



HADDONFIELD MONTHLY MEETING RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER

Volume 54, No. 8 ~ April, 2008

Meeting for worship

10 am Sunday ~ 9:15 am Wednesday

From Worship and Ministry

The Gathered Meeting Part I

Thomas R. Kelly

In the Quaker practice of group worship on the basis of silence come special times when an electric hush solemnity and depth of power steals over the worshippers. A blanket of divine covering comes over the room, and a quickening Presence pervades us, breaking down some part of the special privacy and isolation of our individual lives and blending our spirits within a super-dynamic Presence which enfolds us all, nourishes our souls, and quickens in us depths that had been slumbering. The Burning Bush has been kindled in our midst, and we stand together on holy ground.

Such gathered meetings I take to be cases of group mysticism. It is commonly supposed that mystical experience is an individual affair, in which the lone soul is caught up into the first or second or third heaven and given to see things which it is not lawful for men to utter. And this, I presume is most frequently the case.

Yet there are some cases recorded of two people sharing an experience of ascent together into the amazing Presence of God in His immediacy and glory. The most striking instance of which I know is that of Augustine and his mother Monica who, as they were together leaning in a window overlooking a garden and talking of the wonders of the life of dedicated souls, were together caught up into a sense of divine

immediacy and given the bliss and rapture of the Touch of God.

But we need not go to places remote in space and time to find similar experiences of joint elevation into the light of the Eternal Love. For today it occurs again and again that two or three individuals find the boundaries of their separateness partially melted down. It is not necessarily, or frequently, as exalted an experience as that of Augustine and Monica, nor does it involve losing touch with the world of sense. But after conversing together on central things of the Spirit, two or more friends who know one another at deeper levels find themselves wrapped up in a sense of unity and of Presence such as quiets all words and enfolds them within an unspeakable calm and interknittedness within a vaster life. God's reality and His love become indubitable; His presence, like a living touch, is over them. As one friend speaks in such a silence, the words are found to join on closely to the thought of the others, so the words become needless, and silence becomes a bridge, not of separation, but of communication.

The gathered meeting I take to be of the same kind, but milder and more diffused, yet really of a piece with all mystical experience. For mystical times are capable of all gradings and shadings, from sublime heights to very mild moments of lift and very faint glimpses of glory. In the gathered meeting the sense is present that a new Life and Power has entered or midst. And we know not only that we stand erect in the Holy Presence but also that others sitting with us

are experiencing the same exaltation and access of power. We may not know these our neighbors in any outward intimate sense, but we know them, as it were from within, and they know us in the same way, as souls now alive in the same areas and as blended into the body of Christ, which is his church.

Again, and again this community of life and guidance from the Presence in the midst is made clear by the way the spoken words uttered in the meeting join on to one another and to our inward thoughts. This, I presume, has been a frequent experience for us all, as a common life and current sweeps through us all. We are in communication with one another because we are being communicated to, and through, by Divine Presence. Such indeed is a taste of "the communion of the saints."

John Hughes once told of two Friends side by side in such a gathered meeting. The secret currents of worship flowed with power and then encountered a check. One man moved nervously but did not rise to his feet. Finally the other Friend arose and spoke a few words of searching power, and the meeting proceeded in as sense of coverering. After the meeting had broken, the man who had spoken nudged his silent neighbor and said, "Next time, Henry, say it thyself."



Upcoming Events

April 6 - A Memorial Meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at Haddonfield Monthly Meeting House. We will be there in support of those in our meeting family who have recently suffered the loss of someone close to them. A simple reception in the auditorium will follow. There will be a table provided for displaying photographs. Please join us.

April 6 - Quaker Quest introductory sessions begin at Haverford Meeting. This series of introductions to Quakerism focuses on specific topics of interest to prospective, new and long-time Quakers. Each session presents three

speakers on the given topic, and each session is a mix of speakers, discussion, worship and hospitality. There is always literature available for guests to take away, and there are always experienced Friends present to guide discussion and answer questions. Childcare will be available. Refreshments will be served. The sessions are free. Sessions will run on Sunday afternoons for six consecutive weeks. Attend as many or few sessions as you like.

