

2022

Minutes

of the

**North Carolina
Yearly Meeting**

of the

**Religious Society
of Friends**

(Conservative)

The 325th Session

Held Online

By Adjournments

**From the 13th of Seventh Month
to the 17th of the Same, Inclusive**

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Minutes of the

North Carolina Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

(Conservative)

1. Opening of the Annual Session

The 325th session of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Conservative) convened at Guilford College on 7-14-2022. After two years of meeting virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are delighted to meet this year in person yet we also must recognize our anxiety as we gravitate toward each other while negotiating COVID safety protocols. To accommodate the needs of all who wish to attend, we have arranged for virtual access to the business sessions and some other activities.

Sessions convened with waiting worship and a reading from John 15: 15-17

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is about. I have called you friends, because I have disclosed to you everything that I heard from my Father. You did not choose me; I chose you. I appointed you to go on and bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that the Father may give you whatever you ask in his name. This is my commandment to you: love one another.

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2. Welcoming of Visitors

We welcomed visitors in person and on Zoom. We had 26 visitors from 11 states, DC and from three countries outside the U.S.

We welcomed Dwight Wilson from Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, who will be leading our Bible study; Lilith Swygert, the named Friends General Conference traveling visitor; and several regular visitors to our sessions, David Eley of Ohio Yearly Meeting, Nathaniel Corwin and Sarah Miller who are now in Greensboro, Rex Sprouse from Bloomington Friends Meeting, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, and Mary Linda McKinney representing the Faithful Meetings Program of School of the Spirit. We also expect Emma Condori Mamani to be visiting from Bolivia as she has once before. She is traveling among Friends in the US.

Travel Minutes and Letters of Introduction for visitors to our YM

A travel minute was received and read for Greg Fuquay from Fairhope Meeting, Alabama.

A letter of introduction was received and read from Friends Committee on National Legislation for Emma Hulbert.

A letter of introduction was received and read from Baltimore Yearly Meeting for Wayne Finegar, the new director of Quaker House.

3. Interim Body and Ministry and Oversight Minutes

Friends approved that minutes of Interim Body in 10th month 2021 and 4th month 2022 be included in the published minutes.

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Ministry & Oversight

Friends approved that minutes of Ministry and Oversight be included in the published minutes.

Committees to Write Letters and Summaries

The clerk requested volunteers to write the Letter to Absent Friends, Epistles, and the Summary of Exercises. Nathaniel Corbin agreed to receive Friends' contributions to the Summary of Exercises, David Perry agreed to write the Letter to Absent Friends, Michelle Downey and Susan Lees will write the Epistles.

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

The epistle from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) was read.

7/25/2021

Dear Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting
(Conservative):

We send you warm greetings from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) as we gather as individuals and in small gatherings to attend to the business of our 144th Yearly Meeting sessions, held July 22 through July 25, 2021. Meeting remotely on Zoom for a second year, we are grateful for the technology that allows us to gather with you at a distance. We listened with tenderness and a sense of connection to the ministry shared in your recent epistle and felt lifted up by your generosity of spirit. We are challenged to make our meetings outposts of God's Kingdom in the world. The presence of Nancy Craft from North Carolina was a special gift to those of us gathered here in Iowa.

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We look forward to another year when it might be possible to visit in person.

Our theme for this Yearly Session was “Tapestry of Transformation: Sharing our Light.” In the evening plenary session we were invited to share our encounters with poverty and injustice and then reflect on whether this current world order is under God’s plan. Our Bible study continued this theme of right relationship focusing on how deep knowledge and reverent attention to the natural world sustains us and is necessary to our survival. God invites us to love all our neighbors. As we reflected on how we might more rightly share the world’s resources, address systemic violence including racism, and repair our relationships with the natural world, we were reminded that we do not need to be afraid. We do not walk alone. May we learn to trust in God’s love and the leadings of the Spirit as we discern our individual and collective responses to these issues.

Our beloved Scattergood School and farm continue to be a central part of sharing our Light in the world. We feel awed and blessed by the ministry of the school, the care and dedication of its staff, the loving care of the farm and the many committees which support its work. Classes for middle and high school continued both in person and remotely while keeping staff and students safe during this year of pandemic. In a major decision, the Yearly Meeting agreed to add air conditioning to both the dormitories in addition to its continuing financial support.

The State of Meeting reports from our 13 constituent meetings testify to our efforts to safely continue worship and remain spiritually connected during the Covid pandemic this past year. While some Friends have not felt clear to join worship on Zoom, it has allowed others living at a distance to participate more frequently. Opportunities for participation in midweek worship, Experiment with Light Groups, Bible study groups, the

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Yearly Meeting Spiritual Sharing groups, worship with other meetings including Pendle Hill and collaboration on the work of racial, social and climate justice have all contributed to our spiritual growth and connection. There is a sense that we have remained connected to the three legged stool of the Divine, our blessed community and our work in the world. We have missed the participation of our children and youth at our annual session this year. The pandemic has made it especially hard for these young Friends to remain connected. We look forward to the day when all meetings feel safe to resume worship in our meetinghouses, but feel blessed by the many ways we have maintained our life together in the Spirit of Love.

We enjoyed an evening of song and conversation with John McCutchen. As we bring our annual session to an end, we invite all Friends everywhere to unite with the words of George Fox: “Sing and rejoice ye children of the day and the Light, for the Lord is at work in this thick night of darkness that may be felt; and the Truth doth flourish as the rose, and lilies do grow among the thorns and the plants atop the hills, and upon them the lambs doth skip and play.”

In love,
Carol Gilbert, Clerk
7834 Jackson Street
Omaha, Nebraska, 68114-5316
On behalf of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

The epistle from Ohio Yearly Meeting was read.

Ohio Yearly Meeting
c/o Olney Friends School
61830 Sandy Ridge Road
Barnesville, Ohio 43713

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Dear Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting
(Conservative):

The Ohio Yearly Meeting has met for 143 years within the Stillwater Meetinghouse in the beautiful rolling hills of southern Ohio. We wait in the stillness to find an inward felt awareness of Christ's Spirit within. While we rejoice in the amazing outward beauty of this campus where at least 29 species of birds have been spotted and a herd of goats graze in a nearby pasture, our inward eyes are centered on the unfathomable, eternal world.

For many years, Nancy Craft has reminded us to care for the temples of God we are by staying physically active. Although we did not have her walking among us this year, we were blessed to have both Nancy and Darlene Stanley with us online as we sought the Lord's will. We hope that way will open for Darlene and Nancy and other North Carolina Friends to come and be with us in person in the years ahead. We surely benefitted from the strength evident in your latest epistle to us.

We are a double gathering this year after the pandemic: the familiar gathering of ourselves on Stillwater worship grounds among the comforting hills, and the new and unfamiliar gathering of ourselves online from the worship spaces of our many homes across miles and oceans. As we learn to bring these two parts of us together for Yearly Meeting sessions, we ask, What is the tie that binds, that makes us one? Again and again, we hear and feel it is the Living Christ who gathers us into one community, one communion of Love.

At Yearly Meeting, Ohio Conservative Friends begin each morning session with Bible reading, where as in meeting for worship, we gather and wait in the presence of Jesus Christ. At first people read scripture silently from wherever they are led to start. As different individuals feel led to read various passages aloud, they do so without comment. Christ who inspired the

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writers of Scripture guides our reading. Whether from the road to Emmaus (Luke) or the road to Ethiopia (Acts) Christ comes to teach, to edify, and to train us in righteousness (2 Timothy).

Later in the mornings we have conducted business either as a Yearly Meeting, or as the Yearly Meeting for Ministry and Oversight. Our afternoons have included more Yearly Meeting business. All such times of business begin with meaningful times of worship, which are frequently favored with Gospel ministry.

Two of our evenings were devoted to worship. Another evening we explored what it means to be a friend. Much discussion continued throughout the week involving teens, as well as older Friends about how being a friend applies to being a Friend. On a third evening the Friends Center held an open house for the Taber Room expansion of the Friends Center, which we have been led to build for those known and unknown to us who seek to gather with us and the living Teacher.

Our prayers are for all people as well as those Christ has brought to us for nurturing healing and epistle.

On behalf of Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends,
Seth Hinshaw
Interim Clerk
[Charles Thomas, Jr. has been appointed our new Yearly Meeting Clerk for 2022]

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Report from Guilford College

Gwen Gosney Erickson presented a report on the Quaker Archives at Guilford. The clerk let us know that we need an assistant for technical administration to assist Gwen Gosney Erickson in this work.

Quaker Archives Report to North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) 2021-2022

It is especially gratifying to give this report for your sessions being held in person here on Guilford College's campus. After two years of most gatherings taking place remotely, the college is welcoming back conferences and events. The Quaker Archives is an essential part of the college's Curry-Coffin Commission on Slavery, Race, and Recognition which hosted a national in person gathering of Universities Studying Slavery here at Guilford on March 31. The conference was coordinated jointly by Guilford College and Wake Forest University with a multi-day gathering taking place at sites in Greensboro and Winston-Salem. Sessions included themes specific to Quaker roles in slavery, abolitionism, and continuing legacies as a predominantly white denomination and Quaker-founded college. Several of the sessions drew directly on resources in the Quaker Archives. The Quaker Archives also supported installation of a marker at the front of the campus honoring Lavina "Vina" Curry, a free Black woman employed at New Garden Boarding School in the late 1830s who acted as an operative on the Underground Railroad.

While in reduced numbers, in person researchers returned with graduate students, independent scholars, and meeting members making appointments. Several inquiries were received about Quaker roles with Indian Boarding Schools and any North Carolina connections. Campus inquiries connected with the archives for college history resources and for academic

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scholarship. Especially notable is Beulah Gullion's Spring 2022 history honors thesis on North Carolina Friends and debates relating to sexuality in the late twentieth century: *Friends Divided: Willie Frye and the Conflict of Consciences* (see <https://jstor.org/stable/community.32506327>).

Several media requests brought cameras to the archives, including a recent interview relating to the 350th Anniversary of George Fox's 1672 visit to North Carolina (see <http://ow.ly/yFq150Ji4ul>). Guilford's Friends Center is co-hosting historian Dr. Noeleen McIlvenna on October 13 for a lecture and there is related campus programming that week as we consider the 1672 visit in a fuller context (see <https://friendscenter.guilford.edu/fox-350/>). Noeleen conducted portions of her dissertation research in the Quaker Archives several years ago and is now a professor at Wright State University in Ohio.

The Quaker Archives received records from Rich Square Monthly Meeting and handled information requests from several other meetings over the past year. Any questions are best directed to archives@guilford.edu. Due our operations focus on archival longevity, meetings are still asked to submit paper records (by appointment in person or via postal mail) at this time. Efforts are underway to have a process for a sustainable electronic record submission. Regardless, we are not able to accept email attachments as a way of depositing records at this time.

Guilford receives some funds each year from several of our key organizational partners to help us in providing direct archival services (i.e. care of records). The continuing support of the yearly meeting, as well as direct support from Davidson, Fayetteville, Friendship, and Virginia Beach, is appreciated. Annual contributions from meetings can be mailed directly to Quaker Archives. Contributions from individuals qualify as

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charitable giving and can be directed (either through postal mail or online giving) to the college's Advancement Office. All checks are to be made payable to Guilford College with "Quaker Archives" noted in the memo line. As much of our funding still comes from Guilford College's annual operating budget, annual support and charitable investment to increase endowment funding are actively sought.

Submitted by

Gwen Gosney Erickson, Quaker Archivist & Special
Collection Librarian

Questions? Contact archives@guilford.edu or explore our website at <https://library.guilford.edu/archives> Online giving options for individuals (individuals only as online giving currently only for tax deductible contributions and not partner support from meetings or organizations):

<http://www.giving.guilford.edu>

Welcome from Guilford College President

Guilford College President Kyle Farmbry was present via Zoom. He introduced himself, welcomed us to Guilford, and presented a report which acknowledged the challenges while raising up the strengths of the Guilford community and plans for the future.

Report from Quaker House

Friends warmly received Wayne Finegar who spoke to us about the work of Quaker House and his first few months as director.



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223 Hillside Avenue,
Fayetteville, NC 28301 910-323-3912

execdirector@quakerhouse.org www.quakerhouse.org

2022 Annual Report to Worshiping Communities

2021 and 2022 have seen several significant changes for Quaker House. The summer of 2021 included the gradual relaxing of the worst days of the COVID-19 pandemic as vaccines became available for the first time. Quaker House's free counseling service for active and retired military personnel and their families continued with telehealth sessions throughout the lock-down and subsequent pandemic. In-person sessions were able to re-start at Quaker House in April 2022. We continue our dedication to saying "Yes to the soldiers, No to the War" by supporting those harmed by their service. This includes treatment for moral injury, post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, domestic violence, and other injuries. Relaxation of pandemic distancing rules in the spring of 2022 has also allowed Quaker House to begin more direct participation in community events. In May 2022 Quaker House teamed with Fayetteville based Community Patriot Arts Community to present an introduction to moral injury to some of the nurses of Womack Army Medical Center.

Quaker House's support for the GI Rights Network continued throughout the last year. Calls to the GI Rights Hotline averaged 233 per month across all of 2021 and 238 in the first quarter of 2022. There has been a rise across the first three months of 2022 that may be related to both the war in Ukraine and the start of involuntary discharges from the military for vaccine refusals. So far the discharges have been general discharges. These allow the individuals to obtain the services of the Veterans Administration but not the GI Bill benefits. Media reports suggest that they are likely to be allowed to re-join the military with proof of having been vaccinated. Quaker House

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and the members of the network are going to continue to monitor these discharges and the political discussions related to them.

In the fall of 2021, Executive Director Kindra Bradley announced her resignation. The Quaker House board began a search for Kindra's successor. Kinda's service to Quaker House came with many unanticipated challenges as she helped lead us through the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. She found ways for Quaker House to continue to provide support to our constituents, moved board meetings and conferences online, and masterminded a virtual 5K fundraiser event. Her dedication and energy are deeply appreciated.

On March 1, 2022, Wayne Finegar began his service as the new Executive Director. Wayne is a long-time member of Sandy Spring Friends Meeting in Sandy Spring, Maryland. He spent the last 12 years serving Baltimore Yearly Meeting in multiple roles, most recently as the Acting General Secretary from July 2020 through August 2021.

Since beginning his service, Wayne has regularly worshiped with Fayetteville Friends Meeting, traveled to visit and worship with Wilmington (NC) Friends Meeting, and participated in Southeastern Yearly Meeting's annual gathering. Coming planned travels include presentations to local worshipping communities in Vermont and New York; in-person participation in the annual gatherings of Piedmont Friends Fellowship, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting, Palmetto Friends Gathering, North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative, and North Carolina Fellowship of Friends. He also will be part of the online sessions of Friends General Conference and Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

On February 24, 2022, Russia began the invasion of Ukraine. Quaker House sponsored protests against the conflict in downtown Fayetteville in March that included members of the

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local Ukrainian and Russian diaspora in the city. Additionally, several Friends contacted Quaker House directly or began discussions online about their relationship with the traditional Peace Testimony in light of the war. In response to these messages, Quaker House hosted two online worship sharing sessions that had over 70 participants in each. Many powerful messages were shared as Friends sought to discern their feelings of sympathy and outrage with their personal stances on pacifism and non-violence. Quaker House has announced a follow-on discussion in early June 2022 with the title Putting Action to Witness and additional events may be announced as Friends are led.

The unique challenges faced by everyone in the past years have changed many of our expectations of what is “normal.” Quaker House is looking for ways to build on the opportunities for broad participation in on-line and hybrid events, while also paying attention to the rise of new injuries and challenges for those serving in the military as well as those in the entire community of Friends.

State of Society Reports

State of the Society Reports were shared and are included in the minutes.

Davidson

Our past year has been one of continued diminishment in many ways, with nonetheless some promising moments of vitality. Our meetings for worship are hybrid now, and participation remains low at 5-10 people per week, with most attending in person and usually 1-3 on Zoom. We’ve had little energy for offering adult religious education opportunities, and little to no participation. We hold meeting for worship with attention to business quarterly

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with typical attendance of some 6-9 members and attenders including our Clerk and Recording Clerk.

One major constraint has been the continued impact of the pandemic on our ability to offer indoor childcare. The few families still involved with our meeting have young children for whom a vaccine was still not available. With the return of warmer weather, we are trying now to organize outdoor supervised play for the children during meeting, but able and willing volunteers are not plentiful. Another pandemic-related barrier to participation for some in our meeting has been our continued requirement of indoor masking, particularly after mask mandates were dropped by other institutions this spring.

Susan Campbell, a beloved longtime attender and vibrant force in our meeting's life was lost tragically to cancer at the age of 59 at the end of April. After her diagnosis in the autumn, we often held small, brief worship gatherings on her porch, with widespread participation throughout our Meeting over the months. We treasure those and so many other memories of Susan and her family as we grieve her death and try to support her husband Malcolm and grown daughters Paulina and Celeste.

Brighter spots in the past year for the life of our meeting include a few new frequent attenders, online social gatherings during Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks, holding our annual talent show online again in January, and joyful if small attendance at a Saturday walk on a local greenway. A contemplative practices group that uses our meetinghouse and is led by Anne Olsen has continued to thrive this past year, and our building has also seen regular use by other groups, including the local Unitarian Universalist congregation, the Davidson College chaplain's office, and others. This spring, as omicron-variant infections subsided, we began offering outdoor refreshments and socializing at rise of meeting most weeks, weather permitting, and have found it a welcome and fruitful time to get acquainted

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with our newcomers and for some established members and attenders to deepen again our acquaintance with one another.

Durham

This has been a difficult year. We are grateful for ways of virtually worshiping and connecting to each other, but they are poor substitutes for being in each others' presence. The COVID-19 pandemic has worn on, and worn us all down, bringing a growing sense of weariness and disconnection. Fewer and fewer Friends feel led to serve in committee or leadership positions, which means that our committees and our Meeting are not always functioning as fully as they might.

This situation has provided an opportunity to clarify and refocus our values. If there is not sufficient energy for certain work at this time, perhaps that work has become an empty ritual and does not need doing. This is why, in Eighth Month 2021, the Clerking Team asked Meeting to collectively take a "Pause" – a sort of sabbatical from business as usual -- in order to better reflect on where Spirit truly calls us. This approach led to less business for the Meeting to consider, which led the subsequent Clerking Team to not hold Meeting for Worship With Attention to Business in First Month and Third Month 2022.

Still, we have managed. Friends have faithfully continued to do the work of Meeting, and have stepped in to spell others when they needed to take a well-earned break. Some milestones from the past year include:

- 9th Month 2021. With the Racial Equity Learning Arc series of anti-racist trainings completed, the RELA Steering Committee was laid down. A new standing committee, The Racial Justice and Practice Committee, was formed to focus on anti-racism efforts within the

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Meeting.

- 12th Month 2021. Friends from Durham Meeting helped establish a Circle of Welcome for the Yousafzai family, who fled Afghanistan.
- 2nd Month 2022. Our Care & Support Committee reported the following accomplishments during 2021:
 - Respite care and transportation assistance: 4 instances: (44 people participated)
 - Meal Trains Coordinated by C&S: 9
 - Cards: We have a list of 48 people who are willing to write cards of sympathy and support for people in the Meeting going through a rough time (usually grief or severe illness). In 2021, C&S organized sending cards to 20 people.
 - Memorials: We assisted with memorials for Ted Purcell and Bill Jeffries.
 - Emergency Fund: In three cases, helped members of the Meeting community to pay rent or medical bills.
- 4th Month 2022. Oriana Messer and Oliver Child-Lanning became the first couple we know of to be married under the care of Durham Friends Meeting who were raised in this Meeting. Joseph Killen completed his Eagle Scout project by building new stairs and retaining walls at an entry to the playground.
- 5th Month 2022. We welcomed the 12 babies born since June 2019 at two different welcomings.

Joyfully, the Spring 2022 decline in COVID-19 cases allowed those of us who are vaccinated to once again worship together within our Meetinghouse (with a limit of 40 people). Friends created a “worship station” that enables hybrid worship, so that

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those who do not yet feel comfortable at the Meetinghouse are able to participate by Zoom. We continue to offer multiple opportunities for worship each week, both inside and outside the Meetinghouse, and by Zoom. Throughout the past year, our Youth Ministries program has offered First Day School and other opportunities for our children and youth, which has continued to draw young families to the Meeting.

While the pandemic has contributed to our sense of disconnection from each other, it is not the only source of that disconnection. During the past two years, in particular, our Meeting has been experiencing some conflict among Friends. Some of this conflict results from disagreements about how we need to proceed in our efforts to become an anti-racist Meeting where all feel seen and welcome. Some Friends fear that certain approaches undermine our Quaker process, while others feel they enhance it. Some Friends feel uncomfortable, afraid that they will say “the wrong thing,” while other Friends welcome correction. And, while we approved a “Black Lives Matter” sign at the meetinghouse, the specific form that such a sign would take – and whether or not we can honestly live into its meaning – remain contested.

