edward Pearce presented the Nominating Report, which was approved. (See full report on page 142.)

36. Hospitality Committee

Appreciation was expressed for the hard work of Wilmington Friends serving as the Hospitality Committee for all they have done serving as liaisons to our host institution, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and to assist those attending yearly meeting sessions.

37. Minutes of Thanks to the Planning Committee and Youth Program Planning Committee

Appreciation was expressed for the rich program and opportunities provided through the efforts of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee and to the Youth Program Planning Committee this year.

38. Youth Epistle

Mia Grady read the Youth Epistle. Friends approved including the epistle in these minutes and sending it along with our epistles to Friends everywhere.

Dear Fellow Friends,

14 Young Friends gathered as part of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) on the campus of the University of North Carolina - Wilmington from 7/15-19/2015. We had Young Friends of all ages from several monthly meetings in the region, including West Grove, Friendship, Durham, Rich Square, and Nashville, TN.

Our theme was "Living into our Gifts." We did an audio recording project where we interviewed some of the adult Friends who were identified as having gifts that they share with our community. We also attended and participated in intergenerational Bible study led by Bruce Arnold where we learned about how Samuel learned to listen to God's calling. On Saturday evening, Elizabeth Wintermute and Toby Berla led an Intergenerational program on our theme where we got to know each other better through fun activities and heard a Faith and Play story on the how the testimonies are gifts of the Spirit.

We especially enjoyed going to the beach, visiting Bellamy Mansion, going bowling, visiting the Turtle Hospital and eating Brit's Donuts. We thought that seeing the slave quarters at Bellamy Mansion was especially interesting. We were reminded of our visit to Mendenhall Plantation last year and how we discussed that Quakers had participated in the Underground Railroad to help free slaves. One low point of our weekend was when Ian Gilmore-Cronin got stung by a jellyfish. Luckily, he was not seriously hurt. We enjoyed leading the adults in intergenerational games on Friday and Saturday after dinner.

The food was good and we were thankful for all the people who cooked it and cleaned-up after our dishes. A few of the Young Friends had the chance to join the spontaneous music and singing on Saturday evening. We felt very connected with one another as our community of the yearly meeting during that time together.

One of the older Young Friends pointed-out that we have a real strong community of Young Friends of all different ages, from 5 year olds to 18 year olds, and that we do a really good job of taking care of each other and enjoying being with each other.

We are also thankful for all the adult Friends who bring us to yearly meeting and welcome us at yearly meeting. Thank you to our monthly meetings who support us and enable us to have this special time together each year.

In the Spirit,
The Young Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

39. Epistle to Friends Everywhere

Barbara Gosney read the Epistle to Friends Everywhere. The epistle was approved with gratitude.

Dear Friends,

We gathered during Seventh Month 15-19, 2015 in sunny, humid weather on the campus of the University of North Carolina -Wilmington for our 318th annual session of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

Our theme this year was "Living Into Our Gifts." Our first business session opened with the reading of I Peter 3:8-11: "... have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind." We are aware of how these and other gifts of the Spirit have nourished and fed our Yearly Meeting throughout the years. It is for us now and in the future to strive to "live into our gifts." In our daily Bible study we were reminded that prayer is the cornerstone for a deeper relationship with God which is needed if we are to recognize, accept, and employ our gifts.

As always we found that our monthly meetings' sharing of their query responses and State of the Society reports gave us a richer sense of connection with one another. Friends spoke of a deepening of their worship creating fertile ground for the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit present in each meeting community. Through the reports we heard that the Spirit has been moving in our meetings and has particularly tended to what was needed in each community.

Our Yearly Meeting has spent two years in the process of revising our Book of Discipline. This process is helping us both to articulate our current practice and to discern what we hold dear and wish to preserve about our Conservative Friends' traditions. Prayerful discussions of draft sections among and between the Revision Committee, the monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting have involved us in a fruitful reflection on our faith and practice. We continue this slow process in a careful and respectful way.

Visiting Friend Kathryn Damiano was invited to lead us in exploring the theme of "Living Into Our Gifts." On Fifth and Sixth Day evenings she shared personal experiences of how she and others have been faithful in exercising God-given spiritual gifts. Kathryn's deeply grounded and grounding presence led us into sharing our own experiences and into exploration of what speaks to our condition as a Yearly Meeting. She encouraged us to consider how to nurture our unique Conservative Friends' culture of listening and to be faithful to God in everyday life. Friends named spiritual gifts that have been experienced in our monthly meetings and in our Yearly Meeting. Trust and risk were recognized as integral parts of being in community. We also recognized that trust and risk become possible only in the power of the Lord which allows us to be open and vulnerable with one another. Kathryn Damiano shared the term "to bear another's burdens" as a way to care for each other, all others, and for groups and institutions in suffering and turmoil. We are grateful for Kathryn's leadership this week as we identified some of those gifts into which our Yearly Meeting is being called to live.