April 6: Quakers and Peace

April 13: Quakers and Spiritual Experience

April 20: Quakers and Raising Children

April 27: Quakers and Peace

May 4: Quakers and Spiritual Experience

May 11: Quakers and Raising Children

All sessions begin at 3:00 p.m. in the Forum Room of Haverford Friends Meeting, 855 Buck Lane, Haverford PA 19041. For more information, contact Outreach Coordinator Ben Lloyd at blloyd1@mac.com or 610-864-0317.

April 12 - Arts Festival at Plymouth Meeting

The Meeting is seeking the creative talents of Friends to participate in this festival, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. There will be an art and craft exhibit (2D & 3D), poetry reading, storytelling, circus performance (Plymouth Meeting Friends School), music (instrumental, vocal, pipers), performing arts, and dance. We'd like to know the artists in our Quaker community as we celebrate our 300th Anniversary. Light refreshments provided. All are invited to attend. Plymouth Monthly Meeting is at 2150 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting. For more information, contact Sally Bishop at sabish822@aol.com or 610-277-5805.

April 12 - Earlham Program on Leadership

Earlham School of Religion presents its Vitality Among Friends series at Arch Street Meeting House in Philadelphia. For this session, the theme is Leadership Among Friends. Following a keynote address, a choice of three workshops is offered in the morning. The workshops repeat after lunch, allowing participants to attend another workshop. Tim Seid will offer the keynote address "Leading the Soul: Helping Each Other Reach the Goal of Human Existence."

His presentation will explore the ancient Greek philosophical practice of "psychagogy," the leading of the soul. He also will offer a workshop entitled "Practicing the Leadership of the Soul" in which we will be exercising ourselves, exhorting others, and eldering one another, using psychagogy to progress toward the goal of life. Stephen Angell will offer a workshop, Types of Quaker Leadership: A Historical Perspective, which will address how we define Quaker leadership. A workshop by Jennie Isbell, Exploring a Vocabulary of Faith, will explore obedience, stewardship, gifts, authority, worship and discipleship with emphasis on the universal call to ministry. Registration begins at 8:00 am and the afternoon workshops end at 3:00 Pm. Cost, including lunch, is \$20 (\$10 for students). Register online at <http://esr.earlham.edu/philly> or contact Donna Trankley at 1-800-432-1377 or trankdo@earlham.edu

April 19 - Peace and Social Concerns Gathering
Monthly and Quarterly Meeting Friends and PYM Working Groups concerned with peace, justice and an earth restored are invited to the 4th annual gathering hosted by PYM's Peace & Concerns Standing Committee. We will celebrate and make known all such work in the PYM community. This year we are focused on communicating, networking and strengthening our collective voice. In the build-up to the Peace Consultation in January 2009, we hope to be a community with an effective and unified voice on the critical concerns of our time. A significant number of Friends are working on poverty, protesting or healing the destruction from war, advocating against torture, and protecting and restoring the earth. Many of us yearn to know each other and join hands in this work. Let us see what we can do. Join us from 10 am to 2 pm at the 4th and Arch Street Meeting House in Philadelphia. For more information contact Pat Finley at finleyp@temple.edu

April 27 - Questions and Answers on Quakerism, a discussion for young and old attenders and members at Haddonfield Monthly Meeting. Bob Brookes and Jake McLaughlin

will lead this 7 pm discussion at HMM. Please come and participate and help make it lively.



Haddonfield Monthly Meeting Meeting for Worship for Business March 9

30 Friends were in attendance.

The meeting began with a period of worship. The clerk read extract 257 from Extracts on Equality and Community, Faith & Practice p. 163.