However, this discord is not entirely about our anti-racist commitments. Some of it has to do with differing styles and personalities: there has been conflict and pain over the seasoning of one particular Friend’s nomination. This can reflect deeper disagreements over what it means to be a “good Quaker” and who gets to decide what that means. Some Friends, for example, are uncomfortable with messages during worship that they feel are overly critical or emphatic.

Along the way, some Friends have been hurt by their treatment at Meeting. Such pain has sadly led to a distrust and wariness of “the other side” that isn’t easily mended. And this hurt has brought to light still other wounds from years ago that had been

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papered over by our habit of conflict avoidance. This pain and distrust has led several Friends – on both “sides” – to leave or step away from active participation at Durham Friends Meeting in the past few years.

We should be clear that this conflict and distrust is certainly not felt by all Friends at Durham Meeting. But we know we need to develop better ways of dealing with conflict and healing any hurt, and we are working on that. We need to find ways to express concerns in ways that acknowledge that all are acting in good faith in the best way they know how.

Happily, there are devoted Friends at Durham Meeting who have been working carefully toward re-knitting our fragmented community during the past year. During the Fall, Ministry & Counsel facilitated two happy, well-attended outdoor social retreats at West Point on the Eno Park. And – recognizing the limits of Zoom – for the past year, we have been encouraging more small group interactions. From a 5th Month report:

Ministry and Counsel has been working with several other committees to find opportunities for DFM folks to reconnect and to reunify our community. We assisted in providing listening sessions in small groups and a large group with Nominations Committee and the Clerks. We are working to rebuild trust through reconnecting in serious sharing, informal conversations, small group activities, forums, a book study, and some fun things yet to be announced.

Friends have created new Bible study and spiritual growth groups, as well as small groups devoted to anti-racism study. Ideally, these more intimate groups can create spaces in which Friends are able to better connect with each other during the pandemic. This Spring, Friends have also organized some thoughtful listening sessions: one on our vision for Durham

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Friends Meeting; another to enable a conversation about how harm occurs at our Meeting and what we can do about it. The Adult Education committee recently facilitated a forum on seasoning. More opportunities of various kinds are planned for the future.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-4

This year, for so many Friends, has been messy and painful. We grieve the loss of loved ones, of potluck meals, and of certainty. We grieve the life we had. Friends have faced unimaginable difficulties over the last year as the pandemic has worn on. But this is only a season. While we face an uncertain future, many Friends at Durham are starting to feel reconnected and hopeful. We at Durham Monthly Meeting head into the next year as we always do: trusting and discerning where we are led, but not knowing where that will take us.

2021-2022 Clerking Team, Durham Friends Meeting

Chaz Lang (them/theirs)
Bill Velco (him/his)
Kent Wicker (him/his)

Fayetteville

Fayetteville Friends enjoyed a year of renewed participation in our community, which we had greatly missed during the restrictions of the pandemic. We gathered with other faith

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communities to celebrate and encourage one another in the paths laid out by Spirit. Some of our activities included an interfaith Thanksgiving service, an interfaith service to hold Ukraine in the Light, walking in our local Crop Walk, and once again participating as individuals in multiple demonstrations held in our downtown area. A group traveled to Guilford to attend Piedmont Friends Fellowship and found happiness in connecting with other Quakers in our area.

We continue in a “hybrid” format and enjoy a strong sense of unity despite our divided physical locations. As a small meeting, we feel a bond of community with one another and are always thankful for our peaceful and loving fellowship. We have fostered these relationships with some outside gatherings at a faithful attender’s home and count her husband and son as part of our family of Friends. We tenderly hold the joys and sorrows of each person in our meeting and treasure our commitment to one another.

This year we bade farewell to Kindra as she departed Quaker House to live closer to her daughter and grandchildren. After a period of holding the board in the Light to discern a new director, we were excited to welcome Wayne into our midst. We have enjoyed many lighthearted moments during meetings in regards to his dog and cats joining us during worship: cats kneading our laps with claws and pup flopping heavily to the floor to commence his snoring.

Our studies this year have focused greatly on looking at the notion of separateness and the life-denying consequences of holding onto that notion. We have taken encouragement from our studies that by changing ourselves, we change the world. From one of our books studied, *Active Peace*: “Engaging our lives and the world in a more conscious and intimate way, we find the inspiration and resilience we need to continue. This includes

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building our capacity to face the pain and suffering in the world with courage and compassion.”

Fayetteville Friends accepts this charge to bring peace through the individual and corporate actions of our meeting.

“To know the Lord is at work, you have to be at work with the Lord.” Elfrida Viport Foulds.

Friendship

In 2020, our meeting, like so many others, closed its physical doors and moved over to a Zoom format for worship, business, groups, and committee meetings. In 2021, the advent of an effective vaccine raised hopes that we could resume live worship, and in December of last year we began using the meetinghouse again, requiring proof of vaccination, masks, and social distancing. We use a computer and projector/screen to allow people to continue to attend via Zoom; after the close of worship, the clerk asks those in the meetinghouse to introduce themselves and then goes around the Zoom room asking each person to say good morning. On average now we have 15 people in the meetinghouse and another 15 via Zoom, from various locations in North Carolina and from other states and countries. So far, this combined approach seems to be working, though Friends vary in how close they feel to others on the Zoom screen. Business meetings are carried out via Zoom; committee meetings vary. An Ad Hoc committee continues to monitor the statistics for Covid in Guilford County and to advise the meeting about whether to increase or decrease the restrictions on meetinghouse use. We have held several social get-togethers on the meetinghouse lawn.

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As a result of providing Zoom access to worship and other group gatherings, we have gained new attenders both locally and across the US and Nigeria. We have also gained four new members, two by transfer and two by clearness committees for new membership.

Friends attend Sunday and Wednesday evening worship. Two groups each meet every two weeks—a Bible Study group currently exploring the book of Deuteronomy and a group using Ashley Wilcox's book *A Women's Lectionary*.

We continue to be involved in causes outside the meeting. Friends have been actively involved with two families: a mother and son who have been staying in our meetinghouse while they obtain permanent housing and a family of five who emigrated from Afghanistan. The local family is close to being able to move to an apartment. The Afghan family has recently moved to Durham, closer to family. Both projects have required many hours of work and have opened all of our eyes to the ongoing shortage of decent, affordable housing in the Greensboro area. As our involvement with these families comes to an end, we will be asking what the next steps for us will be in addressing this problem, and what we can learn from our experiences.

As mentioned, the continuing presence of Covid has had both positive and negative effects. We realize that an important thing we have lost is the opportunity to talk informally over coffee or potluck. Our time with each other is limited and perhaps more perfunctory. Up to now, we have been fortunate not to have had major controversies to address, but we realize that being in community requires patience, trust, and the ability to hear hard truths without closing down or leaving the meeting—skills that are better practiced in each other's presence than via Zoom. Our definition of "meeting community" is in flux, without a clear

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endpoint for establishing something new that we can all agree on. We are feeling our way.

Rich Square

Rich Square Monthly Meeting is experiencing change as we, like everyone else, have been adapting to the Covid pandemic and the need to connect with one another. Distant members' and attenders' participation in meetings for worship, business and study groups increased with the use of Zoom and hybrid meetings for worship from Cedar Grove Meeting House. We continue to ask everyone who enters the meetinghouse to wear a mask out of concern for others' health. In Eighth Month the Meeting considered laying down Salem Black River Allowed Meeting since there are only two in the Allowed Meeting and they are now worshipping with us on Zoom. The Meeting united with them in laying down Salem Black River Allowed Meeting.

We recorded three new members during the past year: Anne Brown who lives near Rich Square, plus Mark Moss and Mary Kay Glazer who live in Greenville. Members and attenders worship and/or join us for Bible Study from South Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Greensboro, California and Japan. The meeting has 39 recorded members. Approximately 26 active members and attenders participate in person and/or on Zoom at various times throughout the year.

Our Meeting held two memorial meetings at Cedar Grove Meeting House last summer. The meeting for member Andrew ("Andy") Brown (07/31/1943- 07/25/2021) was held on Seventh Month 30, 2021. The meeting for member William ("Bill") Remmes (07/31/1945-03/9/2020) was held on Eighth Month 4, 2021. After each memorial meeting those in attendance shared a catered meal and fellowship. Given the Covid-19 situation all were careful to care for one another by wearing masks. As Covid infections were increasing last fall, the meeting felt we should

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not have the usual Homecoming at Cedar Grove in Tenth Month. We continue to miss having shared meals, but hope to begin them again soon.

Our Bible Study meets on Zoom each Fourth Day evening except the Third Fourth Day evening each month when we have Worship With Attention to Business on Zoom. Last Fall we began using the Illuminate Friends Bible Study quarterlies published by Barclay Press. During First and Second Months, Elizabeth P. Haskins and Barbara Gosney convened “Rich Square Friends’ Worship and Business 101” using Damon Hickey’s booklet Unforeseen Joy. The group met on Zoom for four consecutive Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Much of our attention in business meetings during the fall and winter dealt with discerning how to respond to Greenville Meeting’s request to be under the care of our meeting at the same time they were transitioning from being a monthly meeting to a worship group. We answered only two of the 1983 queries. We spent a great deal of time thoroughly considering and proposing new and revised queries for the committee.

We continue efforts to be a positive presence in our town and local community with financial contributions for local charitable and emergency assistance, plus daily stocking our Little Free Pantry and maintaining the children’s Little Free Library. Local members continue to demonstrate reverence for the earth with a flower and vegetable garden area near the old Cedar Grove springhouse. Rich Square Monthly Meeting works with Cedar Grove Friends Meeting, Inc. to maintain the Cedar Grove Meetinghouse and Cedar Grove Quaker Cemetery. We seek to “Let Truth Lead Us” as we are mindful of Rich Square Monthly Meeting’s 262 year history and from when our yearly meetings were held in the Cedar Grove Meetinghouse for many decades after 1904.

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Virginia Beach

Meetings for worship continue to be a source of nourishment and a time when we feel joined in Spirit. During introductions and announcements at the rise of meetings for worship, we experience tender sharing, encouragement, humor and gratitude. At times we have had as many as ten folks in the Meetinghouse and ten plus joining via Zoom. We have made improvements in our blended technology acknowledging that Zoom meetings are the norm and preferred by many who are not able or ready to return to our Meetinghouse.

Our community has become smaller and more aware of what is and is not feasible for our numbers and level of participation. This reality presents us with the need to adjust our understanding of what we can achieve and where to focus our energy. A wonderful example of this occurred with a request from members who had concerns about the decrease in monetary contributions over the past few years. The Finance Committee provided a comprehensive presentation of the Meeting's financial resources. It provided us with a better understanding of our financial commitments, our trends in income and expenses and how to best plan for a sustainable future. It was well-received and greatly appreciated.

At the end of June, our Communications lead and tech savvy Friend, Whit Peace, is stepping down from his ten years of caring and diligent service. Currently we do not have any members with the tech skills to maintain the smooth run of things that we've gotten used to with Whit at the wheel. A small transition team is working with Whit and also a hired website developer to determine how to maintain our community communications and online tools.

Exploration into the history, practices and ideas that have shaped the Religious Society of Friends occurs twice a month in our

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First Day Discussion group. It serves as a place to share our own experiences of the divine and what we are finding and what we are still looking for in Quakerism. Our reading of books and Pendle Hill pamphlets serves as more of a prompt for reflection and questioning than a text for scholarly exegesis. Participants feel that this discussion group deepens our connections to one another and is excellent preparation for the following hour of meeting for worship.

During this past year we lost the few Young Friends who participated in the program previously, and we are saddened by the current absence of youth in our Meeting.

Our Friends School will begin construction of a new classroom building this year. A capital campaign has been launched. While waiting for the completion of their new space, the Music program will be held in the Meetinghouse downstairs. Three members of Meeting serve on School Committee and are committed to the success of Friends School.

Worship and Community committee membership has declined to a small dedicated group. Each month this group meets to discuss various ways we can support our spiritual community and bring us together. We miss our social gatherings and potlucks. We have held hybrid themed social times at the rise of meeting which have been well received. We continue to care for one another in times of need.

The two year term of our co-clerks has come to an end. Lewis White will be assuming the role of clerk of meeting for the upcoming two year term. The nominating committee continues to search for a co-clerk to share the duties. During the last two years, serving as clerk for meetings for worship with attention to business has been challenging. Agendas are long, and often, certain issues are left to season due to lack of unity. There are concerns with matters of property and legal specifications

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between the School and Meeting that highlight personal opinions and disagreements. Not so patiently and not so skillfully are we with coming to a sense of the meeting...yet we continue to return monthly. Our commitment to show up informs us that we have hope and are willing to listen inwardly and outwardly.

A joy for our Meeting is the new small garden created by the Garden Gals on the east side of the meetinghouse. It has only just begun to reveal its beauty and plant wisdom.

Respectfully submitted,
Gwynne Wells
Linda Smith
Co-clerks, VBFM

West Grove



West Grove Friends Meeting

4106 Greenhill RD, Snow Camp,
NC

2022 Report on the State of the Society

“Let us then try what love can do to mend a broken world.” ~

William Penn

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The spiritual life of the meeting is strong. Our unprogrammed silent worship has great depth and the rare short vocal ministry is edifying and inspiring. Our Bible study / Worship Sharing discussions on Fourth Day have enriched our Meeting. Greg Fuquay of Fairhope Friends in Alabama has regularly attended Fourth Day Bible Study, and Fairhope Meeting worshiped with West Grove Meeting via zoom in Fifth Month. We plan to continue to experiment with joint virtual worship once a quarter in the coming year. It is a remarkable experience to join two meetings – via technology – over a hundred years old each.

Scott Holmes and Haven Kimmel Holmes are co-clerks of Meeting. When our one recorded minister, Janis Ansel, and an Elder, Charles Ansel, unexpectedly transferred their membership, it was quite a blow to our small meeting. We have missed them deeply in many ways, but with their parting, Way has opened for new growth. We have been greatly enriched with new members, Al McCanless, Liz Parrish, Richard Miller and Mary Miller. With decades of experience in our Yearly Meeting, Richard and Mary have enriched our Meeting with their knowledge and experience of our Conservative tradition. In the words of Louise Wilson, “Once again, the Millers have been faithful.” Katherine Newlin Hadley successfully led an effort to have West Grove Meeting designated as a historic landmark. We applied for and received grant to renovate the walls and floors inside the Meeting House.

We have a deep and spiritual love among our members, and a strong and genuine concern for each other’s physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. We go out of our way to share books, articles, and ideas with each other that we think might be helpful. We share meals with each other in our homes and know each other beyond the four doors of the Meeting House. Our discussions on Fourth day range from personal spiritual experiences, Biblical Hermeneutics, Quaker History, scholarship,

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Philosophy, Theology, knitting, dogs, and the weather. We are willing and able to perform acts of service and support for each other when we need help. We can disagree in the Spirit of Love and Truth. The best way to describe our Meeting is that we are a small, vibrant spiritual family.

Wilmington

The year began while we were meeting in Zoom but ended in the Light of day.

The summer passed almost without event, and we rejoiced to be able to meet with Friends, even if not in person. We would regularly have 7-10 members attending each Meeting. It was nearly always the same persons that appeared for Meeting.

With some trepidation, we met the first time by including the park next door to the Meetinghouse. It was a clear day and there was very little hesitation, but we had to learn some things over again—like the Rise of Meeting. Concerns over vaccinations etc., became a regular occurrence.

Last July, we had the corporate meeting to meet the requirements of NC law. Then we read the Advices. Funny how they've gotten smarter and all that they did was sit in the book since last year. We have discussed the problem of rain and the parking lot. The parking lot slants toward the building and large rain events results in flooding in the Meetinghouse. Sandbags placed in front of the rear door help divert the water.

We were a little slow on the Appreciation Day for Teachers this year that we usually do at Rachel Freeman Elementary School. Covid has made it much more difficult and we may not be able to do it at all. Turns out, we didn't.

We had a family to move away. They were a great addition to our Meeting when they joined. They initiated Meeting with

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Attention to Breakfast and it became very popular on its own. Anyway, when the weather warmed up a little, the Meeting went to spend the night at their new house in Tryon, NC, and had Meeting on the morning of First Day. The members/attenders that did not go joined by Zoom. People are still talking about it. Helped some of the members of the Meeting get to know other members better. Always a good thing.

Wilmington has had a record number of murders/shootings this year. One was very near to an attender's home. As is the case in most of those situations, the Meeting was focused on our attender but less focused on the cause of the problem in the community. Discussion revolved around getting into the community, which may be difficult in some settings. It is an issue that we will continue to work on.

We've had several new people show up and start attending. They add a lot to the Meeting. And some of them can sing. We are trying once again to have the fifth First day second hour spent on singing. We ordered some Quaker hymnals from Philadelphia, and they are very useful, especially if we sing. There are only about three fifth First days in a year so we didn't think it would wear out so fast. Not having an accompaniment is not good for struggling singers.

Since we send out the Zoom details every week, the Meeting is trying to insert a few words of encouragement and gentle persuasion (and perhaps a few announcements) as well as reminders if it is time for Potluck or other events. It appears that the announcements and notice are appreciated.

We have had a few former Peace Corps Volunteers show up. Interesting, huh?

Our building is beginning to show its age. There have been issues with the roof, which is best described as being "accordian-style." There are seven ridges and six intervening troughs. The rain has played havoc on the roof for many years,

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and in fact, has done so again, just recently. We asked and the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting helped us out with the repair cost. This time, it appears that we have a legitimate insurance claim, as the wind ripped the fiber cover off of part of the building.

We had a nice Christmas service. Just around sundown, we gathered in the Meetinghouse and had a bowl of sand in the middle of the room on a table. There were candles available, as had been the case for many years, and those that felt like it, lit a candle and said a few words. Not much, but it meant that another year had passed and we were well enough to appreciate the season.

Unfortunately, we have not had any “cleaning days” at the Meetinghouse. Whereas they were never the climax of the worship week, it gave us a chance to be together. It also gave us a chance to learn all the quirky idiosyncrasies of the building. We are still learning.

So we usually have about 10-15 people at our Meeting. Most are not perfect attenders, but they appear regularly, and always appear to be in an open and receptive mood to learn. Who could ask for anything better?

The State of our Meeting is good.

Finance Committee Report and Presentation of Budget

Bob Parker presented the Finance Committee report and budget for 2023, to be approved at 10th month Interim Body.

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North Carolina Yearly Meeting Expenses			2020 Budget	2020 actual	2021 budget	2021 actual	2022 budget	2022 actual 6/1/22	proposed 2023 budget
INCOME									
	Monthly Meeting Contributions								
		Davidson	750	750	400	400	400	400	400
		Durham	3600	3600	3000	3000	3000	3050	3000
		Fayetteville	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
		Friendship	1000	1000	1000	1000	750	0	1000
		Greenville	400	0	0	400	0	0	0
		Rich Square	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
		Virginia Beach	350	350	350	350	350	350	350
		West Grove	200	200	200	200	200	0	200
		Wilmington	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	0	1000
								0	
	Monthly Meeting Contributions		9300	8900	7950	8350	7700	5800	7950
	Other Income								
		Bookstore Revenue	0		0	0	0	0	0
		other		155		100		0	0
	Other Income Total		0	155	0	100	0	0	0
INCOME			9300	9055	7950	8450	7700	5800	7950

EXPENSES									
	Administrative Expenses								
		Admin., Quaker Archives, Guilford	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
		Bookstore Expenses	55	0	55	0	55		55
		Operating Expenses / postal costs / bank	300	181	300	216	300	20	300
		PayPal fees	1000	18	250	21	250		300
		Publication of Journal	0	0	0	0	0		0
		Publication of	0	0	0	0	0		0
		Publication of Minutes	600	0	600	630	700		700
		Publication of YMTg Directory	250	0	250	162	250		250
		Website Costs	260	167	100	72	100	24	100
		Zoom			180	0	0		0
	Administrative Expenses		2765	667	2035	1401	1955	343	2005

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EXPENSES, cont.			2020 Budget	2020 actual	2021 Budget	2021 actual	2022 Budget	2022 actual 6/1/22	2022 Budget
	Donations to Organizations								
		American Friends Service Committee	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Carolina Friends School-Durham	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends Center at Guilford	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends Cmte National Legislation	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends Hist. Collection, Guilford	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends School of Wilmington	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends World Cmte Consultation	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Guilford College	300	300	1300	1300	400	400	500
		New Garden Friends School	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Pendle Hill	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Quaker Earthcare Witness	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Quaker House of Fayetteville	1000	1000	1000	1000	1100	1100	1200

		Right Sharing of World Resources	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		School of the Spirit	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Virginia Beach Friends School	300	300	300	300	400	400	500
		Friends Com North Carolina Leg					400	400	500
		Indian affairs	300						
	Donations to Organizations		5500	5200	6200	6200	7100	7100	8700
	Other Expenses								
		Internships/Scholarshi	1200	0	1200	0	1200	0	1200
		Poor People's Cmpgn Support Cmte	1000	0	1000	0	1000	0	1000
		Travel for Indian affairs concerns	0	0	300	0	300	0	300
		Travel (General)	3000	0	3000	0	3000	0	3000
		Youth Programs	3500	179	3500	0	3500	0	3500
	Other Expenses Total		8700	179	9000	0	9000	0	9000
	EXPENSES TOTAL		16965	6046	17235	7601	18055	7443	19705
	BUDGET SUMMARY								
		Total Income	9300	9055	7950	8450	7700	5800	7950
		Total Expenses	16965	6046	17235	7601	18055	7443	19705
		Net Difference	-7665	3009	-9285	849	-10355	-1643	-11755

Treasurer's Report

David French presented the Treasurer's report

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North Carolina Yearly Meeting Treasurer's report Year End, 2021

Our fiscal year is the calendar year, so this report summarizes the finances of NCYM-C for 2021.