Lyn and Steve Newsom shared information about the work of Quaker House of Fayetteville, North Carolina in dealing with the "moral injury" experiences of military people. We continued our letter writing to prisoners near and far. We seek to hold in prayer the burdens of all at home and abroad who struggle with fear, violence, and the abuse of power.

Our children and youth group enjoyed making new Friends and renewing acquaintances with one another. Our dedicated adult workers accompanied them in enriching activities which opened the opportunity for new experiences. They had excursions to the beach, a turtle hospital, and the 1859 Bellamy Mansion, which is unique in having urban slave quarters. They joined the adults for a morning Bible study of I Samuel 3 and made audio recordings of adult Friends who answered questions about their experiences of living into their gifts. Saturday evening was an intergenerational celebration of our testimonies of integrity, community, equality, simplicity, and peace. In our shared activities we affirmed that the Spirit is in each of us and spiritual gifts flow from the Spirit as we wait, as we listen, and as we follow the Spirit leading us.

We leave our Yearly Meeting with gratitude for the love and unity we share, and with prayers for the faith and courage which will enable us to "live into our gifts."

On behalf of the yearly meeting,
Nancy Craft, clerk

40. Summary of Exercises

David Perry read the Summary of Exercises, which, with minor amendments, were approved for inclusion in the minutes and distribution to absent Friends. Appreciation was expressed for the work drafting this summary.

The 318th annual sessions of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative), met on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in Wilmington, North Carolina from 7/15 – 7/19/2015 with the theme of “Living Into Our Gifts.” We found ourselves to be a smaller group than in recent years. Upon arrival, the Hospitality Committee gave each of us envelopes with name badges and schedules, as well as a handful of puzzle pieces, symbolizing that we each were valuable in putting together the whole experience. During our stay in the newly built dorm on the campus (with suites of rooms to stay in), several participants proceeded to assemble the puzzle. When all of the available pieces had been placed, several were still missing. This could be seen as symbolic of the missing participants, or symbolic of the ongoing search for a clear picture of Divine will, or simply it was an incomplete puzzle. Regardless, our time together was deep and valuable and felt clearly in right order.

We began with worship and with the Ministry and Oversight body hearing reports and selected query responses. The body then had a threshing session on what changes to Ministry and Oversight should be considered, and what was important about the work done by the group. The one clearly discerned idea was that the body should remain independent and not become a committee of the yearly meeting. Change came with Kristin Olson-Kennedy stepping down as clerk and Nan Bowles stepping down as recording clerk of that body. An ad hoc committee was formed to recommend new people for those roles, and later in the sessions a called meeting of the body approved the nomination of Richard Miller as clerk and Marguerite Dingman as recording clerk.

Bruce Arnold led our bible study in the mornings, with a focus on individual gifts arising out of service to Christ. Acts illustrated how Peter and John were given the gift of healing and that a key part of the gift was that it was in service to Christ. In addition, the power of the leading to use the gift and share about the power of Christ was such that they could not keep from speaking about this despite demands from the council of rulers, elders and scribes. Jonah was shown to have been given the gift of prophesy, but resisted the call to use that gift. 1 Samuel was shared in multigenerational study, with Samuel called by the Lord to a gift of prophecy, and the challenge of realizing when a gift is given by the Divine. Samuel was also used as an example of how sometimes we need to speak with others in order to understand what it means to be given such gifts.

On two nights, our visitor Kathryn Damiano, co-founder of the School of the Spirit ministry, led us in discussion of discernment of our gifts and living into our gifts. She pointed out that using the term “thee was favored” helped to indicate that the gifts were coming from the Divine. She also mentioned the encouragement to bear another’s burden, which was referred to afterward at other points during the annual sessions. We explored what gifts we have as a yearly meeting that constitute our identity and how we may use them. She also gave context for living into our gifts by speaking about spiritual formation.

This included recognizing the “shadow self,” those aspects of our yearly meeting that impact our spiritual life together but that we do not generally speak about or address.

We were lead in a multigenerational event by Elizabeth Wintermute and Toby Berla of Durham Meeting. We lined up by age without using words, then teamed up with someone in the other half of the age range to answer questions about what we had in common. Some turned this into poems that were shared. A Faith and Play activity was shared with the kids of all ages about the spiritual gifts of Friends’ testimonies. This led into fun arts and crafts time.