The Clerk read a letter from Haddonfield Borough regarding the Spring Clean-Up and Adopt-A-Spot programs. The goal of both of these programs is to keep the Borough litter free. The question was, "Would we want to participate?" After some discussion, it was decided that, during the summer, the Meeting will assume responsibility for the areas surrounding the Meeting House that the School has been taking care of during the school year. This would include the area between the brick wall and the sidewalk on Haddon Avenue.

It was also decided that Property Committee would look into getting some trash receptacles for outside.

Jake McLaughlin reported for Care Committee on the request for membership from Patience Dodgeson. The committee recommends that Patience be accepted as a member. Final decision will be held until 4th month Meeting for Business.

Bonnie Smith, science teacher at Haddonfield Friends School, presented a proposal to construct a vernal pool in the wooded area on the school grounds near the fence at the back of the playground. A vernal pool is a natural water feature that would host a variety of aquatic life and would be used by the students to study various species of amphibians and fish, as well as the life cycle of a natural pond. This project is endorsed by the state of NJ and would be paid

for by the state. The pool would be dug in the summer during the dry season. After some discussion, Friends approved the project which would be managed by Bonnie for the School.

Because Mother's Day is on May 11th (2nd Sunday), Friends approved moving Meeting for Worship for Business up one week to May 4th.

Diane Werner updated the Meeting on the Deepening and Strengthening project. There will be four upcoming retreats over the next two years. The first one, which will focus on spirituality, will be held at *Radnor Friends Meeting* on April 18, 19 and 20. Diane's report was accepted with thanks. Meanwhile, Meeting members are encouraged to read "The Gathered Meeting", a pamphlet by Thomas Kelly.

Kevin Heizer updated the Meeting on his research into the past and present status of the original Newton Meeting graveyard in Camden and the one in Collingswood. There will be discussion at a later time as to the future of the Camden property. Friends thanked Kevin for his report and for the time and effort spent on producing it.

Chris Werner presented the Friends School Budget for school year 2008-2009. Mainly because of an increase in enrollment, the school is in a much improved financial condition, reflected in expanding student programs, such as the Trips Program.

Chris relayed to the Meeting deep and sincere thanks from the school and the School Committee for our forgiveness of payment due from the school to the Meeting for various expenses for the school year 2005-2006. This was a major component in stabilizing the school's cash flow and finances. It enabled the school to operate without making major cuts in academic programs.

The sale of Boxwood Hall is going forward. It is now at the sub-divide and subsequent re-zoning stage.

Lou Tomasetti offered information about a recent fire inspection and some needed repairs to bring the building up to code. Some of these repairs have been completed; others will be done over the coming weeks.

The Preliminary Finance Committee Report was held until 4th month Meeting for Business.

Meeting for Worship for Business closed with a period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne R. Heizer, Recording Clerk

Friends and regular Attenders may request copies of the complete minutes from the Recording Clerk at Joanne@synchcorp.com or (856) 429-9186.



Grants for Young Adult Projects

Friends Institute grants are available to enable young adult Friends (YAFs) to follow leadings of the spirit in ministry, service, witness and Quaker study. Grants may also fund projects that are of direct concern to Friends Institute (a PYM group for young adult Friends).

"Young adult Friends" should be understood to mean persons 18-40 years of age, who are active members or attenders of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting constituent Meetings.

Next grant application deadline is May 1, 2008. Grant application guidelines available online at: www.pym.org/friendsinstitute/figg/ Inquiries and application materials can be sent to: friendsinstitute@pym.org

The Care Committee – A Definition

The Care Committee (formerly known as the Committee of Overseers) is appointed to assume leadership in maintaining a caring community, helping all members to find their right roles as

nurturers of others. Its tasks may be shared with other committees.

Pastoral care and counseling are the special responsibility of the members of this committee. They should take a personal interest in the spiritual and physical welfare of each member of the Meeting. Membership on this committee calls for dedication, tact, and discretion.

The Meeting places special responsibilities and duties on this committee, others should also be conscious of their duty and privilege of caring for the members of the Meeting. In some cases, pastoral care can be carried out to better advantage by Friends who are not members of the Care Committee.