Summary:

We ended the year in good financial condition with no significant financial issues. A spreadsheet is attached showing all transactions, year-end balances, and status of Friends Fiduciary Fund investment accounts.

Discussion:

Monthly Meeting donation income, which is our main source of general revenue, was \$8450 – this is \$500 more than budgeted. As in 2020, expenses were about \$10,000 below forecast largely due to lack of travel and other costs that the pandemic impacted. We had budgeted for a significant loss during the year, but instead had about \$1000 gain.

Friends Fiduciary Funds, where our excess money is kept, and where the Travel In The Ministry money is invested, performed very well, following the general increase in the overall stock market. The 14% increase includes the promised 4% payment plus the 10% appreciation. Our general fund in Friends Fiduciary had about \$50,000 at year end. There is a separate report on the Travel in the Ministry fund, which ended the year with about \$14,000.

The 2021 annual gathering income exceeded expenses by about \$100, leaving an adequate balance to begin planning for the year 2021. There is a separate report about the annual gathering.

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Thus our net worth increased by about \$9,000. Of course, the year 2022 has gotten off to a poor start in terms of investment performance, so the above comments, while correct for last year, are not reflective of our current situation. A separate report of 2022 will be given.

Friends World Committee on Consultation Report

Michael Mizenheimer and Liz Parish presented the report for Friends World Committee on Consultation. Next spring's meeting of the Section of the Americas will be held in person near Greensboro, North Carolina at Haw River State Park. Friends are asked to hold the planning in the Light and consider helping with the events. More information can be found at FWCCAmericas.org

Digital Communications and Outreach

The clerk informed Friends of some problems that developed with our Facebook account, highlighting the need for an active committee to consider policy and content for our internet presence. An invitational and informative presence of some sort is necessary to make our message available to the wider world. This is true of our digital presence and we are reminded that it is also true of our in-person presence as evidenced by our invisibility to newcomers on the Guilford Campus this week.

Friends approved forming an ad hoc committee to consider our digital communications and outreach and how to use social media. David Perry, Bob Parker and Lloyd Lee Wilson agreed to serve.

Travel in the Ministry Fund

David Perry presented the trustees' report for the Travel in the Ministry Trust Fund.

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Travel in the Ministry Trust Fund Report

Beginning Balance (Market Value) 6/30/2021 \$13,125.33

Distributions: -\$300.00

Additional Receipts: \$270.00

Investment Income (reinvested): \$213.29

Unrealized Gains/Losses: -\$2,028.66

Ending Balance (Market Value) 6/30/2022 \$11,349.96

Note that \$340 of value was held in the yearly meeting checking account during the course of the year as it was received as donations, including \$70 from the previous fiscal year. \$300 of this amount was distributed by the end of this reporting period, leaving \$40 in the yearly meeting checking account. This \$40 is included in the above ending balance.

Payments for "Travel in the Ministry"

The trustees authorized one request in the amount of \$300.00 from the "Travel in the Ministry" fund during this fiscal year (7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022).

Andrew Wright has led a workshop titled "Who Are Conservative Friends?" at the 2022 Friends General Conference Gathering held via Zoom. Andrew previously gave this workshop in 2017. The workshop explored the historical roots and current practices of North Carolina Yearly Meeting

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(Conservative) in order to offer participants an opportunity to explore their own beliefs and commitments, spiritual formation and spiritual growth. This is the fifth time that Andrew has been led to share his ministry and leadings. The yearly meeting looks forward to hearing of his experiences.

If a Friend feels led to travel as part of a call to ministry, consider what financial support may be needed and apply for assistance through the “Travel in the Ministry” trust fund. A brief history and an application are posted on the yearly meeting website.

As always, Friends are encouraged to make special contributions in support of “Travel in the Ministry.” One individual has been a frequent supporter through \$50.00 contributions which were held in the yearly meeting checking until distributed to Andrew Wright, and otherwise would be added to the Friends Fiduciary Corporation account periodically.

Submitted by.

W. Carey Reece, Jr. and David Perry Trustees

Reports from Organizations and Schools

Virginia Beach Friends School

David French spoke regarding the Virginia Beach Friends School. A written report from the school is included in these minutes.

Head of School Report June 2022

Overall Summary:

In many ways, year two of pandemic teaching was much more

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challenging than year one. The end of the school year saw teachers exhausted and welcoming summer vacation with open arms. Despite the complexities COVID-19 brought to the classroom, Friends School teachers did a brilliant job ensuring all students received the very best education.

Even though VBFS ended the academic year feeling like its pre-COVID self with in-person school gatherings and maskless students, COVID policies of classroom pods were loosely adhered to until the end of the school year. This meant the school maintained its all-school Zoom Meeting for Worship policies and will look to the 2022-23 academic year to begin in-person Meeting for Worship. An unattended positive consequence of Zoom Meeting for Worship was that all VBFS students (from the littlest to the biggest) regularly found their Zoom voices in smaller classroom settings during silence. VBFS middle schoolers took a leadership role working with Dee Talbert, Friends School Counselor and Quaker Education Coordinator, to plan, coordinate, and lead weekly MFW. This leadership will continue next year when the school rolls back to in-person MFW.

The school year ended on a high note with a number of well-attended in-person gatherings. The sense of community VBFS is known for started to come back in April and May. Through end-of-the-year gatherings, parents who have only known the school in the pandemic were able to get a true sense of what it means to attend a Friends school.

Finally, Virginia Beach Friends School continues to see positive enrollment gains based on a renewed interest in Friends School over the last four years. Families of Hampton Roads who are looking for values-based education are finding and loving Friends School. The school's increased marketing, branding, reputation rebuilding, and terrific word-of-mouth by current

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families have helped attract new families to the school. These families, many with young children, are making a clear decision to pick Virginia Beach Friends School over other local better-funded independent schools based on Friends School pedagogical approach that puts the whole child first and foremost in the educational process.

Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

Michael Barclay, *Head of School*

New Garden Friends School Report

Hanna Hobson presented the report from New Garden Friends School.

Dear Friends at Yearly Meeting,

Thank you for being interested in what's going on at New Garden Friends School!

The 2021-22 school year was a special year for our school. We celebrated 50 years of belonging at NGFS, a school that was founded on Quaker values with the goal of educating children from different backgrounds together in a safe and affirming environment.

We celebrated this milestone with many old friends including our founders (Bruce Stewart was able to be with us but Jim was not well and with us in spirit), former heads of school, Bob Welsh, Joyce Sasser, Judy Harvey, Marty Goldstein, and former associate head of school, Jane Carter.

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This year taught us that the students, staff, and families of NGFS have the courage and fortitude to look beyond obstacles and lean into the joy that a thriving learning community can offer.

Here are just a few of the other things we accomplished as a community:

In acknowledging that ours is a community of care, compassion, and interdependence we modified our behaviors and communication to safeguard the health of all community members to the best of our ability.

We advanced teaching and learning for all community members by meeting students where they were and readying them for their next steps.

The arts engage our minds, hearts, and souls, and this year both campuses were alive with music, visual arts, poetry, fiction, dance, and drama.

Knowing that staying active is critical to students' physical and mental health, our athletic department created expanded offerings and opportunities for participation and competition.

Over the last 10 months, staff, parents, and Board members invested time and careful attention in the collaborative process of developing a relevant and challenging Strategic Plan for our school.

Fervently wanting to get back to the group activities that make an NGFS education so special, we resumed many milestone events like graduation, prom, field trips, the middle school dance, the teddy bear picnic, 6th-grade

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celebration, the Lower School talent show, and the eighth-grade celebration.

We dedicated ourselves to keeping our hearts and minds open to looking inward and being accountable for our individual fingerprints on systemic inequality.

Also this year we mourned the loss of cherished friends:

AJ Jorsey, class of 2016
Daniel Hudgins, class of 2018;
Our co-founder, Jim Newlin.

Each of these friends brought extraordinary Light into the world and enriched the lives of all who knew them.

While we have individual hopes and aspirations for our children, this year we came together as a community, knowing it is not enough to advance the academic progress of our learners. If we are to create the just and compassionate world they so richly deserve, we must also devote ourselves to nurturing empathy and cultivating curiosity about those we do not know and positions we may not appreciate.

Friends of Yearly Meeting, thank you for all you do to support our school and bring desperately needed Light to the world.

Kim

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Friends Committee on National Legislation

Tom Bertrand spoke regarding Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Yearly Meeting Committee Reports

Ad Hoc Committee for Five Rivers Friends

David Perry gave a report for the Ad Hoc Committee to consider membership for Five Rivers Friends in the Yearly Meeting. Friends accepted the report and approved that discussion and engagement with Five Rivers Friends be continued.

Ad Hoc Committee for Consideration of Membership for Five Rivers Friends Meeting in North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

Report to Annual Sessions 2022

The Ad Hoc Committee for Consideration of Membership for Five Rivers Friends Meeting was established at annual sessions in 2020 upon request for yearly meeting membership by Five Rivers Friends of Conway, South Carolina. The committee originally was led by Deborah Shaw and included Sidney Lee Kitchens, Huey Marshall, and David Perry. Deborah Shaw stepped away from participation in early 2022 and David Perry took on committee facilitation. The committee is comfortable continuing with this membership, but is open to additions if the yearly meeting is so led.

Over the past two years there have been some opportunities to learn more about each other and hold visits, although this has been limited by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated precautions. Huey Marshall visited Five Rivers Friends in fall

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2020, and David Perry visited in December 2020. Five Rivers clerk Jim Henderson and his son, Joe Henderson, have traveled to visit with several monthly meetings in North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). They visited Fayetteville on 1/24/2021, Wilmington on 11/28/2021, and Davidson on 3/13/2022. There has been some participation in the online meetings of Interim Body and Annual Sessions by Jim Henderson.

The committee requested reflection by Five Rivers Friends on several queries, and received fulsome responses that were shared with Interim Body in spring, 2021. In addition, Five Rivers has been considering NCYMC queries from the 1983 Discipline and shared responses in March 2022.

One concern of the committee is that both in response to the committee queries and on the Five Rivers Friends website there is a presentation that the meeting is a continuation of the one started in Conway in 1987. However, in discussions with meeting participants, it was the committee understanding that interpersonal conflicts and disagreement about pursuit of yearly meeting membership led the current participants of Five Rivers Friends to leave the established meeting and the existing clerk to start a new community. The committee received correspondence from 2019 and 2020 from the original meeting clerk, Grace Giffords, in Third Month, 2022, as well as the State of the Meeting report from 3/14/2020 that supported this history. The original meeting has gone back to using Horry Friends as the community's name to avoid confusion. The committee's concern is that the current Five Rivers Friends community may be misrepresenting the history and appears to have origins in unresolved conflicts.

Another concern is that the community appears to primarily consist of Jim and Joe Henderson as members. Our understanding is that several others attend worship regularly, but one of the key people who left with Jim to form the new

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community has decided not to pursue membership in the meeting.

It is not clear that there is enough participation in the monthly meeting to sustain itself as a monthly meeting and also support participation in the yearly meeting, and the meeting may not have been founded in 2020 in gospel order and following established Friends' practices. It may be a consideration that Five Rivers could become a worship group nurtured under the care of an existing monthly meeting within NCYMC. In addition, we would like to better understand if there have been any ongoing efforts at reconciliation with the original faith community.

While Five Rivers Friends have recognized a need for broader discernment and guidance from a yearly meeting body, a clear sense of kinship with North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) has not been communicated. We would like to understand if membership has also been sought with Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting.

That said, those who have engaged with Jim and Joe have enjoyed the interactions, and the writings shared by Five Rivers Friends have resonated with those who have read them. The Ad Hoc committee believes that engagement, shared worship, and discussion with Five Rivers Friends should be continued.

Submitted by David Perry, Sidney Lee Kitchens, and Huey Marshall

Query Responses from Meetings

Meetings shared responses to Queries 1-4, heard announcements, and Friends entered into worship prior to lunch.

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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?

Durham

We appreciate that members and attenders of Durham Friends Meeting have been faithful through the pandemic to overcome challenges and create solutions to meet and connect: worshipping, conversing, supporting families, and finding ways to interact socially. These many efforts, including those led by Ministry and Counsel and other groups in the meeting, have been a source of tremendous strength against isolation. We also acknowledge that the pandemic, as well as issues in the world and American society, have created division and dislocation within the community. Within our unprogrammed ministry, we recognize the important tension surrounding vocal ministry and recognize that the quality of worship varies – with many opportunities for deep connections and worship in different formats. The nature of unprogrammed worship means that the community may grow, learn, and evolve; it also means that this evolution will sometimes be uncomfortable. We humbly acknowledge that deep listening, receptivity, and patience will be needed to encourage and support the gift of spoken ministry by all in our meeting.

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Fayetteville

With freedom comes responsibility: being without programmed worship leaves us as individuals and as a meeting *responsible* to come together in worship. We examine what it means to prepare for worship, to know our intention to enter into a gathered worship in communion with each other and with the Holy Spirit. We must 'show up' and be present both physically & spiritually. To perceive the Living Silence while we are together partly through technology has been a learning experience for us; we do often feel gathered despite our physical distance from one another and for this we are grateful. We strive to find a place of centering in our daily lives as well as in our worship. Worship teaches us how to wait upon Spirit's direction at other times. We use our time together to strengthen our care for each other and this carries over into our week as we hold each other's concerns in the Light.

Friendship

Friends have struggled to stay as centered and present on Zoom as in-person, even as we are drawn to worship together by Spirit. Many struggle to enter into the silence and depth of worship when physically separated, even as we strive to keep the Spirit alive during our virtual meetings for worship. Friends expressed a desire that we focus on what we have been able to do and be, instead of mourning for the aspects we have missed during the pandemic. It is a joy to see Friends from all over the world join us in our worship. Friends feel strongly that our manner of waiting worship and free and unprogrammed ministry spills over into and inspires other areas of our lives. Sometimes we find ourselves wishing for more Quakerly spaces out in the world. The silence of our waiting worship is not the worship itself, more a byproduct of our waiting and listening. Friends are blessed by all those in our community with the gifts of ministry, and we do our best to encourage them to be faithful to their gifts.

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Virginia Beach

Some struggle to be quiet enough to be able to hear a message, and then a spoken message is shared that is beautiful. Our manner of worship is more difficult, so there is a po on us to know how to participate and value our Society of Friends. We see many times that Friends do come open and ready to worship, and after spoken messages there is frequent encouragement. The Bible says “be still and know that I am.” For many of us, this helps explain our waiting worship.

West Grove

We feel the presence and life of the Spirit in our Meeting for Worship. We are committed to our simple form of worship, like early Christian and Quaker communities who met in small groups in people’s homes, to deepen the message of love before taking it into the world. We are grateful for each other, for being in each other’s presence, and for answering that of God within and among us.

We sense that the growth of the Church as an institution may have diverted Christian communities from the path and teaching of Christ, that it is easy for the concern for an institution to distract from the leading of the Spirit. We are more and more faithful to a free and unprogrammed ministry shared by all. Our task may become finding those who want to share in this way of worship, and we are increasingly called to share our ways in the world. We are increasingly grounded in the depth of our worship, a tent encircling us in a gathered meeting. As we are increasingly able to gather in person, we are continually reminded that our physical presence and proximity make it easier to sense the unity of our body in Christ. Part of our unity in worship is connected to the way we can deepen our fellowship and intimacy outside of Meeting for worship when we gather virtually on Fourth Day

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bible study or socialize together in our homes. These opportunities to share our lives deepen our worship on First Day.

Friends expressed deep gratitude for each other, our Christian Community, and for the unity of the Spirit among us.

Wilmington

Our meeting has gone through the trouble of setting up the equipment for a blended zoom meeting, yet we seldom offer any messages. This started an incredible discussion about speaking and not speaking during silence. There was concern that God might be speaking to us and that we are not responding; surely the spirit must be talking to someone.

It takes courage to speak out of the silence. Many meetings are silent and we understand that it is totally acceptable. There will always be those who miss hearing messages, but we must be patient and wait for the message. Many of us come to Quaker meeting for the silence, and some feel that the spoken message distracts from the internal message. Many enjoy the silence and value it. Some do not share because they feel that the message was personal to them. Others wished they had spoken but didn't. Some do not feel worthy of speaking for the Spirit, while others seem to have the gift of ministry. We are reminded that we all are ministers. Sometimes when one person speaks it prompts others to speak.

A visitor said that the messages spoken during Meeting had more heart than the prepared sermons that he had heard over the years. Another visiting friend revealed that she had been in the 12 step program where both listener and speaker exchange profound experiences. She believes that we all have a need for silence. God sends us messages all the time and we need to learn to listen. We are frustrated when a message is given and cannot be heard. We must remember that a simple message could have

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special meaning for someone; we never know the intention or the implication that message might offer. We should not worry about whether we are not speaking enough nor should we worry about speaking too much. We encourage both the message and the silence.

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?

Durham

Friends have been remarkably faithful in their attendance at Meetings for Worship. It's been wonderful to see since Covid-19 has caused us all to grapple with how we attend Meeting for Worship. Our community has found ways to worship together on Zoom, outdoors, in smaller groups and more. Many people have found spiritually fulfilling and practical ways to attend Meeting for Worship and other spiritual groups. Perhaps these various worship groups will continue to live on in order to support our community's growth. Zoom opportunities will continue to be necessary for some Friends and that can be challenging due to technical difficulties and accidental miscommunication. We need to continue to support one another and reach out to connect. Our open submission to God is enriching for us, which helps deepen the spiritual richness of our Meeting. Zoom has allowed latecomers to enter and exit Meeting without any noise or disturbance. The participation and attendance of all who come to Meeting enriches the experience of the group and we are joyful when others enter the worship space. We want to acknowledge that individual differences and life circumstances may present challenges to arriving to Meeting for Worship at a given time and question the query's assumption that a late arrival inherently

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disturbs the spirit of the meeting. We seek to honor the presence of those who made it, regardless of when they came.

Fayetteville

We welcome those who arrive, no matter what time they arrive. We question some of the language used in the query and ponder the word “submission”--perhaps “receptivity” to “Spirit” might be an alternative that also speaks to us. We strive to be in communion with each other, in a mindset to listen for Divine guidance and with an open heart towards one another.

Virginia Beach

Open submission to God requires a daily letting go of our own emotions, ideas & concerns. We try to practice the discipline of freeing ourselves of distractions in order to hear that ‘still small voice.’

West Grove

We are a dedicated small group who faithfully tend the meeting and respectfully share our space. We each contribute in different ways to making our small meeting, with hybrid in-person and virtual worship possible. We have each brought a measure of care and dedication to Meeting for Worship that makes our experience clear, deep, and beautiful. A Friend shared a poem about this kind of faithfulness which captured this sense.

Those Winter Sundays
By ROBERT HAYDEN

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made

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banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Wilmington

Some of us have found it hard to attend during covid, but we try to be faithful in our attendance. We do not want anyone feeling bad about being late. We want Friends with us late or on time.

We appreciate the silence and try to respect others when entering late. We understand that we are in a process throughout our meeting and that it is meaningful to each of us in different ways.

During meeting for worship we are submissive to God and grateful for community as we share God's presence.

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?

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When differences arise, do we endeavor promptly to resolve them in a spirit of love, honesty, and humility?