The business meetings included hearing epistles from Ohio and Iowa, reports from FCNL, AFSC, William Penn House, and Kristin Olson-Kennedy sharing about her experience corresponding with prisoners in the Southern State Worship Group. We heard reports from two of the four Friends’ schools within the yearly meeting, Carolina and Virginia Beach Friends Schools. We heard about the changes in key staff at Guilford College (including the director of the Friends Center). The developments of FWCC Section of the Americas were shared, and in particular new development of the Traveling Ministry Corps, which Kristin Olson-Kennedy clerks. The Documents Committee shared excellently prepared and moving highlights of the wide range of epistle correspondence our yearly meeting received in the last year, including one from the newly formed Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting.

Attention was brought to the fact that North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM) had not sent us an epistle. It was pointed out that this other yearly meeting was struggling with disagreements about expectations of member meetings, and we empathized with the painfulness of the disagreement and the struggle to know how best to live faithfully. We were asked to pray for those monthly meetings and the North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM).

We learned that the youth activity committee intended to connect our yearly meeting with Piedmont Friends Fellowship and Yearly Meeting hopes to move forward in this next year with organizing. We also heard a report from Durham Meeting about how that meeting was beginning a process of exploring possible dual affiliation with both Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting and ours. Our response was to hold the meeting in prayer and to appoint three liaisons to be resources for Durham as they move forward into this period of discernment.

Fayetteville and Greenville Meetings brought a request to form a quarterly meeting, as a result of four gatherings that smaller meetings in the eastern part of North Carolina have held over the past year. There was no desire for this structure to be an administrative layer added to the current monthly meeting and yearly meeting structure, but rather a context for mutual support. The yearly meeting endorsed the clearly beneficial fellowship and support, and requested that the meetings return with a more detailed description of what was being asked of the yearly meeting.

We found that we were making very satisfactory progress in revising our Book of Discipline, with many good discussions arising, valuable understanding gained, and agreement found. We considered second approval of a draft revised section on organization and procedures. In light of concerns over language that did not capture the mutuality of relationship between the monthly and yearly meetings, we discerned that more work was needed before moving that section forward in the revision process. We also

considered and gave first approval of a draft revision of the portion on membership. We were regularly thankful for the clear and helpful revision process that has allowed us to grapple with how to best express the state of our yearly meeting faith and practice while maintaining love and continuing the work.

Business meetings also dealt with those necessities such as financial reports, budgets, and nominating. As blessedly usual, we felt a depth from sharing the state of society in each meeting, and the responses to queries. We savored our time together during meals in the dining hall, even as hundreds and hundreds of young children on campus for various camps shared the space (and the coffee). We leave refreshed, thoughtful, thankful, and close to the Divine and each other.

41. Concluding Minute

We adjourn our yearly meeting sessions purposing to meet Seventh Month 14th through 17th, 2016 at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina, if consistent with Divine will. The Interim Body is scheduled to next meet on the 24th of Tenth Month at Davidson Meeting and on the 23th of Fourth Month at Durham Meeting.

Appendix

**Minutes of Meeting of Ministry and Oversight
Seventh Month 15, 2015**

Attenders: Carole Treadway, Ray Treadway, David Perry, Susan Lees, Connie Keller, Barbara Gosney, Maureen Burns, Edward Pierce, Ruth Ann Childress, Tom Bertrand, Nancy Craft, Darlene Stanley, Deborah Shaw, Patty Levering, Bruce Arnold, Bonnie Arnold, Melidy Poole, Gayle Cameron, Claire Koster, David French

Visitors: Mary Linda McKinney, Mark Wutka, Sean Langberg, Sarah Miller, Nathaniel Corwin

The meeting began with a period of waiting worship out of which a beautiful song was shared. A message was read from Nan Bowles who is stepping down as Recording Clerk due to health concerns.

The Body heard answers to Queries number 3 and 7.

Reports from Ministry and Oversight committees were read.

Bruce Arnold shared a report from the planning committee for a gathering of those active in vocal ministry and those offering support and guidance. Durham Friends have agreed to host. The Body approved Ninth Month 26, 2015 for the gathering.

The Body approved a committee consisting of Carole Treadway, Kristin Olson-Kennedy, and Marguerite Dingman to bring forward a recommendation for the next Friend to serve as Clerk of Ministry and Oversight. The committee is asked to hold listening sessions with Bruce Arnold and Richard Miller and any other Friend who may present themselves during the Annual Sessions. The committee is also asked to serve as Nominating Committee for Recording Clerk. If the committee reaches clearness there will be a called meeting of Ministry and Oversight within the time frame that we are together for Yearly Meeting Sessions.