Care Committee is responsible for managing the boundaries of the Meeting:

Entering the community, Care Committee is responsible for:

- Accepting transfers into Meeting of persons who are members of other meetings
- Inquirers
- Applications for membership
- Clearness committees for new members
- Advice on applications
- Welcome of new members

Within the Meeting, Care Committee is responsible for:

- Maintaining contacts with new meeting members
- Introducing new members to other Friends
- Encouraging good order within the Meeting
- Nurturing spiritual growth in Meeting members support Meeting members through life crises
- Pastoral care and counseling
- Assisting members in material need
- Providing a framework for reconciliation when differences among members
- Visiting the sick and extending sympathy
- Delinquencies and lack of interest

Leaving the community, Care Committee is responsible for:

- Assuring memorial meeting or funeral is held upon death of a member

- Transfers to other meetings
- Resignations
- Release of members

More detail on the Care Committee can be found in Faith & Practice, pp. 183-186 and 34-37.

Library Notes

The following new texts have been added to the Library collection, as of March. They can be found in the New Books rack:

“From West Point to Quakerism,” by Mike Heller. This is a very timely story of an amazing spiritual journey. (Pendle Hill pamphlet)

“A Guide to Quaker Practice,” by Howard Brinton. A classic, especially useful for those who are Seekers new to the Society of Friends. (Pendle Hill pamphlet)

“The Back Bench,” by Margaret Hope Bacon. This novel tells the story of a young Friend growing up in 1837 Philadelphia – for readers of all ages.

“Quaking,” by Kathryn Erskine. This is a very good new novel for mature young adults (middle school/high school) that I highly recommend. A more detailed review will appear in a future edition of the newsletter. Adults may also enjoy it: I did!

“The Quaker Bible Reader,” edited by Paul Buckley and Stephen Angell. This collection features essays by thirteen different Friends.

“Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory, and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780-1930,” by Sandra Stanley Holton. Actually, the title says it all!

“Slavery and The Meetinghouse: The Quakers and the Abolitionist Dilemma, 1820-1865,” by Ryan P. Jordan. A reviewer on Amazon.com states that, “Ryan Jordan's work lucidly explores the intersections between social activism, religious conviction, slavery/abolition, and

political involvement. The result is an exception work that should be read by all interested in abolitionism and religious attitudes towards slavery in the antebellum United States."

"Time for Peace," by Janet Ganguli. A text for late elementary/ middle school readers (and the adults who teach, mentor, and/or raise them) about the value of peacemaking.

"Truth of the Heart: An Anthology of George Fox," edited by Rex Ambler. This is an excellent introduction to seminal passages from Fox's writings. It includes translations into modern English, a glossary, and a concluding essay, "Making Sense of Fox." I have found this to be a very useful resource.

"Universalism and Religions: Quaker Universalist Reader Number Two," edited by Patricia Williams. Thirty-six Friends from the U.S. and the U.K. continue this series of essays.

We also have added two DVDs to the collection:

"The Camden 28." This video was recently screened for the meeting by the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. We greatly appreciate their donation of this fine film for our collection.

"Defying Genocide: Choices That Saved Lives." I received this video from The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It's very good.

In addition, the Meeting will once again be subscribing to the Pendle Hill pamphlet series. These will be added to the "New Books" rack as they are received.

Suggestions for titles to be added to the collection are always welcome. Please contact

me at fouraustins4@verizon.net. Donations of appropriate titles are also cheerfully accepted.

Finally, the Library Committee respectfully requests that those who use the Library for meetings or quiet reading please clean up after themselves, especially in terms of trash disposal. We are in the process of reorganizing and straightening the space so that more Friends will be able to use and enjoy our collection, and your assistance and cooperation in this area will be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

By David Austin



A Poem

And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me the with the joy

Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused...

A motion and a spirit, that impel

All thinking things, all objects of all thought,

and scrolls through all things.

By William Wordsworth

Submitted by Judy Kruger