Durham

This complex query speaks to the current environment, relationships, hardships, emotions, and challenges facing Durham Friends Meeting in this moment. It is hard to answer the query, both because the language can be interpreted so many ways and because the text makes assumptions about differences always being problematic. Attenders and members of DFM have felt harm at Meetings for Worship because of the words and actions of others in the community. How we react to that harm – including harm that has led people to leave the meeting – matters in the moment and into the future. We are struggling to examine the racism and other systemic oppressions that engulf us as a meeting and as individuals. There is no perfect time to call out systemic oppression. There is no perfect way to handle conflict. There is no perfect time to educate or correct misstatements.

But, if we consider this query as a community instead of just as individuals, we realize that we must seek ways to listen to differences and honor the fact that we each experience the Spirit differently and authentically. Being able to communicate effectively with one another about differences can cause pain but it can also be critical to advancing justice for those among us without a voice. Listening deeply and with humility will lead us to unity. Human beings make assumptions, get defensive, misunderstand, and bumble into situations where they have good intentions but actually make things worse with their words and actions. And, we are drawn to Quakerism because we have a faith in Spirit. The query speaks of humility, honesty, and love. We understand that if we were truly following the teachings of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, we'd be better at managing conflict but we are buoyed by our knowledge that Jesus' life was messy and human. His relationships included conflict.

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Fayetteville

Our Peace Vigil held this week is one expression of our testimony of love—that we are called to find that of God in every individual—even political leaders that are causing war. We are to pray for all as we pray for peace. We look to the leadings of Spirit to guide us in following the teachings of Jesus. Through unity by setting aside ego and individual opinions, truth is revealed. As a small meeting, we enjoy peace and unity the majority of the time and feel blessed by that. In times of disunity, our strong bond of fellowship carries us through. The words of guidance in this query regarding resolving conflict are wise and we seek the path of love, honesty, and humility.

Friendship

We follow the teachings of Jesus and find a strong Christian spirit in our community, and we hold space for those who do not feel a connection to concepts like “Christianity” and “Jesus.” Big emotions can be hard for Quaker meetings to deal with. We must seek a balance between helping bring those emotions to light while at the same time maintaining love and unity. Sometimes differences of opinion are waited out, with two diverging results. Sometimes, the difference fades away and we find we agree in the end. Other times, we are conflict-avoidant, and the concern is never brought up. We struggle to find ways to deal corporately with conflicts and how to resolve them promptly, when there may be only one voice or a few voices in conflict. Even so, we feel a strong sense of love. We want to be better at addressing conflict in our community, and efforts are underway by Worship and Ministry. We sit with our differences and carry them with love and concern.

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Virginia Beach

Our culture does not value humility. We may struggle even more with a forgiving spirit, sometimes ascribing ulterior motives to others. It is tempting to be authoritative in bringing a point across. Yet the Quaker process is alive and well in our community. What we may lack is patience, and the willingness to listen and keep the lines of communication open.

West Grove

Friends certainly strive to lift up the aims of this query. We cannot achieve these things all the time. Sometimes we can be reactive rather than mindful. We also don't live up to these values when we speak beyond our measure of truth.

We have recently lost an elder and a minister in a way that feels abrupt which makes us wonder how we are doing in our effort to act upon the Holy Spirit in our dealings with each other. Members of West Grove may depart for a time, but sometimes they return after a period. We want to explore ways we might reach out and nurture inactive members. Each Monthly Meeting has its own personality which is remarkably stable despite changes in membership. West Grove has an intensity of spirit which can be both attractive and repelling to people. We are seeing a repetition of this cycle which is a natural part of the cycle of our Meeting.

Our waiting worship has really helped center us each week, and we feel the presence of the Divine working on us, making us into better people. Our gatherings help the divine Potter mold us into our better selves. We feel even more committed to exemplifying virtues of steady love, humility, and honesty, and avoiding needless criticism. Among us who remain, our hearts are knit together in the unity of God's love.

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Wilmington

As for following the teachings of Jesus... yes, we endeavor most of the time but not always succeeding.

What does unity mean? Does it mean we accept? Does it mean we are on the same page? What about the responsibility for the people who are compromised? How does one seek unity with people who oppose your sense of what is right or wrong?

The teachings of Jesus help us to forgive. We realize that there are many different layers in the lives of each of us, and that we have been taught differently. What is acceptable to one may not be acceptable to another. We must cultivate an understanding. Sometimes we are destructive; it's not intentional and we need to be aware of how we are perceived.

We need to think about finding unity, and not look for ways to disrupt or destroy. We see how political issues can separate one from the other. First, we must find peace within ourselves, then we can look for ways to restore peace outside of ourselves. We are all going through the same fears and doubts. We are not alone. Reading history helps to see the big picture of humanity. It's our responsibility to find unity... to find the God in each of us when dealing with daily decisions. We must learn how to offer peace. We all seek harmony, a common ground, and the need to be at peace with oneself and each other.

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?*

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Durham

Many members and attenders of Durham Friends Meeting are very generous with their time and money. People give their time and resources freely for the benefit of others. We have a core group of Friends who have faithfully supported Urban Ministries of Durham with lunches and dinners. We have other Friends who support the work of Durham CAN, Religious Coalition for a Nonviolent Durham and other local and national organizations.

We are fortunate that our Meeting has a lot of resources and yet, sometimes our Meeting can act as if we are constrained. Our Meeting has a history of feeling poor and sometimes when money becomes the Meeting's money we can guard it closely. We sometimes fail to support our greater community as much as we can because of the need to protect the Meeting's financial well-being. In reality, our Meeting can do as much as we believe we can do. When we commit to something that we believe needs to be done, we find the resources, financial or otherwise, to make our dreams a reality. For example, when there was energy to join Durham CAN, the Meeting found the money to do so. We need to trust in our ability to find the necessary resources more often and commit to doing the work we view as necessary.

A current area for growth is giving our time and energy to committees and the inner workings of the Meeting more freely. Recently we have struggled to find members for committees, clerks for committees and clerks for the Meeting. Some friends feel we must balance our caring for others with our care for the health of our immediate community.

Fayetteville

Our meeting gives to yearly meeting and to organizations we support. Having no meeting house of our own allows us more

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latitude to donate to others. We support one another in our meeting, each one of us stepping up to assist where we are able—both with our time, our energy, and our finances. We work together to create a whole. We are very aware of being good stewards of all we have been blessed with.

Friendship

Friendship Friends members and attenders dedicate much time and many talents to the life and work of the meeting. Most recently, Friends have given freely of their time and money to reopen the Meetinghouse for hybrid in-person and Zoom worship. When we have a need, the meeting community contributes generously in whatever ways each is able. Friends are grateful for the opportunity we have had to provide hospitality to a family in need of housing during the pandemic closure. We find a spirit of generosity, whether spiritual, financial or otherwise, in our meeting community.

Virginia Beach

We feel we give our time and talents lavishly, not just to the Meeting, but to the larger community. We are generous with the school. Some would like to see more gifting outside the Meeting.

West Grove

Our members are supportive of Meeting. We aim to improve our stewardship as we grow. In the last year we have applied for a grant to repaint the interior of the Meeting house, and individuals have donated their time and resources cleaning, repairing, and improving our space. We are generous with each other and eager to serve each other in our own ways, as way opens.

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Query 5

Do we regularly attend our meetings for business, and are they held in a spirit of love, understanding, and forbearance? Do we seek the right course of action in humble submission to the Authority of Truth and in the patient search for a sense of unity under Divine guidance?

Durham

Yes, our Meetings are held in a spirit of love, understanding, and forbearance. We sometimes stray from this due to impatience, experiencing misunderstandings and more, yet when we do we can be called back into this Spirit. We can reflect on ways to continually refine our individual and collective practice to more tenderly hold Meeting in this manner. Business Meeting is an important spiritual practice. It is our responsibility as Friends to attend Business Meeting, but our individual leadings sometimes are in conflict with the corporate needs and leadings. We see both the individual and corporate leadings as essential to our individual and collective spiritual health. As a Meeting we are questioning our practices surrounding Business Meeting and are considering how to make attending Business Meeting more appealing and accessible to all. Being open to change may support us as we move forward. We are enriched when Friends see all work being brought forward at Business Meeting as essential. This helps us all have a greater understanding of the individual leadings present in our Meeting and our collective leadings, as well as a richer Spiritual life. The pandemic has created more challenges for individuals and our community. Business Meeting is currently held over Zoom, which can make it more and less accessible at the same time for different community members, and the trauma and stress of living through a pandemic can impact one's ability to participate in the life of the Meeting in the ways one normally would.

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Fayetteville

We feel our meetings for business are important and not a burden to us. The meetings are an expression of our spiritual path and further reinforcement of our Quaker beliefs and the unity of spirit we enjoy with one another. We feel blessed to have a small meeting that feels great community with one another. We prepare our hearts and minds ahead of meeting as our responsibility to our process and recognize the spirit of worship that underlies the work. We acknowledge the importance of being centered and of returning to silent worship during times of differing opinions. We value the spiritual work of seeking clarity and unity in the silence. We appreciate that our business meetings are well-attended. It is part of meeting's responsibility to educate new attenders about the nature of Quaker business meetings and testimonies. The "sense of the meeting" is a palpable sense of unity and worship and a moment of awe at the work of Spirit that we strive towards.

Friendship

This query presents a much-needed reminder to renew our own commitment to faithfully attend Meeting for Business. Sometimes hurtful things have been said in Business Meeting that perhaps wouldn't be said if we kept more in a spirit of prayer. Friends are aware that we have work to do in conflict resolution. Patience in Business Meeting can be a struggle, yet it is necessary to find a sense of the meeting as we listen to Divine Guidance. As a community, we are improving in our patient waiting as we seek unity. Some Friends find it more convenient to attend Zoom Meeting for Business in the midst of our busy lives. Others find that Business Meeting by Zoom presents challenges to discussion; however, we still bring the best spirit of love and understanding that we can. Friends find many role

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models in our community for waiting with a spirit of love and forbearance. Appreciation was expressed for our Clerks who have done admirable jobs of leading our community through difficult decisions and discussions.

Virginia Beach

We sometimes stray from Jesus' message, which may keep people away. Can we set our personal agendas behind and do what's best for the Meeting and each other? Many of us feel a responsibility to attend Business Meeting, yet the length of the meeting demands we give our time. We were urged years ago to "trust the process." Reaching a "sense of the meeting," is a wonderful teaching tool about Quakerism in action.

West Grove

Our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business are held in good order under Divine Guidance. We believe our manner of business is an example of how the business of the world could be conducted with loving respect and discernment. Over the course of the year, there have been a few Months when we were not able to hold Business Meeting, but we have shown forbearance and worked together and do the work before us. We are excited and energized about the creative energy among us and opening ourselves to each other and the broader community.

Wilmington

With the help of Zoom technology we are held together and attend Meeting for Business with forbearance and love. Understanding comes through the Divine guidance given in the silence along with the spirit of love. This understanding allows us to make inclusive decisions and procedures for business that will bring unity to meeting, as well as extending our goodwill into the community.

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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?

Durham

The spiritual life of Durham Friends Meeting is greatly enriched by the presence of children and young Friends in our meeting. People of all ages enjoy the babbling and energy that the children bring to meeting. Parents and caregivers are valued and respected for the important role that they play in our meeting and efforts are made to support their participation in the life of the meeting. We recognize that the stresses and joys of childrearing impact parents and caregivers ability to serve the meeting in more formal roles.

During this past year, the DFM Youth and Children Ministries has continued to support children in a variety of ways even with the safety concerns and limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Youth and Children Ministries has been working very hard to nurture the spiritual life of Durham Friends Meeting with programs such as Zoom junior meeting, gardening, outdoor movies, and camping trips. These interactions have been a deep anchor for many young Friends even if the anchor has not been able to be cast as often as it would be in normal times. Youth and Children Ministries has also made efforts to connect kids with the meeting, including with short videos from the youth that were shared at the rise of meeting for worship. Such efforts buoyed spirits, eased isolation and loneliness, and deepened a sense of community.

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We acknowledge how much the charge of this query has fallen to the parents of the meeting without the usual level of support. We also appreciate the joy and hope shared because of the way that families are letting children be children and connect to their unique humanity.

Fayetteville

Our meeting has not enjoyed the company of young friends for some years. Our children in our families are also grown—we listen respectfully to their viewpoints regarding the Divine. We strive to model behavior in our day to day lives to everyone we may come in contact with, children and adults alike, demonstrating our faith by living in accordance with it.

Friendship

Recently on Zoom, we do not see the children of our meeting, so some find it difficult to answer this query corporately. Friends feel we have not done enough to reach out and draw in our children while we are not meeting in person. This problem is not unique to our meeting, however, and we acknowledge that the pandemic has been very hard on all children. The religious education committee has found it challenging to find ways to keep the children connected to the meeting. Some parents acknowledged that our time together before the pandemic made a lasting impression on their children that has carried through the pandemic. We support our children as they follow their individual spiritual paths, and serve as examples of the many ways to embody spiritual practice. The meeting continues to have an impact on children in the broader community, such as neighbors, extended family, and the children of the refugee family we are helping to sponsor.

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Virginia Beach

Looking at the light within is where the answer to this query may lie. We can learn from being human and trying our best. We miss those young Friends who have passed through our midst and fondly remember them. We are an example to them, and enjoy the gift of their presence. Most of us have adult children and grandchildren to whom we can also reach out. We also think of the children at Friends School as under our care.

West Grove

We are a small Meeting with no children who regularly attend. For most of us, our children have grown up. That our children have grown up and do not attend our Meeting is consistent with the experience of other Meetings in the Religious Society of Friends. We hope that by living our Quaker faith, practice, and values in our families and in the world, we have shared ourselves and provided some guidance for the children in our lives. We are all children of God, looking to the Divine with open hearts, regardless of our age, to be gathered by the Holy Spirit, and we hope that we have given the children we have encountered some help and guidance along their way.

Wilmington

Even though all of our children are grown, we need to be aware of the presence of children that we encounter in daily life. We endeavor to acknowledge their presence and offer them assistance and guidance and love. Sadly, there is a lot of anger and impatience during this time in our country. Still, we strive to teach love and patience to all, especially the children.

The presence of children is a blessing. When we encounter them we endeavor to guide them in moral judgments and to be a good

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example. We understand that our actions reflect who we are and by loving, we teach our children how to love.

It was requested that the following line, ‘while encouraging them to develop their religious insights as the Spirit of God may lead them?’ Be edited to read: ‘ while encouraging them to develop loving insights as the Spirit of God may lead them?’

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

Our Meeting historically has engaged in various projects that support peace. We also contribute financially to various peace-oriented organizations, and we help where we can to feed the hungry or address other economic deprivations that may lead to violence. Individuals from our Meeting frequently speak out publicly to oppose war, and we support their leadings to do so as appropriate. For a small Meeting, we feel that we do our part.

On an individual level, it can be challenging to live in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all war. Staying deep and open to the Divine, grounded enough to avoid being drawn into personal or political conflict, is very difficult, especially during such divided and contentious times.

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Durham

We do endeavor to live in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all war. We are imperfect, but actively seek to spread peace and healing to our community and the world. There is power in the word reconciliation and the numerous ways reconciliation manifests in the Quaker testimony of peace. Reconciliation must occur on numerous levels, beginning with reconciliation in our own hearts. When we do not address the conflicts within ourselves, we can seek to annihilate and harm the parts of ourselves with which we have not reconciled when we see them manifest in the world. Addressing our own conflicts first allows healing and peace to flow outward from us. In our lives, we work to address interpersonal conflicts peacefully and strive to see solutions that work for all. How do we lovingly hold individuals involved in war and the military while advocating for peace?

Over the years, Durham Friends Meeting has done important reconciliation work within the Durham community and it's very important that we continue this work. We also have areas for growth as a community. As a Meeting, there is more we can do to advocate for measures to address climate change and diminish the resulting droughts, severe weather and other effects. The severe effects of climate change are apt to continue to spark conflict and by mitigating the effects now and working for climate justice, we can decrease the likelihood of future wars. We feel called to better support the anti-war efforts of larger Quaker organizations. FCNL recently wrote about increases in our government's budget for nuclear warfare preparation and we support resisting this move. In the past, members of DFM have been more involved with FCNL and informed the larger group of actions and campaigns that our community could take part in. How are we currently advocating for diplomacy and supporting the work of peacemakers in all nations? Are we working to actively dismantle situations that may cause war in the future?

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Fayetteville

In our journey, we begin by *listening*. We seek to hold others in compassion and listen with intent to understand rather than jumping to formulate our response. By exploring their motivations and fears, we work towards unity rather than antagonism towards “the other.” These are the seeds of peace that must be nurtured in the community we come in contact with on the path to wider peace. We are grateful for the work of Quaker House in the support of the hard consequences conscientious objectors often face as they decide to take the road of peace: we honor their bravery. We appreciate and value the diligent work of FCNL as well. By seeking constructive dialogue, by seeking common ground, the foundation is laid on which to build peace.

Friendship

We take inspiration from historical Quaker heroes such as Cyrus Pringle, refusing to take part in violent conflict or military service, and hold up the Quaker values of pacifism and nonviolence. Many Friends find meaning and even livelihoods in the work of community building and reconciliation. We seek not to avoid conflict but actively engage in the work for justice and the dignity of all persons through nonviolent action. Our Meeting is currently supporting the Noori family, who are refugees from the US war in Afghanistan. Even so, we recognize that we cannot simply ignore the presence of the military, as some Friends have past involvement with the armed services, or loved ones and former students currently serving in the military. We hold in the Light those who have chosen military service with the hope of humanizing and pacifying our country’s military institutions, and providing an alternative face of the US abroad. Our Meeting financially supports the work of FCNL and

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FCNCL, and Quaker House's ministry to service members at Fort Bragg. Despite all our work to take away the occasion of all war, we know we are all caught up in the systems of militarization, since we pay taxes, use fossil fuels, and other natural resources that are sources of international conflict. We recognize that the military provides such a straightforward path out of poverty for many American families. Friends are concerned with the current escalation of conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, but are unsure what actions to take.

Virginia Beach

We have to go down deep from peace within ourselves to the larger community, to the nation, and the world. In this community, so dependent on the military, we see preparation for war all around us. Living in the occasion of all war is the difficult part. There is such a temptation from all the material things and distractions in our lives whose acquisition requires some kind of violence. Examples in history seem hard to find. Gandhi is one. Reconciliation is hard work! As humans we are further tempted to simply give up. We live in such a conflicted world of opposite tribal sides! We have to make time in our lives to listen to and learn to speak with modesty and restraint!

West Grove

As a Meeting, West Grove does not participate in war or military preparations, and we live in that life and power that takes away the occasion of all war. We are all parts of one body, serving the truth of peace in our own ways. We give thanks to those in our Meeting and in our broader Yearly Meeting who actively work on peacemaking and equality in their daily lives. It is sometimes hard in the midst of worldly affairs and struggles, to articulate the peace of the Kingdom of God among us. We see, in the operation of our Meeting for Worship with attention to business,

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how we can have different and conflicting points of view and still arrive at a gathered Truth that is beyond any individual will. We can each individually make our view of peace heard through our vote, our words, and our deeds; and we recognize that we can change the world the most by working to remove the seeds of war from our hearts, minds, and material possessions. We cherish our tradition of peace and equality and seek to make it real in the world as individual Quakers and as a Quaker Meeting.

Wilmington

It is imperative to always embrace peace, to be friends with people who are not like us, and for each of us to be an example, to gently guide and promote peace in a loving way. We want the power of the spirit to lead us in a suitable and loving way, as we deal with extremism and aggression in our daily lives.

We feel concerned and seek guidance when faced with Hitler-like leaders, the right to bear arms, the fear of nuclear war, and the everyday task of living with people who are aggressive and confrontational.

We have to remind ourselves that people who use weapons live in fear and that fear can lead to aggression. We must learn to identify and recognize those fears and find ways to turn aggression into understanding and compromise.

In spite of the fact that the course of our nation is about being prepared and maintaining a superior edge, we as Quakers, must continue to support our testimony against nuclear weapons, support Friends Service Committee, and support GUNO at the United Nations.

Query 8

*Do we observe simplicity and honesty in our manner of living?
Are we careful to live within the bounds of our circumstances,*

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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 been honest with one another and with others who use our building. We are paying down our building mortgage early. We seem to have a culture that supports the values described in this query.

The covid pandemic has made it difficult to pursue activities that strengthen our Meeting community and that support individuals' physical, mental, and spiritual lives. This has been and remains a challenge that we are trying to meet as best we can under shifting conditions.

Many of us take encouragement from this query to return our focus to making good choices for our own activities outside of Meeting.

Durham

Our response to this individual-focused query can be informed by the gentle direction toward which these questions encourage us to turn.