The Clerk presented a report regarding the role and structure of Ministry and Oversight that was prepared by Richard Miller based upon the visits that Richard and Kristin Olson-Kennedy did to all but one Monthly Meeting Ministry and Oversight committees thru out the year. The following is the report:

Report on visits to most of the Monthly Meetings concerning YMM&O

Kristen and I visited with Davidson, Friendship, Durham, Fayetteville, Greenville, Rich Square, Wilmington and Core Sound. Nancy Craft met with Virginia Beach. We were unable to arrange a meeting with West Grove.

My impression from these meetings is that Friends feel that changes are needed, but there is not yet unity about what those changes ought to look like. I did sense a general willingness to

experiment with new approaches to get more and more recent experience about what works for who we are now. Friends don't want to eliminate this Body, nor do they want to see it continue in exactly the same form. Friends seem ready to innovate with the current structure. The most productive part of the dialogue seemed to me the discussion of how each Monthly Meeting deals with supporting and fostering the ministry of individuals and with provided care and counsel for those experiencing personal or spiritual difficulties. Many felt that having a gathering at the Yearly Meeting level could be valuable as an opportunity for individuals doing this work at the local level to network with others doing similar work. We face similar issues and being able to call on the experience of others who have dealt, successfully or unsuccessfully, with those issues in the past could be very helpful. It was felt that this body might more consciously and actively foster such opportunities to informally learn from each other.

No clear sense of unity is yet emerging about basic structural issues. It's not clear if the Body should continue as distinct from the Yearly Meeting or if it should be converted into a standing committee within the Yearly Meeting. It is also unclear what the membership should be. In the past there has been a problem with some feeling excluded. We need to change this. People doing this work at the Monthly Meeting level need to feel invited to participate at the Yearly Meeting level.

Concerning the sharing of reports and answering queries there seems to be a split between the small and larger meetings. The small meetings generally feel that the responsibility to write these reports and answer these queries is burdensome. The larger meetings seem to not find it so, and consequently are more appreciative of the value of continuing this practice.

On a personal note I've been involved in this process for two years and with Kristen being called to other things I feel led to continue to be involved in the revisioning and reshaping that are taking place. I am not clear about what form that should take. The Body is meeting today and I expect that you will move forward in ways I cannot foresee. Know that I'm willing to be of assistance in whatever way seems best.

The Body started a Threshing Session to discuss the report. The Threshing will continue at 9:45am prior to Interim Body on 10th Month 24, 2015. The notes of this threshing will be made available in advance.

Friends thanked Kristin Olson-Kennedy for her service as Clerk in particular for bringing these defining questions before us for our consideration.

The Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.

Submitted by Marguerite Dingman, acting Recording Clerk.

Ministry & Oversight Threshing Session Notes 7-15-2015

After a report regarding the role and structure of Ministry and Oversight was read, Kristen Olsen-Kennedy, Clerk of Ministry and Oversight, invited the body to engage in threshing the following questions:

- Shall Ministry and Oversight remain a separate body or become a committee of the Yearly Meeting?
- Is the function of Ministry and Oversight to provide more support to the Monthly Meetings? If so, how?
- Small and larger meetings relate differently to some practices such as answering the queries. How shall the body respond?

As this was a threshing session, there were no minuted outcomes. The following notes are grouped loosely under those question headings and reflect an attempt to capture the matters raised:

1.
 - Perhaps if it were a named committee of the Yearly Meeting people would feel more of a barrier to attending rather than less.
 - There would be no improvement resulting from naming it as a standing committee. My understanding is that presently it is an open meeting. Those who serve on Ministry/Counsel/Oversight committees in the monthly meetings are encouraged to attend and others may also attend.
 - If the purpose is related to the spiritual life of the meetings, the more involved the better. Whether participants are recorded as ministers and elders or not, they need to be named to serve on this body and need to gather regularly, getting to know each other over time.
 - How can we arrange it so that the body is open and invitational AND experiences continuity over time?
 - Should there be named representatives or should the body consist of Friends who are serving on Ministry/Care/Oversight in the Monthly Meetings?
 - Does the name of the body need to be changed in order to be more welcoming of broader participation?
2.
 - Is the purpose of the body clear?
 - The defining concept of spiritual nurture speaks to me.
 - There are those people who have a concern to deepen and broaden the spiritual life of Monthly Meetings, the Yearly Meeting and all of God's Creation. We meet out of that concern. We provide mutual support of each other and the work of deepening and broadening the spiritual lives of our meetings.
 - Ministry is a function, not a status. A lot of people exercise ministry. The word "minister" connotes a status.

- We need to broaden our concept of ministry beyond vocal ministry to include other forms of ministry. People are led by Spirit in different ways to nurture a closer relationship with Spirit and notice and encourage the fruits being produced. This body has a special concern to further that dialogue in the Yearly and Monthly Meetings – to recognize, cultivate and support each other's ministry.
- 3.
- There's a level at which the reports and queries are useful. We can learn from what others are doing. Perhaps other prompts or queries would also be useful, such as 'what issues are you concerned with, What concerns and solutions can you share?'
 - It could be useful to have sharing groups with similar concerns, or to have a group provide support to a monthly meeting seeking support and guidance for a particular concern.
 - M&O is responsible for the spiritual life and nurture of the Yearly Meeting, not just the monthly meetings.
 - These same queries that we are considering now could be asked at the monthly meeting level regarding what they see as the purpose of M&O and how it could be more helpful.

It was agreed that the threshing would continue at 9:45am prior to the meeting of Interim Body on 10-24-2015.

Submitted by Marguerite Dingman, acting recording clerk

Reports and query responses from constituent meetings

Davidson

Query 1: We do understand our responsibility to encourage the spiritual life of our meeting. We find disjunction between how this query describes our work and how we function as a committee, but we do respond to the needs of the meeting as we understand them and in ways appropriate to our meeting. We do have persons in the meeting who are expressing the gifts mentioned in this query, but not because they have the roles. We may not adequately help persons in meeting learn to recognize spiritual depth in vocal ministry or how to function in eldership. We feel uncomfortable with the use of the term “overseer” because its use makes us unwelcoming.

Query 2: The clerk rewrote the query: “What do we see as the work of ministry and counsel? What would faithful performance of our work, individually and corporately, look like? Are we being faithful? Does it matter if we attend meeting for worship or our committee meetings?” Our responses include reflections on the original query and the rewritten one.

The work of ministry and counsel is to observe the Meeting and to listen, to come together to reflect on the spiritual health and needs of the Meeting, and then to act in ways that serve the Meeting and persons in the Meeting. It is important to attend Meeting for Worship in order to stay abreast of the

condition of the Meeting and for our own spiritual welfare. It is important to attend our committee meetings in order to join together our different perspectives and help the committee serve the Meeting.

The encouragement of us to attend meetings and where appropriate bring our children creates different responses among us. We notice that almost none of us attend as a whole family, whatever the structure of our family is. Some of us are pastors' kids and we remember well the burden placed on us to be the model family by being at everything and more. Some of us, highlighting the Meeting as a community, focus on the importance of families, especially children, in building our community, remembering the value of the Meeting as the center of a family's social life.

We asked ourselves how do we, or can we, know what the spiritual health of the Meeting is. We are clear that there is no one standard by which we would evaluate and judge the Meeting or persons in the Meeting. Our attending to Meeting is not about directing persons or the Meeting according to some one way. Our hope is to listen to the journeys of others in an accepting and invitational way. We are aware that it takes all of us being attentive to the Meeting and coming together to share what arises for us— noticing who is coming and who is absent, meeting newcomers, having conversations during fellowship time, listening to vocal ministry. What we look for in assessing our own spiritual health is likely to vary but may include such things as receptivity to beauty, level of frustration and of compassion, a sense of peace or a sense of racing from one thing to another, a feeling of “being on track.” We agreed that in ourselves and in the Meeting we would be looking for the existence of fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, endurance, etc.

Query 3: At this committee meeting we had many issues that needed careful discernment about the exercise of our gifts in the meeting. We have waited for and moved under a sense of Divine leading as we proceeded with our agenda.

Query 4: We begin our care for the spiritual lives of those in our meeting by respecting their journeys and responding to where they are. We do not have a vision of what a Quaker meeting should be like that we are trying to fit people into, but rather we have a desire to listen and respond in ways that can be supportive. We recognize that we generally are slow to talk about what we believe.

Query 5: We do feel clear about being in unity with each other and the meeting. We do not have unity of belief. Our unity is in our care for one another. The unity is in how we function; we are not as cross purposes with each other; we don't carry personal agendas. We care for this meeting and for its growth. Unity is not unanimity. It is unity in the Spirit, listening attentively in our own ways, our care for conducting the business of the meeting and sharing the tasks that need to be done. We are community.