The refrain of Shaker song, 'Tis a gift to be simple echoes in this query and we recognize that it is not easy in practice. Our commitment to Quaker process can also be described in simple terms but it is also not easy in practice. When we are moving through the world as individuals and as a community, it takes time and effort to strip down the extraneous layers to find the truth. It is easy for a community to become tangled and

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distracted by activities that do not strengthen our physical, mental, and spiritual lives.

As we do our anti-racist work and in all other matters, we strive to be honest with ourselves that we each have a piece of the work, value that piece, and recognize the incompleteness of our individual pieces. It is absolutely necessary to bring everyone into the work. The vision we are striving for is one that perhaps no one had at the beginning but that we find together by doing the work and listening to one another.

We recognize that when we frame our responses to community concerns and opportunities in terms of money, the result can be hurtful instead of spiritual. It can lead to the loss of spirit in our decision-making, especially around finances. Our attention to listening, silent worship, and the direct relationship between us and our higher power, help us strip away the complications and find the truth together. Starting with our spiritual goals is critical in having successful conversations about money. We strive to trust each other more and guard against using discussions about our things and our money in place of discussions about what we really care about.

We look to be just in all our dealings, not merely to avoid lying, stealing, and cheating, but being proactive in reaching out and living in harmony and a cooperative way. Not only avoiding doing things that are harmful but rather doing good.

Fayetteville

Each one of us individually strives to uphold our Quaker principles and thus bring integrity to our meeting. We worship together with a shared sympathy towards the testimonies and manners of living that are important to us. As a meeting, we do not feel a need for outward “show” but allow our worship and

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fellowship to speak plainly. We appreciate the diligent attention of our treasurer to pay our commitments to organizations we have agreed to support. We are mindful to conserve our resources. We share space with Quaker House and feel comfort that whether inside or outside, our faith community exists in the company of each other and our gathered worship. We welcome each person as they are. Plainness and simplicity are not outward indicators of “correctness” but opportunities for us to explore deeper issues such as conservation and fair trade. Our discussion hours and conversations during our time together strengthen our mental and spiritual life as a meeting. Our meeting continues to be welcoming and encouraging to each other on our paths to growing in our faith as individuals and as a body. We recognize the interconnectedness in attending to each aspect of mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional health. We hold each other in the Light that encompasses every area of our lives--no concern is too small to express our care, concern, and nurture for one another.

Friendship

Our Meeting pays its bills and debts on time, and Friends give freely to support the work and operations of the meeting. We also recognize we have emotional and spiritual debts, and must forgive others as the Lord’s Prayer says. We attempt to make decisions that will have a positive impact on the earth, such as the cleaning products we use to clean the meetinghouse, and in our dealings with people and companies helping to design the new meeting room. We wrestle with our association with financial organizations that do not feel just. As a faith community, we strive to embody simplicity and honesty in our life together. Sometimes this can create an insular feeling that may not be welcoming to others outside our community. Some Friends find it difficult to maintain integrity in situations when speaking up could hurt others or make them uncomfortable.

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Sometimes we find ourselves being silent in moments when it might be more in keeping with a healthy spiritual life to speak out. Even though our in-person gatherings have been infrequent during the pandemic, we nurture our physical and mental community with gatherings of food and fellowship.

Rich Square

We trust we do observe simplicity and honesty in our manner of living; our intention is to do so. The Query asks first about our “dealings” and whether they are appropriate conduct in terms of simplicity and honesty. Some of us question whether simplicity in “dealings” is best characterized by “living within the bounds of our circumstances.” While we in one sense strive to live within the bounds of our circumstances, we also are mindful that life in the Spirit at times calls us in another sense to rise above our circumstances and embark on new adventures. We trust that we do discern the proper relation of ourselves to our circumstances — neither exceeding given capacities and appropriate desires, nor avoiding opportunities for expanding the use of our gifts. Honesty requires attention to promises, obligations, and all matters of what is right and just in the practical “dealings” of life. We believe we generally give our “dealings” such attention. We endeavor to live in such a way that all our “dealings” are honest and just. At times we are overwhelmed by the pace of and lack of space in our lives which do not seem to give us room to discern what is truly needed on our part if we are to be honest and just.

We also trust that we choose to act in ways which “strengthen our physical, mental, and spiritual lives” and which “avoid” harm to ourselves and others. We pray that our actions may in some way also contribute to the strengthening of the physical, mental, and spiritual lives of others. A friend of our Monthly Meeting — after reading a draft of our answer to this query — reminded us of the importance of choosing the right way of living as well as of taking action. In this context he referred to

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the spiritual caution given in the book of Proverbs for all human beings that “sometimes there is a way that seems right, but in the end it is the way to death” (16:25 NRSV).

Virginia Beach

We feel we come up short with an answer, because to live within the bounds of our circumstances depends on a supply chain based on exploitation. Do we have the strength to live *below* the bounds of our circumstances? Repeating this query year after year requires deepening self-examination. Living simply is part of our responsibility for self-care. This query gives us a goal, but it is not an end-point. Though we can look at our lives from far away, or very close up, the focus begins with us.

West Grove

Our Meeting house is simple, and we worship in a way that honors our testimony to simplicity. Our activities outside of meeting are not harmful to others and tend to strengthen our spiritual lives. And we are planning repairs to the Meeting house to ensure the safety of people who attend.

Friends expressed concern for Members and regular attenders who have not attended in person or virtually in some time.

As far as other activities that we could engage in that increase the spiritual life of the Meeting, Friends expressed a desire to do a better job, as a Meeting, sharing our care and concern for people who are not attending regularly.

Friends expressed the desire to be more intentional about getting to know each other, sharing our lives with each other, and caring and supporting each other – whether Friends are attending regularly or not.

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Wilmington

Isolation from the pandemic continues to challenge and even overwhelm us at times. In spite of that, we do endeavor to be honest and just in our dealings with people and to be punctual in paying our debts. We know the value of a balanced life: mental, physical, and spiritual.

We strive for simplicity in our lives; however, we are aware and feel deep concern about being a part of the collective whole that does harm to the earth and to other people. For example, plastics, which we all know are harmful but they fill our grocery carts because foods are packaged in plastic. Simple tasks or purchases can be complicated for us because everything we do affects the environment and/or the lives of others.

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 question whether abstinence is truly the best witness against overindulgence; perhaps moderation is a better model. Current technology can make local and public problematic behavior like gambling both more global and more hidden from public view. Between the ongoing pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and other grave problems, the biggest source of demoralized feelings nowadays for many is simply the news of the world.

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How can we practice moderation rather than outright avoidance in our awareness of the world's pain, and how can we foster a sense of grace and hope rooted in our faith community? Matthew 16:26 ("What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?") may encourage us to lead our daily lives in the world in ways that support our spiritual growth. We hunger for guidance and inspiration on what to do more than what to avoid doing.

Durham

This query negatively judges a set of personal behaviors instead of encouraging us to examine how we live our lives in a positive way. We feel grateful that the Yearly Meeting is inviting us to reconsider our queries and move forward with a set of queries that feels relevant and spiritually enriching.

This query brings up the question of whether abstinence is really the best course of action in our dealings with alcoholic beverages, tobacco and other harmful drugs. Regardless of whether we use or how we use any mind-altering substance, we need to be mindful of our consumption or abstinence. If we choose to consume, we need to be aware of the effects our consumption has on other people and be sure to consume in a way that does not harm others. The consumption of harmful substances can and does destroy the lives of individuals, families and communities causing incredible amounts of pain and suffering. The behaviors listed can be addictive for some individuals and if they become so can impact our sense of personal and community responsibility, which feels like an important component of being a Quaker.

Despite some aspects of this query not resonating with Friends, we acknowledge that some parts of it allow us to reflect on our lives and the world in a helpful manner. The question about the

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temptations to grow richer at the expense of others feels relevant and speaks to the state of our world. We should all examine our personal finances and periodically check that our finances reflect our values. We hope to have our relationship with money reflect our commitment to helping others and not succumb to the temptation of greed. Other behaviors that are unnamed that can be addictive are social media and over-consumption of news. Overindulging in social media and what's beyond our control in the world can be demoralizing as the query states and can pull us off course. Friends expressed grappling with the pull of news and social media as a present challenge in people's lives. The final part of the Query speaks to Quaker's testimony against taking oaths due to their firm commitment to always being truthful. This is a worthy goal that we should all have. As individuals and a community we aspire to find the demoralizing places of diversion in our own lives, so that we can make mindful choices that benefit us and the larger community.

Toby Berla, who clerks the ad hoc Faith & Practice Revision Committee, reminds Friends that they are always seeking input from the Meeting about what might be needed in our revised queries..

Fayetteville

Anything that dulls our minds or removes us from clear examination of ourselves and which takes us from our spiritual path should be viewed with caution. We may consume alcohol as an enjoyable beverage, but we must examine our use for overindulgence and in regard to our witness to others. We are unclear whether abstinence is necessary, but more of a mindfulness of any excessive behaviors that may become a hindrance in our lives. Substances or activities may be beneficial but "excess" is what may pull us from our spiritual path. We strive to be aware of privilege in our lives and aware that our

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country's wealth came in part from the enslavement and repression of people. We must also examine our investments and spending in regard to whether that may be at the expense of others—educating ourselves in order to avoid unwittingly supporting the unfair treatment of others. An unflinching examination of our own choices and history is a first step towards a better path forward. We remember the reasoning against taking oaths: to speak and live in truth at all times.

Friendship

The different parts of this query seem disparate yet are connected by mindfulness. The testimony against taking oaths depends on telling the truth at all times. In our relationships, we must remain truthful and trustworthy, yet sometimes we must be mindful to hold our tongue. This is challenging yet worthwhile. This has led some friends not to lie about common cultural myths such as Santa and the Easter Bunny.

Some ways of growing richer at the expense of others are more obvious, such as gambling, but in our modern culture, it feels nearly impossible to gain riches without exploitation. Much of the price others are paying for our comfort is out of sight, out of town, overseas. We find we must be mindful of so many choices in our interconnected lives. We do not find easy answers.

Many Friends feel mindful moderation of alcohol and not abstinence is their witness. For some Friends, the connection and community that can come from being at a bar is valuable, even when alcohol is a part of it. Those who abstain have experienced challenges, when alcohol is so widespread in our culture. It can cause discomfort, and sets one apart as different. Some have lost friends and family to substance abuse, and others work in the area of substance abuse recovery. We recognize and mourn the

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loss of life and livelihood from overindulgence, while also acknowledging that we should not stand in judgment.

Rich Square

Friends addressed the concerns raised in this query and their relevance to current issues in our lives. The concern which appears most relevant to us at this time is expressed in the words of the query on “how diverse and widespread are the temptations to grow richer at the expense of others.” Under this heading we recognized that we benefit from the labor of others, and in some cases those who provide that labor may not be fairly compensated. Furthermore, the current epidemic of overuse and abuse of opioid pain medications leads us to question if the promotion of these medicines has more to do with monetary gain than relief of pain. These medications are readily available from pharmaceutical companies and are often prescribed thus giving the impression they are not “harmful drugs.” People may begin taking them for beneficial purposes, but come to suffer harm from their use while others are enriched by drug sales. Another case of some growing richer at the expense of others comes with the wide-spread acceptance of gambling. It appears that among the many reasons to avoid gambling is that it is often, as in state lotteries, taking money from the poor. In such a case, others are growing richer at the expense of the poor. Some question whether investing funds in the stock market is more a matter of gambling than investment, and whether it may also be a situation in which some are unfairly growing richer at the expense of others. The investment of Meeting funds by Cedar Grove Friends Meeting, Inc. is with Friends Fiduciary. Our stock market involvement appears based on sound social and environmental investments rather than simply gambling with stocks to get money without regard to its source. We hope we continue to be sensitive to this concern as these cases show a disposition in our country toward gaining prosperity by growing richer at the expense of others. We find ourselves surrounded by the

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temptation to become more involved -- consciously or unconsciously -- in such activities.

Virginia Beach

This query could have been written as a positive, rather than a negative. We note that the queries are currently under revision. Overindulgence and negative thinking can block us from the “sunlight of the Spirit.” Is our will aligned with God’s will? We could come up with quite a list of demoralizing places that would raise our awareness. Prayer, sitting in silence, and reading helps. We remember others who have helped us break out of old habits.

West Grove

Friends shared the importance of being mindful about the way in which we live so that it is healthy and in Divine Gospel Order. Being among Friends helps us to become better able to live in a manner that is consistent with good divine order. The different temptations to live in ways that are not healthy or divine look different to different people in different times. The important work for us is to be mindful about the Divine leading to truth, love, beauty, and goodness in each moment, and to engage in habits and behavior that tends toward these ends.

We note that the testimony against taking oaths is of historic importance to Friends and are thankful that our courts recognize the alternative of “affirming” the truth rather than taking an oath on the Bible.

Some of these examples of temptations are dated, historically, but they speak to the concern about healthy living in good order. Some are challenged with trauma that leads to self-harming behavior and need love and support to mindfully change these patterns. As a Meeting we aim to love and care for each other to

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help each of us be as healthy, whole and loving as we can be as individuals and as a community.

Wilmington

We are mindful of the testimonies against alcohol, tobacco, and harmful drugs; they are harmful and serve no purpose. We see no positive purpose in gambling, because so many lose while only a few can win. Gambling can be an activity for people who are in desperate need and see it as an opportunity for a change in fortune. We do have a concern as collective consumers about buying products made by unfair labor; we see it as a way of being part of a system that rewards the wealthy and takes from the poor. We are faithful to our testimony against taking an oath. We believe in always telling the truth and following the rules; it is our affirmation, not oath.

Query 10

Do we endeavor to live in harmony with nature? Are we careful in our stewardship of the world's irreplaceable resources?

Davidson

Currently some of us are especially mindful about minimizing our usage of gasoline, both because of high prices and because of increased awareness of climate change. Use of Zoom for some committee meetings likewise reduces travel. Our meeting tries to purchase goods for the meetinghouse with the environment in mind, and we are careful to conserve power. Recently the UU children have put signs in the bathrooms to encourage minimizing the use of paper towels. We encourage other groups to use our building so that its environmental footprint goes further in meeting community needs.

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Durham

Do we sincerely seek to understand our place in the universe and our purpose here on the earth? Are we willing to make sacrifices and to ask others to join us in changing the things we use and the way we use them in order to preserve life everywhere? Are we willing to persist gently in persuading others, not giving up, but being receptive to others' needs, as we strive to establish lifestyles dedicated to the preservation of all life? Are we open to the strength, the purpose, the joy, the desire within and beyond ourselves as a resource in truly and genuinely loving the world? (Proposed by DFM young friends in 1991 and used since)

This year's holiday season brings its usual pressures of "Consume! Consume! Consume!" This message is especially discordant with Quaker values and our concern for the earth now as the results of the recent lackluster UN Climate Summit in Glasgow. It did not yield significant agreements for addressing global climate change. It is easy to feel disempowered, overwhelmed, and sad about the prospects for the ecosystem.

We note that this query was posed to us by youth who are now adults and may have their own children. This call from the past into the future helps us to focus on doing the right things now so we can improve the quality of the lives of our descendants and future human generations. Sacrifice is hard and a difficult message for people to hear, especially those in a privileged position. We are heartened by the youth our meeting, the voices of students, and young people across the world who are advocating for sustainability. The energy of young people is encouraging. Many changes in the climate are already in motion – we must accept these realities and yet still try to stop further degradation.

It's time for individuals to hold political leaders and large corporations accountable for our adverse impact on the

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environment. More than just small acts like recycling, we must be engaged with and pressure powerful entities and large companies. It is important to support and challenge businesses to do better because they are the large players on the field and they can make the biggest difference. Some corporations are seeing a benefit to supporting ecological change, including the agriculture sector and petrochemical companies.

Fayetteville

We strive as a meeting and as individuals to weigh carefully the choices we make, doing research to discover ways to tread as lightly upon the earth as possible. Each choice made will have consequences, and we must be conscientious in our decisions as they arise. Each individual effort contributes to a greater whole—hope and perseverance must prevail over discouragement. As “keepers of the garden” we bring a spiritual regard to secular concerns.

Friendship

Friends try to live in harmony with nature. As a community, we are careful not to intentionally do things we know will harm the environment, but it is easy to think of all the ways we still fall short in being stewards of the earth. We don’t often talk about ways we could be healing the world, and we need to talk more about what’s possible for us to do.

West Grove

John Woolman asked “May we look upon our treasure, the furniture of our houses, and our garments, and try to discover whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions.” In our consideration of this query, we can add

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whether we can see the seeds of destruction of our environment in these our possession. Individually we grow in our consciousness on how our possessions and daily habits impact our environment, and ask what sacrifices are we ready to make? Are we ready to be inconvenienced to live in more harmony with our earth? Are we ready to inconvenience those around us, those we take care of, those we love, in order to become better stewards of our world? The farmers in our Meeting farm in a way that is harmonious with nature: they have no feed lots and pasture their animals. As a Meeting, we have a light footprint – with no asphalt parking lots, a composting toilet, and limited energy use – we are living lightly in the world. Our effort to become better stewards of our Meetinghouse will lead to a space that is safer and inviting for Worship. We are open to the leadings of the Spirit and determined to be in tune with the changes we need to make in our lives to be better stewards in the world.

Wilmington

We do endeavor to live in harmony in nature, but there are many more common sense ways to improve. We need to understand more in order to do more. We recycle, cut out or cut down on meat, and work to simplify our lives. The pandemic has taught us how to rethink automobile and product use.

As a meeting we are researching solar installation to our meeting house and we hope to be a resource for friends and neighbors; perhaps host a tour and offer information. We have a member reupholstering our meeting house chairs; chairs that would otherwise be thrown into the dump.

As a society we have concerns about the environment that we continue to address. Historically, governing entities react to catastrophes rather than to prepare for them. Often things that are improved are due to self interest. We also feel that children need

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to spend time with nature so that they learn how to understand and appreciate the intricate workings of nature. We remind our politicians about our concern for the environment.

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?

Durham

Yes, and we recognize that throughout history and within our own memories, Quakers have been at our most effective in addressing social injustice and racial discrimination when we have approached problems after deep listening and with a spirit of humility. In our own meeting, we are at our best when we encourage each person in the meeting to find their ministry and test and follow their leadings. We note that individual leadings, informed by deep listening and humility, can lead to powerful collective action. We strive to be open to the messages of Spirit but also aware of our own blind spots so that we don't miss the mark.

We have more work to do on identifying and being sensitive to the needs of all individuals, especially Friends of Color. At times, we have strong outreach to the larger community but we haven't always shown similar energy or tenderness within our DFM community.

We observe that our First Day School and Junior Meeting teachers and volunteers have a natural tendency to work directly with each child and meet the needs of each child. This can be a strength when affirming children who are in the minority in our community. Challenges grow as children get older and social

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dynamics get more complicated. This is an area to which we must continue to recognize and support our meeting community.

Fayetteville

We must challenge and cast light upon our own prejudices or lack of understanding regarding others. As we work to see that of God in everyone, are we truly expressing concern for *their* particular needs rather than striving to conform them to our own molds and expectations? It is our responsibility to seek true understanding rather than work under assumptions of what is needed. Setting aside our own ego presents an opportunity for us to grow spiritually: to grow in our humility and in our discernment and in striving to listen and learn. It takes real effort to do the work towards rectifying ongoing injustice and discrimination—this may be uncomfortable and difficult for us.

Friendship

It is difficult to give an unequivocal positive response to this query in today's world. It asks us to do the difficult work of seeing that of God in human beings whose deeds are apparently evil. We strive to love all, and confess that at times all we can do is to pray for individuals to be released from whatever makes them behave as they do. Friendship Friends Meeting as a faith community continues to uphold the importance of continuing to seek that of God in everyone, and at the same time working to rectify social and racial injustice. We encourage and support each other in this effort.

Virginia Beach

This query has a very important message for the world. Individuals in the meeting are doing so many positive things. We will be following its guidance for the rest of our lives. As a

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meeting, we've aged, and some of us have less time and energy to travel to places where service to others is needed. We devote prayer for those we know of being in need.

West Grove

As a Meeting we reverence that of God in every human being and are mindful of showing concern for each individual. We can address racism and injustice that appears before us in our lives and speak up and ease suffering with our service and charity. It is harder to consider how we can rectify injustice and racial discrimination in our communities and the world at large. We are inspired and guided by the steady quiet work of the Holy Spirit that causes changes so subtly we don't see how it happens that all things are turned toward love. We understand that one important path toward racial justice is developing and cultivating personal relationships with people of different races and positions in society. Our relationships help make injustice to others personal to us.