Query 7: Sometimes we talk as a committee about concerns regarding persons in the meeting, but more often individuals take on caring for a person or situation on their own. We do the best we can. There is no formula. Our sharing of concerns is not gossipy. We note the value of discernment in the care offered and we pay attention to both the physical and spiritual needs. We find Facebook to be useful in being aware of needs and of expressing care. Many of our meetings begin with checking in with each other, and we find that a practice that nurtures our care for each other on the committee.

Patty Levering, clerk

Durham

Query 1: Some Friends find some difficulty with the wording of this Query. They wonder whether those who serve on this committee conduct themselves differently than they otherwise would. Other Friends felt that the duties of committee members continue to be revealed over time, and that membership on the committee creates a space in which we learn how to serve. We don't explicitly name ministers, elders and overseers in our Meeting, but just serving in this committee changes one's perspective; the members work to hold the spiritual space for the Meeting. Friends find that this service raises the question of who is "in charge" in our Meeting. Not us! Serving on M&C makes us listen more deeply. We learn to understand how messages may not feel meant for us personally, but may still work for the Meeting. Some of us feel that it is "us" who are eldered and overseen, not the other way around.

Query 2: We considered the query on attending our monthly meetings for ministers, elders, and overseers. We do regularly attend our meetings of Ministry & Counsel, and some of us (at least one at this time) attend Yearly Meeting gatherings of ministers and elders. We recognize that there are many things going on in our Meeting, and even though we are on Ministry and Counsel, we can't attend all gatherings.

Query 3: Yes. We feel that we often move under Divine inspiration; the query challenges us to continue to seek to wait and move under that inspiration. Are we aware of our gifts? Do we help one another to know them? The query raises the question of whether we take the time (and have the time) to do so on a daily basis. It is also a challenge to listen deeply as part of the discernment about action, which comes from waiting. We should invite others to exercise their gifts; to recognize and lift them up.

Query 4: We feel that our committee and other committees are indeed promoting spiritual growth for members of our Meeting. For us the faith that is in Jesus Christ is more akin to the faith that is the inner Light, or love. Similarly, we seek to live lives grounded in love, in the faith that love does not blame. We are more comfortable responding to the first two parts of the query as a committee, and we strive as a committee to work generously on behalf of the Meeting.

Query 5: If we think of unity, as in God, we are necessarily in unity with each other. We may disagree about issues at times, and we are still one in the divine. We do strive to be in unity on issues, and we recognize that sometimes life gets in the way. We believe that in the Meeting we do pretty well dealing with each other when we have differences. The tender way in which there is such support to listen to voices in committees that are struggling helps to provide a sense of unity within the Meeting, and we trust that that will continue, so that we are able to reach unity on important issues.

Query 6: We recognize that sometimes our participation in Quaker activities can add to busyness in our lives too. And sometimes we're tempted to let that take all of our energy. We see the temptation also to draw a distinction between religious or spiritual life and everyday life, and we want to do what we can to unify those, so that they are not distinct. If "we" refers to our Committee on Ministry and Counsel, we

hope that together we do a good job of assuring that we can serve the Meeting well, although there are times of ebb and flow regarding the time any one member can devote. As Quakers, we believe that everything is sacred. Everything we do is spiritual, which may mean that spiritual activities may be different from our religious lives or service to the Meeting. If we are led to do something that takes us away from the Meeting, this can be part of a spiritual path too. We hope that the upcoming “Light Up Our Winter” activities will draw Friends together in fellowship and deepen our connections.

Query 7: We considered the query on watching over each other for good. While we might not want to presume to know what is best for all, we personally feel cared for, and are aware that not all feel this way. We’re also aware of how some of our younger friends have joined those who bring a great deal of love and commitment to the Meeting, watching out for individuals and working for justice.

Fayetteville

For YM Ministry and Nurture/Oversight committee:

- M&O Annual Reports, Fayetteville Friends Meeting has no committee and has no reports
- M&O query responses; Fayetteville Friends Meeting did not read or respond to these queries.
- Named representatives: Fayetteville Friends Meeting has not named any representatives.

Friendship

Friendship Friends Meeting Worship and Ministry committee meets the first First Day of each month from Eighth month thru Sixth month. We meet jointly with our Care and Counsel committee twice and more often if needed.

Our committee members are Carole Treadway, Deborah Shaw, Neil Swenson, (recorder) Sid Kitchens and Darlene Stanley, Clerk.

In addition to prayerfully and intentionally holding the corporate body in Divine Light, we continue to sponsor forums, Deepening the Life of the Meeting a monthly adult class; the annual Christmas Eve Worship Service and the All Meeting Retreat. We strive to provide themes to educate support and nurture our Meetings spiritual life.