We note the work of Quaker groups advocating for justice, AFSC, FCNL, and NCFCNL, and our members working for justice in our community. We remember the words of Martin Luther King, Jr who defined justice as Power implementing the requirements of Love in the world – providing human needs out of our abundance and avoiding the kind of abundance and luxury that becomes a burden upon others. We remember the words of Augustine who wrote that “charity is not a substitute for justice denied.” We are mindful of the way charity can make us feel like we have done enough, when there is still the communal work of justice that needs to be done. We find that attending Meeting for Worship keeps us more in tune with the Divine presence and the Kingdom of God among us. We value every opportunity to grow in personal relationships and community work that aims at making justice real in the lives of people around us.

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Wilmington

(from Tryon; our first annual retreat)

It is hard to understand the word reverence, but we recognize that of God in everyone. We treat people with equal reverence. Seeing God in others helps us to understand people who make us angry or hurt us in some way. This all seems to lead back to the golden rule.

We want social justice but rectifying social injustice leads to questions. What do we do as a corporate body? Are we part of the problem or part of the solution? Do we know or understand the perceptions we are putting out to other people? Do we act or react out of evolutionarily conditioning? If we react the wrong way, we need to recode ourselves and remember the golden rule. Where do we get our perceptions? Can our perceptions be so different? Can our perceptions lead us into believing that our insights are correct? Again, that brings us back to the golden rule.

At what point do we see disenfranchised people as just people. As Quakers we are taught to listen and not proselytize. We recognize that there has been progress but not enough.

(from meeting)

Many expressed a feeling that it is growing increasingly difficult to find the Light in some people. Whether intrusive neighbors or political figures, some people just seem abrasive and unlovable. But we are reminded that these are the people who need our concern and reverence the most. Aren't these the Jesus people? There is usually a reason for folks to spout out and argue or to behave in ways that we find uncomfortable. In many situations, these are people who don't feel heard or seen, and are behaving this way to attract attention, to feel more in control. We are encouraged to look for points of commonality with people who have strong opposite views, providing social connections that

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extend around friction points. Having concern for those who seek attention makes it easier to see their inner Light.

Though we live in a state that historically has been very racist, sometimes it is easy to ignore that discrimination is still present and prevalent. It is clear cut that witnessing a racist or unjust action might inspire immediate action. But, if we are not experiencing it directly and personally, not noticing something is probably common. We are called on, in this case, to listen to others who are subjected to this kind of behavior, and to be sensitive to their stories. We must understand that asking for a person's preference of personal pronouns allows some individuals to be seen the way they see themselves.

We also recognize the importance of speaking out with and for those who are subjected to discriminatory behavior or are victims of social injustice. In the book *Untamed* by Glennon Doyle, a mother reads to her daughters about Civil Rights Marches. The youngest asks her mother "If we were there, would we be marching?" Her sister interrupts and says "No, or we'd be marching now." We recognize that 'Civil Rights' is not a period from our distant history, and the time to march is now. Our Meeting has supported the Poor People's Campaign financially, and at least two of our members have attended rallies in support of the Reverend William Barber across the South. Being present in the moment, at this moment, is important. Fox said "Be patterns, be examples ... that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people and to them." St. Francis of Assisi "Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary, use words."

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

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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 this visitation and caring extend beyond the members of our own Meeting?

Durham

As a Meeting and community we are not perfect and although there are many wonderful ways we welcome, care and support each other, we also have ample opportunities for growth. We have created many opportunities for connection and care through phone trees, the Care and Support Committee, Neighborhood Groups and more. These smaller groups and committees within our Meeting help us do the work of caring for every individual. We see the benefit of having more opportunities for small group formation and welcoming, in-person activities and gatherings to deepen our connections, particularly since in some ways we are all newcomers to Meeting. The past few years have forced us to practice our faith and spirituality in new ways and we have needed to find new ways to conduct Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and to deepen our relationship and commitment to each other. We have provided opportunities for people to voice needs during these past few years, but could improve on our ability to sense the unspoken needs of individuals. We also want to improve our reaching out to each other and checking in with new and longtime attenders, particularly after a period of absence.

This year Spirit has led us into some troubled waters regarding welcoming newcomers and non-members and we've been invited to shine a light on some places that are uncomfortable. We have been given the opportunity to think about how we communicate with people outside our immediate community. The Spirit is asking us how we open our hearts, minds and grounds to all people and how we can do more and do better. We

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are seeking more ways to make the work and fellowship of different groups more visible to the Meeting as a whole. For example, our youth group is very active and we would welcome more of their voices in decisions. Some of our young adults, parents of small children and middle-aged adults are stepping into leadership roles and this is appreciated. We still need to find more ways to encourage greater committee service and involvement from all Members and attenders.

As a whole we can do a better job articulating what Membership means and what that commitment truly means. What are the tangible actions that Members can take to demonstrate their commitment to Durham Friends Meeting and each other? How can we invite each other into a dialogue about Membership and help people deepen their connection and relationship with our community?

Fayetteville

We enjoy the full participation of our members and attenders alike. We appreciate the reminder to reach out to those who may be lonely. We experience additional challenges to stay connected during these times of pandemic. We consider how these new techniques of communication could be used to maintain ties moving forward. We acknowledge a certain sadness at the loss of how we used to gather and recognize the basic human need and longing for community and connection. We are called to love our neighbor.

West Grove

As a Meeting West Grove is eager to welcome newcomers and non-members. We have grown a little in the last year, adding a new member, and welcoming some Friends who attend remotely on ZOOM because they live too far away to worship in person.

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We have an opportunity to visit on Fourth day evenings during Bible study to share fellowship and topics that we are pondering and wrestling with. Our Wednesday gatherings contribute to and feed our Meeting for Worship on First Days. Our work on building and grounds is aimed at making our space more hospitable and safer and inviting for others in our community. We hope to offer events such as musical events and a book signing when we can invite local Quakers and community members to share time and food together. Our younger members are involved in committee work and the business of meeting, but we have no children or young adult members.

What can we do to change this trend because our faith tradition seems to be dying out. When we look at other Meetings and other traditional churches, we see a decline in participation and membership, we see large churches with only a few cars in the parking lot. We also see large Christian mega-churches using the tools of consumer capitalism to build churches which seem to be selling religion as entertainment as a product. We seek discernment on how we might adapt to speak authentically and truthfully to the condition of the present generation

Wilmington

Meeting was united in saying that we do welcome newcomers and non-members to our Meeting. The return to the Meeting House after quarantine for CoVid has been gradual, but several new people have shown an interest and attend regularly. No one has been actively encouraged to consider membership, though some have expressed an interest and were encouraged after their initial inquiry. Because our Meeting is so small, committees are formed when needed. We have been aided by a younger, technologically adept member to aid in Zoom Meetings. Another new member has helped with building maintenance and repair of the roof. Like everything else, visitation has taken on a new dimension since CoVid, but members have visited others who

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are unable to attend due to health reasons. Building a community of Friends is as important as it has ever been. This year we attended Meeting in the Mountains, at the home of members who recently moved there.

Friends Center Report

A report from Wess Daniels, Director of the Friends Center at Guilford College, was read. The report follows:

2022 Friends Center Report

This is an update about the Friends Center at Guilford College from the past year.

Visit our website for other updates and to subscribe to our newsletter: <https://friendscenter.guilford.edu> Introduction from Wess Daniels

Much has shifted in the life of the college and Friends Center since the pandemic began. We will not rehash all of that but to say that Friends Center has faced various challenges and transitions over the past 2 years and is now, again, stable and moving forward with our work on campus. Last spring, Aleks Babić, QLSP Director since Fall 2018 was hired on as a tenure track faculty in Public Health at Guilford College. This was a huge move for Aleks and one we not only fully supported but anticipated, knowing Aleks' ongoing work in their field of study. While this was good news on most fronts, it left Friends Center down to one staff member (Director Wess Daniels). Through the summer and fall, Wess managed the center and its responsibilities with plenty of help from student leaders a part of our "Friends Center Fellows" program.

In January, Wess hired Liz Nicholson to be the new director of the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. Liz comes with a

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breadth of experience, working for Quaker Voluntary Service for six years as staff as well as participating in the program. Prior to that, Liz graduated from Guilford College and participated in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. Liz brings energy, excitement, and creativity to her work and has made a big impact on the campus since her arrival.

In February, Wess hired Meagan Holleman to be the new Multifaith Coordinator and Student Chaplain. Meagan is another familiar face here at Guilford College where she started as staff in 2018 hired first by Dr. Krishauna Hines-Gaither for the role of LGBTQIA coordinator, she then worked in the Title IX office before working in Bonner and ultimately becoming the coordinator after the departure of James Shields. Meagan comes to us with an M.Div. from Wake Forest Divinity School and a deep passion for community-building, diversity and inclusion work, and does great work connecting with students on campus across religious differences.

It is such a joy to have both Liz and Meagan now working full-time at Friends Center. Their love of students, Guilford College, and the passion they bring to our shared work is renewing and vibrant.

You can read more about Liz and Meagan's in their reports and biographies below.

Friends Center and Campus Wide Updates

The work of Friends Center is broad: we are tasked with supporting multifaith collaboration on campus, the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program, Quaker Studies, the ongoing support for the teaching and learning of the Quaker tradition of the college, support college leadership (through strategic work, as well as committee work, staff council, meeting with clerks of faculty, staff, etc), and interfacing with Quaker and other faith

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communities outside of the campus. Friends Center has a big mission and vision so here are just some of the ways we have supported this work this year.

Wess has been involved with the Poor People's Campaign for many years, most recently through his involvement in the "Reading the Bible with the Poor" cohort through the Kairos Center at Union Theological Seminary and is a founding member of the Freedom Church of the Poor. This year we have been able to connect more with the Poor People's Campaign through our weekly student group, "Dialogues in Liberation" where we read the book "We Cry Justice: Reading the Bible with the Poor People's Campaign", we also took a van and car load out to Durham this spring to participate in a Poor People's Campaign rally in Raleigh. Most recently, Liz participated in a Freedom Church of the Poor service leading music during a service with the theme of Bible, Empire, and the Control of Bodies. These opportunities have helped connect students who are passionate about liberation and social justice with liberatory spirituality.

Friends Center continues to offer weekly worship for the campus and provide spaces for centering silence, worship, and prayer when the campus needs it. We held vigils for the war in Ukraine, and another for "The Dispossessed" organized by Jim Glenn '24 (he/him), a student in QLSP and a Friends Center Fellow. We also held a time of prayer and mourning, and then organized a memorial service during the 3-week this spring, after the tragic and accidental death of student Ahmad Brewington '23.

There are many other ways we support the campus but one is through committee work and other projects. Wess is serving on the inaugural Staff Council, a staff body that mirrors the faculty body on campus (which Wess and a number of other staff helped form while Jim Hood was interim president). Liz has recently

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helped create a free-store on campus that provides clothing, furniture, and other supplies for campus folks at no cost.

Multifaith Collaboration

Following a two-year hiatus, we are pleased to report that Multifaith Collaboration efforts at the Friends Center has a full-time staff member once again. Multifaith Coordinator and Student Chaplain, Meagan Holleman (she/hers), is not a new face to Guilford College as she served the College in a variety of roles from 2018-2021.

In Fall 2021, prior to Meagan's return to Guilford in February 2022, two exceptional students, Jacob Perkins '22 (he/him) and Jim Glenn '24 (he/him), were significant to the continuation of multifaith programs under the leadership of Wess Daniels. Both serving as Friends Center Fellows, Jacob and Jim planned four Connecting Conversations events. Connecting Conversations is a monthly event for interfaith dialogue while breaking bread and as participants enjoy a meal together. These monthly dialogues are led by members of the Interfaith Leadership Council and Friends Center and is a time of sharing, listening, learning, and teaching. After Meagan's return in February 2022, three additional dialogues were held. In February 2022, six students and two staff members from Guilford College virtually attended the Ripple Conference at Elon University. The Ripple Conference offers time to learn, engage, reflect, and share. Together, attendees learn about other traditions, including religious, spiritual, and secular worldviews, and engage in social justice and interfaith dialogue.

As Meagan served as the College's LGBTQIA+ Coordinator previously and this position is currently unfilled, she continues to be a resource for students, faculty, and staff in this arena. Because of this, Meagan partnered with the Intercultural Engagement Center to plan the College's fourth Lavender

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Graduation in April 2022. Lavender Graduation is an annual ceremony conducted on numerous campuses to honor and celebrate the achievements of our outstanding LGBTQIA+ graduating students. The involvement of the Friends Center in Lavender Graduation speaks to students that our Center is open and affirming to the LGBTQIA+ community, a noteworthy statement bearing in mind the sometimes adverse relationships some students have between their faith and sexuality.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community. Ramadan in 2022 was held from the evening of April 1 through the evening of May 1. During this time, Meagan met with several Muslim students across campus to discuss plans and implement support for the 2022-2023 academic year, and hosted two Iftar meals at the Friends Center. Iftar is the evening meal with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset. Following prayer in our Friends Center Prayer Room, Muslim students and faculty gathered with Meagan to enjoy a meal from Nazareth's Bread Company, a local restaurant owned by a Muslim family in Greensboro.

Meagan serves on Guilford College's Commencement Committee to plan our annual Baccalaureate service. The intended outcomes for Baccalaureate are to 1) Celebrate religious diversity at the College, 2) Honor spiritual journeys and growth during time at College, 3) Understand how this fits into the Quaker practice, and 4) Bless seniors and family members who supported them as they graduate. Baccalaureate, an interfaith gathering to mark the end of a class' career at Guilford College, featured three student speakers from the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith traditions in addition to one faculty and one staff member. Our student speakers expressed their spiritual journeys together as a community and assisted in celebrating graduates who then took their light out into the world.

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Guilford College Interfaith Leadership Council (ILC) is a cooperative endeavor of faith communities within the College that works in close partnership with the Friends Center. Guilford College's ILC serves as a support structure for ministers, clergy, and other religious representatives on the Guilford College campus. In addition to this, the Council provides a religious and spiritual response to issues and events impacting the campus community through organized events or programs, preserves a cooperative relationship with the College through Friends Center, and participates in campus events and ceremonies, representing religious and spiritual traditions as appropriate. In March 2022, the ILC gathered with Meagan Holleman to discuss the state of the Council and to look toward the future. The Council discussed ideas for the 2022-2023 academic year, and then met monthly for the remainder of the 2021-2022 academic year.

Looking toward the 2022-2023 academic year, Meagan is compiling a resource of worship opportunities for students at Guilford College, working with the Department of Academic and Student Affairs and the College's Care Team to establish more trauma-informed responses to student emergencies, creating a renewed Multifaith Calendar as a reference for our community, and collaborating with various campus departments and student organizations to organize regular programming across a number of demographic backgrounds and religious traditions.

The Quaker Leadership Scholars Program

QLSP welcomed back 2012 QLSP and Guilford Alum, Liz Nicholson to serve as the Director of the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. Liz joins QLSP after recently finishing a Masters of Peace and Social Transformation Program at Earlham School of Religion, and has previously worked with Quaker Voluntary Service, serving in Atlanta Coordinator and national Communications Coordinator roles. She is deeply excited to

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return to a community that was impactful and grounding in her college experience, and is ready to offer her gifts to current students and the Guilford Community!

This spring, the QLSP community returned to in person weekly gatherings, service opportunities, and programming. Students deepened community through the offered modules (mini-classes) which were led by Wess, and Liz. Wess invited students to read the bible through a historic and liberatory lens in his module on “Jesus Against Empire,” thinking about how we can interpret the message of Jesus in modern times. Liz led students in navigating the Quaker’s historic Peace testimony, and in thinking about our own conflict styles and backgrounds, teaching tools like non-violent communication (NVC) and needs theories.

Six of our QLSP Scholars were honored in our Spring Graduation ceremony, Alex Alexandre, Erin Askew, Karla Goss, Beulah Guillion, Julia Hudson, and Nema Kodio, where they were given a print by artist Ricardo Levins Morales, and a Quaker Minute of Introduction with gifts named by members of their community. We have one student doing a Summer Service Fellowship looking to expand the resources and offerings of the Quaker Cupboard, a mutual aid food pantry on Guilford’s Campus.

Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome eight incoming first year students from around the country to Guilford and QLSP, as well as six current Guilford students for a total of 14 incoming QLSP scholars! We also look forward to deepening relationships with local Friends Meetings through programming this fall, as well as inviting Alumni to return to celebrate QLSP’s 30th Anniversary! We are grateful and growing deeper in Spirit and community.

Upcoming Events:

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We have two main, public, events coming up in the fall:

1. October 13th at 7pm in the Carnegie Room - *Reassessing George Fox: 350+ Years of Quakers in North Carolina*

Scholar Dr. Noeleen McIlvenna. This is in collaboration with Quaker Archives.

2. November 16th at 7pm in the Moon Room - Quaker Scholar Dr. Rhiannon Grant is coming from England to present on her latest writing and research

Sincerely,

C. Wess Daniels

William R. Rogers Director of Friends Center and Quaker Studies at Guilford College

New Staff Biographies

<https://friendscenter.guilford.edu/staff/>

Liz Nicholson

Liz Nicholson is honored to return to Guilford's campus to serve as the Director of the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program (QLSP) under the Friends Center. A Hoosier Quaker in origins, Liz is a 2012 graduate of Guilford College where she studied Psychology and Music, and was an active part of the QLSP program during her years here. Upon graduation, Liz moved to Atlanta to join the founding cohort of Quaker Voluntary Service, where she later went on to serve as the Atlanta City Coordinator, and Communications Coordinator for the national organization.

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Liz recently completed her Master's degree in Peace and Social Transformation at Earlham School of Religion as a part of the first program cohort. Her studies explored the theological and historical intersections of spirituality and social change work. During her studies, Liz also worked at the Joseph Moore Museum, a natural history museum on Earlham College campus, catalyzing her love of learning, working with young adults, and all things science.

Liz is deeply excited to return to the Guilford community to work closely with students exploring spirituality, identity, and what it means to apprentice in “the Quaker Way.” She brings passion and experience with conflict transformation, racial equity work, and disability justice to the community. Liz will be working closely with C. Wess Daniels, the William R. Rogers Director of the Friends Center and Quaker Studies.

Meagan Holleman

Meagan Holleman (she/her) is Guilford College’s Multifaith Coordinator & Student Chaplain. Throughout her tenure at Guilford, she’s previously served as the LGBTQIA+ Coordinator, Title IX Education and Response Coordinator, and Bonner Program Coordinator. Meagan has also served as the Director of the Bonner Leader Program at High Point University and is an experienced DEI Educator. Before coming to Guilford in 2018, Meagan worked at Wake Forest University’s Anna Julia Cooper Center as the Freedom School Project Director and as a graduate assistant for WFU’s Office and Community and Civic Engagement. Meagan holds a Bachelor’s in Sociology and in Religious Studies from Mars Hill University and a Master of Divinity from Wake Forest University.

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Nominating Committee

Edward Pearce presented the report of the Nominating Committee which contained the following:

1. On adoption of a new description of the duties of the Documents Committee: The Meeting agreed to the adoption of a new description for the work of the Documents Committee for sharing general epistles which are generally sent to us digitally. The Meeting agreed that Epistles from our other two Conservative Yearly Meetings would continue to be shared as we currently do during our Yearly Meeting sessions.

The new description is: “Committee examines epistles sent by other yearly meetings and Friends’ groups and chooses those they feel deserve circulation among our members. In conjunction with the Clerk of Yearly Meeting they make available links to the epistles online.”

2. On the formation of an ad hoc committee to report back during these sessions on how to proceed regarding minutes publication since presently there is no one serving on the Minutes Publication Committee: The Meeting agreed to the Nominating Committee’s proposal and appointed Mark Wutka, Mark Moss, and Nancy Craft to report at our next business session.

3 On the report for nominations for the coming year: The Meeting accepted the report of the Nominating Committee on the officers, standing committees, and special appointments for the coming year and approved all those nominated in the report. The report appears at the end of this minute book.

4. On the naming of a clerk to succeed our clerk when her current term concludes next year: The name of Michelle Downey was presented as clerk beginning in 2023. She will be available

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to Friends during the remainder of this year and her name will be brought to consideration at Interim Body in the fall.

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Lauri Langham presented a report on Quaker Earthcare Witness. The report is as follows:

NCYM-C Representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness
Report Seventh Month 2022

Dear Friends,

From my experience, QEW has continued to grow as a vibrant, effective witness for Quaker Monthly and Yearly Meetings to carry the vision forward of deepening our spiritual connection to the earth and working to be a Quaker voice in protecting the earth and all life. Attention this past year has included an emphasis on inclusivity and diversity within QEW; and issues of environmental justice: recognizing the needs of the marginalized as most like affected by global warming and lifting up the importance of leadership from black and brown people. QEW has been able to hire another part- time position in addition to the two staff positions, continues to give grants to individual meetings, has co-sponsored worship -sharing sessions with FGC, has supported EQAT (Earth Quaker Action Team) on its campaign to Vanguard to divest from fossil fuel investment, continued its work with the UN, and put out an inspiring newsletter entitled Befriending Creation 3 times a year, among other activities. Currently only one quarter of Monthly Meetings in the US have a direct connection with QEW and QEW is actively reaching out to all Meetings to join QEW in the critical endeavor to protect all life and learn to live in harmony with creation.