As a committee we answer the queries of the Meeting for Ministry and Oversight from the Faith and Practice Book of Discipline of NCYM-C and continue to see these as a guide and reminder to seek humble assistance from God for direction and guidance individually and as a committee.

Our committees created what we call a Friendly presence or designated person who now at the end of Meeting for Worship announce their availability for visitors or attenders to seek out to answer questions about our Meeting or Quakerism. Our two committees have been rotating this and we will move into involving additional seasoned Friends from the Meeting in the fall.

We sponsored a forum on Emergency Procedures also covering unusual situations that may occur during a Meeting for Worship or at a Meeting event establishing guidelines that members and attenders can follow. These procedures include medical as well as mental health scenarios and protocols to be followed.

Our Meeting is blessed to have Deborah Shaw and Lloyd Lee Wilson, both recorded ministers, in our midst. We offer support thru travel minutes, prayer support, encouragement and guidance as they continue to seek Gods will in their ministries.

We end our gathered committee time holding our membership up asking for God's will to be done and we might be able to hear and in strength follow through in love and faithfulness as we are directed.

Submitted by: Darlene Stanley, clerk, Worship Ministry

Query Responses from Friendship Friends Meeting Committees of Ministry and Worship/ Care and Counsel

Query 1: In the past year the members of the Worship and Ministry and the Care and Counsel committees have carefully reviewed the description in the Meeting's Handbook about the respective responsibilities and duties of each committee. This review has led to proposing some changes. Moreover, each committee prepares an annual report, which is presented to the business meeting. This practice allows us to consider the work that we have done over the year. We strive to fulfill these responsibilities, to care for the general well-being of the corporate life of the meeting and its members and to foster the spiritual life of the meeting. IN addition, individual members and attenders of the meeting offer their time and effort both to deepening the spiritual life of the meeting and to looking after one another. WE could always do more.

Query 2: Members of these committees are regular attenders at meeting for worship and meeting for worship with attention to business. However, we are aware that our meeting as a whole has not been consistent in providing childcare for our committee meetings and other meeting events. WE need to be more intentional in reminding ourselves to make childcare arrangements when needed so that we are not unintentionally excluding members of our meeting with children from being present at all meetings for ministers, elders and overseers and other events. Committee chairs need to be reminded to keep this need in mind when meetings are scheduled. Members discussed the burden that increased childcare responsibilities would place on the Religious Education Committee and realized that ministers, elders and overseers as well as other committee members might take time to discern how additional support can be provided to individuals serving on the Religious Education committee.

Query 3: We all strive to do this. We support each other and mentor each other in waiting, listening and seeking Divine inspiration. WE uphold each other in that discernment. It can be both support and accountability. It is a fruitful relationship on the committee. The silence we share is a deep one and is enriched by the spiritual work we all do in our own daily lives.

Query 4: In our meeting, there are mixed feelings about discussing Christ. How can we profess our faith without causing anyone to feel judged? How do we challenge people without turning them away? One way we do this ministry is the way we conduct our daily life in the meeting and outside of it. We need to offer up our witness as an invitation, not as judgmental or persuasive. Other forms of persuasion can be a

kind of violence. We can't know how God is working. How could we encourage more sharing about our spiritual journeys? We have the Deepening the Spiritual Life of the Meeting group and men's group, but are there other Opportunities? We also strive to continue to educate the meeting about Quaker structures and process through our Quakerism 101 forums and the examples of our lives.

Query 5: We are in unity of the spirit and the bonds of peace with each other, and we strive to be with the meeting as a whole, in those things that are eternal. Unity does not mean unanimity. Sometimes we forget that the most important prayer is one of thanks.

Query 6: We are mindful of the need to avoid becoming involved in the business and activity of everyday life to the impairment of our religious lives and our service to our Meeting. We are not always successful, but the members of this committee are faithful in our service to the meeting. There is evidence in the manner of conduct and conversation of members of this committee that we are concerned to nurture our religious lives.

Query 7: We watch over and try to reach out to those in the Friendship community who need help and visitation, when we are aware of specific needs. Much of our attention has been to the elderly, particularly those who are isolated and unable to get out on his or her own. Some of us have interacted with young persons to give support and counsel. We try to be responsive when asked for emergency assistance. We are aware of our shortcomings with regard to newcomers, and we are aware of the need to make a greater effort to get to know those who come to meeting a few times. They need to know that we do care about their interest in the work and worship of the meeting.

Greenville

Typically, for Greenville Friends, we have no reports for YMM&O.

Rich Square

The Meeting of Ministry and Oversight of Rich Square Monthly Meeting has not held regular meetings over the past year. We have not answered the Queries for Meeting of Ministry and Oversight, nor heard, as a Meeting of Ministry and Oversight, the Advices to Meeting of Ministry and Oversight.