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As a NCYM-C Representative I have participated in one of the two annual meetings in the 4 years that I have served, and have participated in the Direct Action Working Group and the Outreach Committee. I have helped organize three QEW staff-led zoom programs which have been well attended and for which announcements have been sent to the Monthly Meetings in NCYM-C. I feel that the time has come for me to lay down my formal role as QEW Representative. I appreciate the spiritual and financial support I have received from the Yearly Meeting. I have spoken to several people who might consider becoming QEW Representatives to the Yearly Meeting.

I plan to continue my participation as I am able with our Yearly Meeting and hope to continue to be a witness and advocate of our sacred responsibility to protect and care for to our natural world and all life.

In the spirit of love and for the earth,

Lauri Langham

Lauri is stepping away from her role as Yearly Meeting representative. Friends expressed gratitude for her service and encouraged others to examine whether they might be led to carry on this service.

Future Yearly Meeting Sessions

The Meeting considered the location for our future Yearly Meeting sessions and agreed to request reservations at Guilford College for 2023 and 2024. Friends were encouraged to volunteer to assist Friendship Meeting Friends with responsibilities for hospitality. It was suggested that the Hospitality Committee identify tasks which can be done by Friends who volunteer to assist the Committee.

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Interim Body Meeting

Durham Monthly Meeting has agreed to host the Interim Body on Tenth Month 20, 2022.

Discipline Revision Committee Report

Lloyd Lee Wilson presented the report of the Discipline Revision Committee.

Friends approved use of the newly proposed queries for a year, responding to the queries AND responding to the experience of using them. The committee would like to hear what has been helpful and what has presented roadblocks as Friends use the queries. The feedback will be used to again consider revisions before the queries are finalized for inclusion in the Book of Discipline.

Minutes Publication

Mark Wutka reported for the Ad Hoc Minutes Publication Committee formed yesterday. The committee has agreed to do the publication tasks themselves if approved. Mark Wutka and Mark Moss will work on formatting the minute book and Nancy Craft will do the directories. Friends approved, with gratitude.

Friends authorized the treasurer to expend in this fiscal year the funds necessary for publication of minute books and directories.

Minute on Native Boarding School Legislation

Tom Bertrand, one of the Yearly Meeting's representatives to Friends Committee on National Legislation, presented a proposed minute on Native Boarding School Legislation.

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Friends edited and approved the minute and named an ad hoc committee to support Friends in following through on the commitments made in the minute. Tom Bertrand, Marguerite Dingman and Susan Lees were named to the ad hoc committee.

NCYM(C) MINUTE SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL COMMISSION CONCERNING BOARDING SCHOOLS FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) of the Religious Society of Friends wholeheartedly supports establishment and funding of a national commission with subpoena powers to seek truth and a measure of justice for those still suffering residual effects of public policies that created and maintained hundreds of boarding schools for Indigenous children in the United States from 1869 through the 1960s. Once this commission is established, we will hold the commission and people who come before it in the Light, in expectation that airing of harms and traumas will lead to some healing of long-suffered wounds. We applaud the fact that one intention of the commission is to prevent continued removal of Indigenous (American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian) children from their families, communities, and cultural connections by adoption and foster care agencies. We urge research by faith groups that ran residential schools, especially the Religious Society of Friends, to provide explicit data requested by the federal government as part of the commission's documentation of all boarding schools and students. We want a commission that yields real results and changes. We believe accountability requires robust cooperation. As a yearly meeting, we encourage our individual members and our monthly meetings to enter into conversations about these matters with Native Americans who live in what is now North Carolina and southeastern Virginia where we are now privileged to dwell with them on the land.

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Friends approved putting the minute on the NCYM-C website

Hospitality Report

Hanna Hobson presented the report of the Hospitality Committee. It was accepted with gratitude to the committee.

This summer 111 individuals registered for NCYM-C 2022 sessions. 11 of those individuals were under the age of 18, 2 registered as commuters, 9 registered to stay in the dorms. The adults who registered consisted of 31 day attenders, 52 staying in the dorms, 16 attending over zoom and one who registered simply as a way of making a donation.

We knew that meeting in person this summer would be challenging and did not know how to predict how many registrations to expect. Our registration fee was based on the possibility of 35 registrations which we hoped would be sufficient to cover the fees for use of campus facilities and other conference costs. In the end we had over 80 adult registrations which should mean that we have sufficient income to cover all of the costs of our conference.

Unfortunately due to Covid and other personal reasons many were unable to attend in whatever way they had initially intended. We will attempt to have an approximate number of actual attenders once our sessions are over. These absences hit the Hospitality committee hard during sessions resulting in fewer Friends on hand for support.

Support from friends not on the committee has been greatly appreciated. I would especially like to hold up Mizey's tech/zoom ministry and Mary's golf cart ministry and willingness to act as an in-dorm hospitality committee surrogate. In light of the support that Mary has provided I would like to

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) - 2022

suggest that Nominating Committee might consider appointing a couple of Friends who plan to attend and stay in the dorm. This would ease some of the burden from the local meeting (especially with the likelihood of sessions remaining at Guilford College yearly for the foreseeable future) as well as providing someone on the ground late evening/early morning to assist with needs on campus.

I would also like to express deep gratitude for the continued support and guidance of Ray Treadway who has provided the current financial update for these sessions:

Submitted by Hanna Passmore Hobson, Registrar

Minutes for Travel on Behalf of our Yearly Meeting

Friends approved that the clerk write a travel minute for Darlene Stanley's travel (virtually or in person) to the sessions of Ohio Yearly Meeting

Friends approved that the clerk write a travel minute for Nancy Craft's travel (virtually or in person) to the sessions of Ohio Yearly Meeting and Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

Financial Review Committee Report

David French presented an interim report on behalf of the Financial Review Committee. Friends accepted the interim report and expect the committee to send a written report for Interim Body in 10th Month.

Letter to Absent Friends

Friends approved the Letter to Absent Friends which was presented by David Perry.

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Dear Friend,

Greetings from Guilford College in Greensboro, the gathering place this week for Friends from North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and beyond for our annual session. We have rejoiced in gathering mostly in person, with some joining via Zoom, but this is mixed with a bit of sadness as we have missed your presence. May those demands or circumstances that require you to be elsewhere rest lightly on your shoulders along with the knowledge that the Divine provides connection between us as we think fondly of you. We pray that you are grounded in Spirit in all that you may encounter.

We have appreciated being together with a sense of being covered by the Lord in our bible study, interest groups, shared meals, walks around campus, evening programs, and our shared seeking of Divine will in meetings for worship with attention to business. The presence of young Friends as a visible and active part of our community after two years of Zoom meetings largely without them has added to our joy. Catching up on overdue conversations and getting to know new participants and visitors has created the opportunity for tender moments. We hope to share some of the sense of our activities through the Summary of Exercises, which should be attached.

We have made plans to meet again at Guilford for the next two years, and hope you may be present, if it is accordance with Divine will.

On behalf of the yearly meeting and in Christ's tender love,

Anne Olsen, clerk

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

ncymc.clerks@gmail.com

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Epistle to Friends Everywhere

Friends approved the Epistle to Friends Everywhere, the Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative and the Epistle to Ohio Yearly Meeting which were presented by Michelle Downey and Susan Lees

To Friends Everywhere,

John 15: 15-17

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is about. I have called you friends, because I have disclosed to you everything that I heard from my Father. You did not choose me; I chose you. I appointed you to go on and bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that the Father may give you whatever you ask in his name. This is my commandment to you: love one another.

With this opening Scripture, we gathered in person at Guilford College and online via Zoom for our 325th annual sessions, seventh month, 13-17, 2022. Our theme this year was Let Truth Lead Us.

It was with great joy and fondness we reunited with Friends we have not seen in person since our annual sessions in 2019. We continue to appreciate that technology allows us to maintain contact with those unable to travel. It is in fellowship that we find holy communion with each other in shared waiting worship, open to Divine guidance.

Our meetings have undergone changes and challenges during the pandemic, but we take comfort in the solid foundation of our faith and in the unchangeability of the Divine. We enjoyed the wisdom as each monthly meeting shared their responses to our current queries. The process of revision continues on our Faith

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and Practice and an interest group was held to discuss two of the proposed new queries. Even as queries ask us to examine our corporate practice, so too does the revision process.

One area of focus discussed during our sessions is our relationship with indigenous people and with the land. As we honor the Light within all peoples, we also face a reckoning with the actions taken in the past that still inflict grief and suffering in our own time. We are tasked to use all the Light that is available to us and to grow our understanding. The Inner Light is our experience of and connection with God.

We have been greatly blessed to once again sit together side by side in expectant waiting worship. Our joy has overflowed in the simplest pleasures that had been lost to us in the past two years: heads huddled together in intimate conversation, laughter bursting from one of the tables of people in the dining room, hugs and hands on shoulders in care, walks down the wooded pathways in silent companionship, tears allowed to fall and comfort provided. It is in this loving company that we renew and refresh ourselves and nurture our spirits to go back out into the world strengthened and fortified, prepared to let the Truth lead us.

Our wish for you, Friends, is a deep and fruitful blossoming of the Holy Spirit within you that in turn shines the Light of Christ upon all you encounter. With hearts open, we welcome you to join us next year to share your experiences in faith with us – as way opens and as the Spirit leads.

In Holy Peace,

Anne Olsen, Clerk

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Epistle to Ohio Yearly Meeting

The following paragraph for Ohio Yearly Meeting will be inserted into the Letter to Friends Everywhere

We received and welcomed Friend David Eley to our sessions; he has been a faithful visitor to our yearly meeting. We are grateful for the continued visitation between our yearly meetings and feel a special connection with Ohio Conservative Friends arising from our shared faith and practices and the travel of Friends among us. If in accordance with Divine will, we anticipate Nancy Craft and Darlene Stanley from our meeting present when you meet during eighth month.

Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

The following paragraph for Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative will be inserted into the Letter to Friends Everywhere

We received and welcomed Friend Deborah Fisch and minuted sincere appreciation for the comfort her presence gave us. We are grateful for the continued visitation between our yearly meetings and feel a special connection with Iowa Friends arising from our shared faith and practices and the travel of Friends among us. If in accordance with Divine will, we anticipate Nancy Craft from our meeting present when you meet later this month.

Travel Minute for Deborah Fish (IYMC)

We received a travel minute from Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative for Deborah Fisch. Friends approved that the clerk endorse and return the minute, expressing our sincere appreciation for her ministry among us.

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Advices

The Advices were lovingly read.

Youth Epistle

Friends enjoyed hearing about the activities of the youth through the reading of The Youth Epistle. Friends approved adding the epistle to the minutes and sending it along with the Letter to Absent Friends.

17th of 10th month, 2022

Guilford College in Greensboro, NC

Dear Friends,

The 2022 annual sessions of North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative began on Wednesday evening July 13. We met at Guilford College in Greensboro, NC. On the first evening, the Young Friends mainly took a walk around campus to get our bearings and then played Apples to Apples and a few other games.

On Thursday, the Young Friends went to Wet and Wild water park, where everyone got wet and wild and had lots of fun. The next day, Friday, we travelled to West Grove Meeting, which is a 105 year old meetinghouse with an outhouse. We met Louise Hobbs and Charles and Janie Newlin, who shared with us about their meeting and its history. The meetinghouse has separate doors that used to be used for men and women to have separate meetings for business. After we left the meetinghouse, we went to Reverence Farm where we met Hugh Karreman and his herd of cows and sheep. We enjoyed petting his cows while we ate lunch. After lunch, we enjoyed a fruit of the Spirit game and watched the herd of sheep go to the river. Next we headed over

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to Saxapahaw to see the museum. Janie Newlin showed us her exhibition on what she has learned about her ancestor John Newlin. We also learned a bit about the history of Saxapahaw and then went to get LocoPops down the hill. After eating our LocoPops popsicles, we headed back to campus for dinner and enjoyed playing games and doing makeovers on kids and adults.

The next morning after breakfast, we drove to the Friends Emergency Material Assistance Project (FEMAP), in the historic Allen Jay house on the grounds of Springfield Friends Meeting, where we put together three kinds of emergency kits - hygiene kits, school materials kits, and infant kits. A very interesting part of this trip was seeing a hidden stairway in the house where they once hid slaves while they tried to find their way to freedom. It was very cool because it was hidden behind a wall and it was very narrow. When we got back to campus we had lunch and then we joined the adults for a picture of all Friends attending yearly meeting in order to commemorate 350 years of Quakers in NC. After that we played more games at the Community Center while there was a very heavy rainstorm that lasted for quite awhile. In the evening we led an intergenerational game and then there was intergenerational singing and dance, led by Kathleen Hannan. After the dancing and singing, Dwight Wilson read a psalm that he wrote for Collection. Then we had snacks and fellowship.

First day morning was mainly a time for moving out of the dorms and getting ready to go home. We read our epistle at the closing business session.

To summarize, some highlights were petting the cows, eating LocoPops, seeing the hidden stairway, putting on makeup late at night, and playing a pirate game. (I enjoyed myself so much that we stayed an extra day.) We also appreciated the cookies that Wilmington Friends, and others, brought to share.

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Thank you to the yearly meeting, to Goldie Walton, Will Strayer, and Andrew Wright for leading us, to Davida Reid, Richard Baltaro and Judy Reece for helping-out, to our parents for bringing us and to Guilford College for hosting us.

Submitted by Ora Belle Reid-Eidukas of Durham Friends Meeting, on behalf of all the children and youth.

PS We had a total of 11 children and youth attending this year. 8 of us had come to yearly meeting before. 3 of us were new this year.

Matteo, Rowan, and Nico Baltaro
Ora and Ocean Reid-Eidukas
Michael Killen
Vivien Risdorfer
Jeffrey and Kerry Hobson
Cyrus Gadbury
Ruby Murcko

Summary of Exercises

The Summary of Exercises was read and Friends approved including it in the minutes and with the Letter to Absent Friends.

The 325th annual sessions of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) began on the 13th day of 7th month, 2022. Deep prayers were offered during the opening worship, reminding us of the Spirit's movement among us. There was great joy at the opportunity to meet in person (for the first time in almost three years) as well as on zoom.

We continue to be blessed with Friends who serve the Yearly Meeting by preparing for our annual sessions. The Planning and Hospitality Committees sowed their seeds well. We are grateful for their dedication, for the work of our clerks, for the patient,

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able technical support offered to those on Zoom, for Divine assistance, and for everyone who has helped make this gathering such a wonderful experience.

The reflections that follow are snapshots of participants at this year's gathering:

It was a joy to be together in person once again on the Guilford campus. Every morning and during the day we were greeted by the presence of two Red-shouldered Hawks. What a wonderful reminder of our connection with nature and the spiritual gifts nature offers us. The campus looked especially beautiful this year, perhaps because we had missed it, or maybe because it was newly watered by the thunderstorm, which dampened our walk back to the Community Center following dinner.

As we sat at the dinner table, a friend and I smiled as we witnessed the blossoming of a new friendship between two others at the table. The simple pleasure of affinity found brought us great joy.

I am especially grateful for the worship during our sessions. It has been very deep and very special. What a wonderful blessing it has been to gather once again in worship with Friends.

Morning communion has been worthy of the effort of arriving early. The lively and deeply searching conversation has been a tremendous blessing and an opportunity for growth.

The meetings for business were transacted in a careful and deliberate manner that has been no surprise, but I am grateful for it as an example for small independent meetings.

The state of the Society Reports from each monthly meeting reflected the many challenges over the past year. Wilmington's

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report started with “...the year began while we were meeting on Zoom, but ended in the light of day.” In closing they said, “the state of our meeting is good.”

Dwight Wilson led us in a study of the Letter of James in which he showed how the Letter may speak directly to us, if we will listen. He followed a pattern of presentation in which he shared one of his own original psalms, read a carefully selected short passage, and closed with a query which invited us to seek deeper insight into the verses. James is known for an emphasis on works: “What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? ...” Each day the Bible study illustrated the significance of this practical emphasis on works by demonstrating how our daily actions affirm or deny the worth of each person we encounter. Dwight shared epiphanies in a long life of doing this work and invited us to share our own experiences, demonstrating that we cannot affirm the worth of another unless we also accept our own worth in the sight of God. His message was further manifested by the manner in which he held us in the Spirit throughout our time together.

All of the interest groups were carefully planned and presented. A few of those commented on were:

Gray Cox’s presentation on the Quaker Institute for the Future which encouraged us to think beyond our cultural norms. And, Gwen Gosney Erickson picked up the thread from last year’s annual sessions and spoke about Guilford College’s ongoing efforts to end the silence about the lives of people of color who were and are such an integral part of this institution.

Led by home-grown talent, the evening gatherings spoke truth:

Edward Pearce coordinated dramatic readings of passages from the journals of William Edmondson and George Fox. We

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were put in the moment and experienced the travails of bringing the Truth to the northeastern corner of North Carolina.

Margie Dingman, opening to Spirit from her own experience, presented a quietly powerful narrative of Quaker involvement with the Indigenous Peoples of North America. Much of this story is a bitter truth, yet Friends were tender and wrestled with the shortcomings of our forebears.

Kathleen Hannan led us in an outdoor time of singing and dancing from the heart. It was a delightful opportunity to be together.

We have experienced a powerful season of community at this year's sessions.

The Friends of this yearly meeting that have left me in a state of joy. I have been made welcome in a way that has not been felt since I first came among Friends.

Another summed up the experience by saying, I departed the meeting happy, informed on the workings of NCYM(C), and spiritually deepened. I pray that this was true for all who were able to gather with us.

Closing Minute

It was announced that 10th month Interim Body is scheduled to be held at Durham Meeting on 10-22-2022 and the 4th month 2023 Interim Body is scheduled to be at Wilmington Meeting on 4-22-2023, if in accordance with divine will.

With deep gratitude for this loving community gathered in person and on Zoom, we adjourned our yearly meeting sessions purposing to meet 7th Month 13 through 16, 2023 at Guilford

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College in Greensboro, North Carolina if in accordance with divine will.

NCYM-C Interim Body 10-23-2021

Friends gathered on 10-23-21 via Zoom, hosted by Durham Meeting. We enjoyed waiting worship prior to lunch and then gathered for business. The clerk introduced another period of waiting worship by sharing these words from Jeremiah 17:5-8:

Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the shrub in the desert, and shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when he heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of the drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Friends were present from 8 of our nine monthly meetings. We missed the presence of Wilmington Friends.

Report from Rich Square Monthly Meeting

Friends received a report from Rich Square Monthly Meeting stating that they united in the decision to lay down the Salem Black River Allowed Meeting due to multiple deaths in the past 2 years and people moving elsewhere. The two remaining Friends actively participate with them in hybrid Zoom meetings.

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2021 Trustees Annual Report

David Perry presented the Travel in the Ministry Trust Fund Annual Report. Friends accepted the report.

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Travel in the Ministry Trust Fund Report

Beginning Balance (Market Value) 6/30/2020 \$10,005.88

Distributions: \$0.00

Additional Receipts: \$70.00

Realized Gains/Losses: \$3,049.45

Ending Balance (Market Value) 6/30/2021 \$13,125.33

Payments for “Travel in the Ministry”

The trustees received no requests for support from the “Travel in the Ministry” fund during this fiscal year (the Trust continues to operate on a fiscal year from 7/1 to 6/30, while the yearly meeting uses a calendar year for the fiscal year).

If a Friend feels led to travel as part of a call to ministry, consider what financial support may be needed and apply for assistance through the “Travel in the Ministry” trust fund. A brief history and an application are posted on the yearly meeting website.

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While there have been no applications this year, the trustees encourage the yearly meeting to search for other avenues of income to support this important commitment. Friends are encouraged to make special contributions in support of “Travel in the Ministry.” One such contribution of \$70.00 was received and deposited in First Month.

Submitted by.

W. Carey Reece, Jr. and David Perry Trustees

Treasurer's report

David French presented the Treasurer's Report. Friends accepted the report and reviewed the draft budget.

Friends approved the inclusion of a [standard] donation to Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation as a line item in our budget.

Friends approved increasing all of our budgeted donations to organizations by \$100 each.

The budget was approved with the above changes and updated information from West Grove that they will contribute \$200.