We did have several discussions of how we might carry out our responsibility to keep our meeting community "aware of the basic principles of Friends faith and worship." A proposal was made to monthly meeting that an opportunity be given for a conversation on these topics through considering some of George Fox's "openings." These opportunities would seek both to reflect on the beginnings of Friends and on our current faith and practice. The monthly meeting agreed to the proposal and suggested quarterly sessions following our meeting pot-luck lunches on monthly meeting days. We have held two of these opportunities and look forward to continuing them throughout this year. In addition to the face-to-face conversations following lunch, there are also opportunities a few weeks before the conversations to share in an e-mail "thread" which is prompted by distributing the Fox "opening" being considered.

There are no changes in the listing of ministers and elders in Rich Square Monthly Meeting.

Robert Gosney, clerk of the Meeting of Ministry and Oversight

Virginia Beach

VBFM MEO reports that the Advices were read in the face of the Meeting Queries for MEO were read and responded too. Please see attachment.

Ministers for VBFM are: Paula Justice

Elders are: Nancy Craft, Patricia Phelan-Young, and Andrew Young.

VBFM representatives will be those members from VBFM who will attend 2015 North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative.

Query 1: As a group we recognize our responsibility for the spiritual life of our community. The Book of Discipline describes our duties. How we function is broader than the written word. Caring for our community encompasses empathy, listening and understanding.

Query 2: Most of the time we are all in attendance and we make others aware when we need to be away. We appear to be taking our responsibilities seriously and hold the committee as vital, not merely seeing ourselves as individuals.

Query 3: MEO was united in the following response: We do seek to do this if not continually or perfectly. True gratitude in us opens the door to Divine inspiration which allows it then to flow naturally thru us. Sometimes we recognize our limitations as we often forget to seek, letting ego get in the way. We find it's difficult at times to see our own gifts but are more comfortable naming them for others. The question was posed as we seek the answer-are we using our minds or our hearts? We recognize that no God given gift is greater than another and we hope to encourage one another to see and use the gifts they have been given. It is more important, however, to be the gift than to name it.

Query 4: Sharing our deepest faith makes us vulnerable and sometimes difficult to put into words. Speaking of our faith in Jesus Christ is powerful, but may not always be accepted. Living out our lives with or without the words is important.

Query 5: While we don't always agree as we are all on different timetables, we are committed to seeking unity. We work to be open with one another and encourage that in the greater Meeting. We feel we are looking and listening for the will of God even while recognizing that individuals may come to this differently.

Query 6: It was noted that it is tempting to get lost in the busyness of everyday life and that mental or physical weariness can get in the way. We find that our mind often leads us into thoughts of "having no time" and it is up to us to remember to be mindful to create a spiritual time for ourselves. Others looked from the perspective of bringing our beliefs into our lives no matter what we do. We are aware that there are many opportunities in our day, outside of First Day experiences, to be present to the Light within.

Query 7: We felt this query applied to each of us as we may all be seen to be young or inexperienced in some area. It was noted that we are often not asked to counsel and it was suggested that we be as open as possible to others' concerns while understanding that our work is not always fully understood by the

Meeting. However, we feel we are responsive to people who reach out and as individuals we try to be attentive to those in need. As changes occur, we want to be mindful of our shifting roles and take the time to address the spoken and unspoken needs of our Members while providing spiritual support.

West Grove

Ministry and Oversight did not meet regularly this year. We did not answer the queries. No ministers, elders, or overseers were named. Lloyd Lee Wilson transferred his membership to Friendship Meeting and is therefore no longer a member of the body of Ministers, Elders and Overseers at West Grove.

As we are few in number, Friends present at meeting for business several months ago sensed that the work of M&O could be accomplished as a part of Meeting for Business. Friends decided to lay Ministry and Oversight down until such time as the Spirit calls us to action.

Wilmington

The Ministry and Worship at Wilmington Friends includes Connie Keller, Goldie Walton, Rowena Hensler, and Cheryl Fetterman, clerk. We have met twice during the year and have not answered the queries for Ministry and Oversight, but we did read the advices. We did not have members joining or leaving this year.

We began this year feeling we did not need to meet regularly and we have ended the year feeling a need to stay in closer touch and to hold matters within the meeting in the Light. Our expectation is that we will consider additions to Ministry and Worship membership and we look forward to meeting regularly during the upcoming year.

Submitted with feelings of happy anticipation,
Cheryl Fetterman, Clerk of M&W, Wilmington Friends