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North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative		2019 Budget	2019 Actual	Difference
INCOME				
Monthly Meeting Contributions				
	Davidson	750.00	0.00	750.00
	Durham	3,600.00	0.00	3,600.00
	Fayetteville	600.00	0.00	600.00
	Friendship	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
	Greenville	400.00	0.00	400.00
	Rich Square	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
	Virginia Beach	350.00	0.00	350.00
	West Grove	200.00	0.00	200.00
	Wilmington	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Monthly Meeting Contributions Total		9,400.00	0.00	9,400.00
Other Income				
	Individual Contributions – unrestricted	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Individual Contributions – Directory	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Nonmember Contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Bookstore Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Income Total		0.00	0.00	0.00
INCOME TOTAL		\$ 9,400.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 9,400.00

EXPENSES				
Administrative Expenses				
	Admin., Quaker Achives, Guilford	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Bookstore Expenses	55.00	0.00	55.00
	Operating Expenses	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Publication of Journal	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Publication of Memorials	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Publication of Minutes	600.00	0.00	600.00
	Publication of YMTg Directory	250.00	0.00	250.00
	Website Costs	260.00	0.00	260.00
Administrative Expenses		1,765.00	0.00	1,765.00

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North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative		2019 Budget	2019 Actual	Difference
Donations to Organizations				
	American Friends Service Committee	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Carolina Friends School	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Friends Center at Guilford	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Friends Cmte National Legislation	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Friends Hist. Collection, Guilford	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Friends School of Wilmington	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Friends World Cmte Consultation	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Guilford College	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Indian Affairs	300.00	0.00	300.00
	New Garden Friends School	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Pendle Hill	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Quaker Earthcare Witness	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Quaker House of Fayetteville	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
	Right Sharing of World Resources	300.00	0.00	300.00
	School of the Spirit	300.00	0.00	300.00
	Virginia Beach Friends School	300.00	0.00	300.00
Donations to Organizations		5,500.00	0.00	5,500.00
Other Expenses				
	Internships/Scholarships	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
	Travel (General)	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
	Youth Programs	3,500.00	0.00	3,500.00
Other Expenses Total		7,700.00	0.00	7,700.00
EXPENSES TOTAL		\$ 14,965.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 14,965.00

BUDGET SUMMARY				
	Total Income	9,400.00	0.00	9,400.00
	Total Expenses	14,965.00	0.00	14,965.00
	Net Difference	-\$ 5,565.00	\$ 0.00	
NON-BUDGETED FUNDS		Authorized 2018	Expenses 2018	Balance
SP	Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	\$ 750.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,500.00
NON-BUDGETED FUNDS TOTAL		\$ 750.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,500.00

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Hospitality Report

Hanna Hobson presented the Hospitality Report. Friends accepted the report with correction of dates.

Report for the Hospitality Committee

North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative (NCYMC) Annual Meeting 2021

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic it was deemed necessary to meet virtually for the second year in a row. The Planning and Hospitality Committees agreed to plan for a virtual Yearly Meeting with all sessions to take place on the platform ZOOM. Friendship Friends Meeting agreed to host the sessions on the Meetings Zoom account, so the Yearly Meeting only paid for the increased capacity on the account should it have been needed. The only other expense for this year's sessions was honoraria for speakers. We asked participants voluntarily to help cover these costs, while making it clear that registration would have no fee. Donations were made by Check as well as through Paypal. We received a total of \$865 in donations to help with expenses, which amounted to \$850.00. This will allow the yearly meeting to build up the Yearly Meeting Sessions reserve so as to be able to cover early expenses for annual session in 2021.

NCYMC required registration in order for participants to receive an invitation to the Zoom sessions.

The online registration form asked for a name and email address, information about membership in a Friends Meeting, and information about comfort using ZOOM. Registrants also indicated the sessions they expected to "attend" in order to help Zoom hosts plan for participation. At the end of the registration period, 88 individuals and 18 households had registered.

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According to the registration information, 77 of those who registered were participants in NCYMC monthly meetings, 20 were connected to other Friends meetings, and nine indicated “interest in the Quaker process.” We welcomed participants from Great Britain as well as 19 US states and the District of Columbia.

At the time that the decision was made that we would not be holding our sessions at Guilford College in 2021 Reservations were made for our sessions to be held at Guilford College July 13-17 2022.

Hospitality Committee

Transactions of 2021 NCYMC Yearly Meeting Sessions

Category	Balance May 1	Income	Expenses	Balance Aug 30
Yearly Meetings Sessions Reserve	\$1,942.28	\$865.00	\$850.00	\$1957.28
YM Sessions Scholarship Fund	\$4943.00			\$4943.00
Operating Fund /				Amt of Budget

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Budget				Remaining
Youth Program	\$3500.00			\$3500
Pay Pal Fees	\$250.00		\$20.84	\$229.16

Details

Reserve PayPal (10) – \$320 Honorarium Checks (3) — \$615
\$800.00

Revised August 30, 2021 Zoom Update 1 month \$50.00s

Planning Committee report

Edward Pearce presented the report of the Planning Committee. Friends accepted the report. The Planning Committee has met twice via Zoom and we are preparing for yearly meeting sessions to be 7th month 13-17, 2022 at Guilford College, if way opens, or via Zoom if need be.

Since 2022 is the 350th anniversary of the visits to the Carolina Colony by William Edmundson and George Fox, we intend to weave that into our planning some way. We also are exploring how we might address relations of Friends with Native Americans in North Carolina.

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Nominating Committee Report

Janis Ansell was approved for service on the Discipline Revision Committee Claire Williams was approved for FCNL General Committee for the term ending 12-2024.

Friends await further communication with Donna Hart.

Report from Greenville Friends

Bruce Arnold spoke to a report from Greenville Friends to Interim Body indicating that Greenville Friends can no longer function as a monthly meeting and is in transition from being a monthly meeting to being a worship group. They are exploring coming under the care of Rich Square Monthly Meeting.

The interim body accepts that Greenville is no longer able to do business as a monthly meeting and that Greenville is in unity about laying themselves down as a monthly meeting. The Interim Body is clear to join Greenville in the process of making their transition to becoming a worship group. A committee will be formed to work with Greenville to effect this transition together.

A report was shared from Rich Square Monthly Meeting indicating that they are in discernment with Greenville Meeting about taking the Greenville Worship Group under the care of Rich Square.

Robert Gosney, Carole Aldrich McCleery and Janis Ansell were approved to serve on the committee to work with Greenville Friends.

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Discipline Revision Committee Report

Deborah Shaw presented the report of the Discipline Revision Committee. Friends accepted the report.

Since yearly meeting, we have refreshed the roster of monthly meeting liaisons, and asked monthly meetings to send us their recommendations about monthly meeting queries, including recommendations for specific queries. We have also asked for guidance about whether or not to include (unanswered) queries for individuals in this revision of the Discipline. As of 9/18, no monthly meeting has responded to either request.

The clerk asked for responses to planning for in-person annual sessions at Guilford College. The College requires everyone on the campus to be fully vaccinated. We can have ZOOM participation in the business sessions. Also, Friends were asked to explore hosting a hybrid meeting for Interim Body in 4th month 2022.

Friends are grateful for this opportunity to gather together in the Spirit and grateful for our technical hosts from Durham Meeting. We purpose to meet on 4-23-2022 if consistent with divine will.

Anne Olsen, Clerk
Marguerite Dingman, Recording Clerk

NCYM-C Interim Body 4-24-2021

Friends gathered on 4-24-2021 via ZOOM, hosted by Friendship Meeting. We enjoyed waiting worship before lunch and during lunch some Friends remained online for fellowship. Then we re-gathered for business, beginning with waiting worship and this reading shared by the clerk:

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Luke 4:16-20

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet, Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at Liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

Friends were present from all nine of our monthly meetings.

Treasurer's Report

David French presented the Treasurer's Report which was accepted.

Ad Hoc Committee For Guilford Donation

The Ad Hoc Committee that had been asked to explore making a donation to Guilford College recommends a donation of \$1000. They seek guidance regarding the specific recipient. Friends approved designating \$1000 for the Guilford Forward Fund and requested that it be sent with a background letter via Friendship member Jim Hood who serves as Interim President of the College. This will be sent over the clerk's signature.

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Ad Hoc Committee for Five Rivers Friends

Deborah Shaw presented the report of the Ad Hoc Committee named to explore with Five Rivers Friends Meeting its desire for deeper relationship with North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative. There has been a fruitful correspondence and the process continues at a deliberate pace made slower by restrictions on travel due to COVID. Any Friends who feel comfortable and led to join Five Rivers Friends in their meetinghouse for worship are encouraged to do so. The report is accepted and Friends are encouraged to read the complete committee report which is posted on the NCYM-C website as well as being included in these minutes.

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee named to explore with Five Rivers Friends Meeting its desire for deeper relationship with North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative Third Month, 2021

The ad hoc committee, comprised of Huey Marshall, David Perry, Sidney Kitchens, and Deborah Shaw, met via zoom several times since being named at annual sessions last year. Huey Marshall and David Perry worshiped with Five Rivers Friends in person on two separate occasions. Members of Five Rivers Friends worshiped with Fayetteville Friends in their outdoor gathering. These visits and email communications between Five Rivers and the committee have furthered the exploration of relationship between Five Rivers Friends and the yearly meeting.

We include the following two communications to give a sense of the progress we have been making. We encourage any Friends who feel comfortable doing so to visit and worship with Five Rivers Friends in person. We ask each monthly meeting to be sure to let Five Rivers Friends know if you are returning to “in person” worship, as they will want to organize visits to worship

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with you. Until we are all able/comfortable with meeting in person we feel that this process of visiting each other in worship (as we are able/comfortable) and deepening our understanding of one another through correspondence is how we are led at this time.

Deborah Shaw, on behalf of the ad hoc committee

Text of email sent to Five Rivers Friends Twelfth Month 19, 2020

Dear Jim Henderson and Five Rivers Friends,

Trust and pray that this finds you and all who worship with you in good health and flourishing in and through the Holy Spirit!

I am writing on behalf of an ad hoc committee appointed by North Carolina Yearly Meeting - Conservative to be liaison to you as with you, we consider and deliberate on how Five Rivers Friends might be in relationship with the Yearly Meeting. This process feels especially challenging in these times of Covid-19, when changing mandates restrict traveling and gathering, and many are not comfortable or easy with gathering/worshipping via zoom platforms. It makes it difficult to come to know one another. A long and deliberate "courtship" (such as Davidson Friends undertook in the years leading up to their joining NCYM-C) in which we visit and worship with one another, learning of and from one another, will only come about once all feel safe to travel and meet physically with one another. This "courtship" feels to be a necessary step toward the process of growing in this relationship with one another.

We are glad that Huey Marshall felt clear to visit with you last month. We enjoyed hearing his report of the time spent with you. We will encourage others in the yearly meeting to come visit with you as they feel comfortable. Similarly, we again

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extend the invitation to you all to worship with us in our various meetings - perhaps challenging yourselves to explore the online worship as a necessary, if not ideal, solution to these times in which we find ourselves.

As our small committee met we came up with some queries that might be useful to your meeting to consider - certainly your responses to them would be a part of us getting to know more about you all! What is it about our Yearly Meeting that draws you to consider membership with us? What kinship are you seeking?

What expectations do you have of the Yearly Meeting?

Do you have a sense of what the Yearly Meeting expects of its member monthly meetings? How do you envision "showing up" for Yearly Meeting work and gatherings?

We wondered if you have a history (with perhaps more detail than what can be found on your website) of Five Rivers Friends that you might share with us that would also help us to come to know more about you? If you have such a thing - or if that could be easily compiled - that would be wonderful to receive.

We wish for you the blessings of this season and that the coming year be joy-filled!

In and through that precious Love and Light,

Deborah Shaw, on behalf of David Perry, Huey Marshall & Sidney Kitchens

Responses to Queries on our Application to Join North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative (NCYM-C) posed to Members of Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting (FRFMM) in December

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2020, by an ad hoc committee chaired by Deborah Shaw
Submitted March 2021

First Query: What is it about our yearly meeting that draws you to consider membership with us?

One FRFMM Friend responded “Affiliation with North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) will enhance the experience of that of God in every person who attends this monthly meeting.”

Another Friend responded:

At the present time, and throughout our thirty-three-year history, Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting, has not enjoyed yearly meeting affiliation. It is of course right order among Friends that a monthly meeting be part of a yearly meeting. Hence, we seek yearly meeting affiliation.

There is geographic logic in our becoming part of NCYM-C. Most NCYM-C monthly meetings are an easy drive from Conway, South Carolina, where we are located. This proximity to NCYM-C meetings would permit members of FRFMM to easily participate in activities of the yearly meeting.

Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting seeks yearly meeting affiliation. Because we have come to understand that an independent Friends meeting such as ours is to an extent rudderless and adrift. Yearly meeting affiliation would help give us direction.

Yet another Friend responded:

Community connectivity: Being part of a broader community of well-established monthly meetings and other affiliate organizations of NCYM-C would help connect Friends of

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Conway, Horry County, and the low-country of South Carolina, to a far reaching network of organized Friends.

Spiritual guidance: Becoming affiliated with a yearly meeting would connect our members and attenders with other Friends and elders to provide our meeting with spiritual guidance and an understanding of the principles and history of the NCYM(C)'s Faith and practice document. By attending meetings for worship, quarterly and annual meetings for business, and other regular events, we'll learn more about these Quaker ideals and values.

Meeting structure: Given our recent establishment of Conway's first-ever Quaker meeting house, it will be useful to see other examples of Monthly Meetings and their procedural structure, the duties associated with meeting officers, and to get ideas for our own programming.

Second Query: What kinship are you seeking?

Simply put, we of Five Rivers Friends Meeting seek kinship with what can be called the greater Quaker fellowship of the Carolinas. Given the considerable number of Friends living in North Carolina, and the fact that Friends in South Carolina are relatively few in number, those of us living here draw strength in our commitment to principles of the Religious Society of Friends through ongoing contact with North Carolina Friends.

Over the past several months, members of Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting have met various affiliate members of the NCYM-C (Fayetteville Friends, Davidson Friends). Their openness, kindness and willingness to accept our Meeting's attendees for meetings for worship truly exemplifies the kinship we seek. It is this sense of inclusivity and kinship that draws us to affiliation with NCYM-C.

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Third Query: What expectations do you have of the Yearly Meeting?

We anticipate great things from this proposed association. Five Rivers Friends has never had yearly meeting affiliation. Our experience has revealed the error of attempting to go it alone. Following considerable meditation on the subject, we've concluded, as did George Fox some years back, that the monthly meeting draws support, guidance, strength, and stability from its corresponding yearly meeting.

We have the expectation of coming into contact with like-minded Friends, and participating in an inclusive and open meeting setting for all NCYM-C functions. We plan to attend regularly scheduled quarterly meetings and annual events around North and South Carolina, and to periodically meet with affiliate monthly meetings when it is safe to do so.

Fourth Query: Do you have a sense of what the Yearly Meeting expects of its member monthly meetings?

We believe so. Monthly meetings support of yearly meetings involves ongoing financial, corporal, and spiritual support of greater body. Members of constituent meetings commit themselves to represent their meetings at as many yearly-meeting activities as possible, where they can contribute to the common good. Similarly, monthly meetings are called upon to extend welcome and hospitality to members of the yearly meeting in every way possible. Such hospitality runs from welcoming visiting Friends who join them for worship, to hosting yearly meeting activities when called upon to do so.

Fifth Query: How do you envision "showing up" for Yearly Meeting work and gatherings?

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As members of NCYM-C we envision showing up whenever called upon to do so by The yearly meeting. Ideally, this is in a physical sense. In time of pandemic this implies participating virtually in yearly meeting business.

We look forward to holding regular discussions during our own meetings for business to synchronize our local activities with those of NYCM-C yearly meeting. Given our distance, we will attend virtual meetings as needed and in-person gatherings as often as possible to contribute to the annual projects and initiatives. One of our goals would be to connect with the Virginia Beach Friends to discuss ways they participate with the yearly meeting at such a distance.

Additional question posed: We wondered if you have a history (with perhaps more detail than what can be found on your website) of Five Rivers Friends that you might share with us that would also help us come to [words not contained in my print-out] or that could be easily compiled—that would be wonderful to receive.

Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting (FRFMM), originally Horry Friends Monthly Meeting, was founded in July 1987, in response to a personal ad placed in our local newspaper, The Sun News of Myrtle Beach. A number of people responded to the ad, going on to form a worship group under the care of Columbia, South Carolina, Friends Meeting. We became a monthly meeting two years later.

Initially we hoped to become part of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting (SAYMA), the yearly meeting of Columbia Friends. That proved impossible giving the lengthy journey required to attend SAYMA functions. Thus, we hit upon the idea of establishing a South Carolina Quaker fellowship that, in time, might evolve into a Yearly Meeting for South Carolina. Our fellowship, Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG), hosted by Five

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Rivers Friends, held its inaugural meeting on Martin Luther King Day 1990. Additionally, FRFMM hoped and believed Friends General Conference (FGC), with which we became directly affiliated, would help us meet our yearly meeting needs.

After thirty years, around 2017, it became clear that PFG did not—could not—serve us as a yearly meeting. Therefore, we began discussing affiliating with a yearly meeting. This introduced stress in meeting. Our long-time clerk did not favor this. Ill-health and family considerations informed her position. She would not be able to travel out of state to participate in yearly meeting business. Other members of Five Rivers Friends offered to do any traveling necessary. This did not win over our clerk of meeting. Complicating things was a personality conflict that arose between our clerk and a new member of meeting. The upshot was that our clerk and three other members of meeting withdrew from Five Rivers Friends and formed their own worship group. This took place January 12, 2020. Those of us left behind went on to conduct meeting for business (January 12 was the day set for our regular meeting for business). We went on to approve new officers going on to conduct business as usual. One of our first items of business was to adopt the practice of a three-year rotation of officers.

As painful as the departure of longstanding members of meeting was, it allowed Five Rivers Friends to, so to speak, spread its wings. Finding ourselves unable to continue meeting at Conway's food bank, the CAP Center, where we had been for some twenty years, we resolved to secure a dedicated meeting house. We did this expeditiously. In May 2020 we began meeting at 1103 Main Street, in Conway. This was historic in that there had never been a Friends meeting house in this part of South Carolina. Additionally, we launched a website (<5riversfriends.org>). Equally important was our application for membership in North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative.

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FRFMM retains its affiliation with Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG), Friends General Conference, and Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF).

We of Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting devoutly wish to become part of North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative. Should this occur, we will find ourselves standing in the tradition established by George Fox in 1672, when he visited the Albemarle Sound region of North Carolina. Fox envisioned the formation of Friends meetings down the Atlantic Coast of the Carolinas. We of Five Rivers Friends Monthly Meeting, being an Atlantic-coast meeting, look forward to joining your Virginia Beach, Rich Square, and Wilmington meetings in lending representation to North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative in this historic part of the United States.

Nominating Committee

Mark Moss presented the Nominating Committee report.

Three individuals have agreed to serve on the Financial Review Committee, Tom Kennedy from Virginia Beach Meeting, David Perry from Davidson Meeting, and Carole Aldrich McCleery from Durham Meeting. Friends approved them to serve.

Friends are encouraged to consider whether they are led to serve as Assistant Clerk for the Yearly Meeting. This role does not imply an obligation to step into the role of Yearly Meeting Clerk.

Friends are reminded that Nominating Committee does not name members of Interim Body, Records Committee, Nominating Committee, Finance Committee, or Web Page Committee. These are determined by the Monthly Meetings, and

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should be reported by the Monthly Meeting clerks when they submit their reports in preparation for yearly meeting sessions.

Nominating Committee Report - NCYM-C Fourth month 14, 2022

We gathered via Zoom. In attendance were, Mark Moss, Tom Bertrand, Margie Dingman, Michelle Downey, Edward Pearce, Carole Treadway, and Kristin Olson-Kennedy

1. We are bringing forward 2 names for the Financial Review Committee. These are Tom Kennedy of Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting and Carole McCleery of Durham Monthly Meeting.
2. We are bringing forward Keith Williamson of Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting to serve as an FCNL Representative his term will end 12/2024.
3. We would like to encourage Friends to consider how they may serve the wider community. There are many opportunities to serve on committees in the Yearly Meeting. For example, we are in need of at least 2 more members to serve as our representatives to Friends Committee on National Legislation. We need another representative for Friends World Committee for Consultation.
4. We ask Friends to join us in seeking someone to take on the role of Clerk in 2023 at the closing of Yearly Meeting sessions. Anne Olsen has indicated that she will not serve beyond 2023.
5. Friends are reminded that Nominating Committee does not name members of Interim Body, Records Committee, Nominating Committee, Finance Committee, or Web Page Committee. These are determined by the Monthly Meetings, and should be reported by the Monthly Meeting clerks when they submit their reports in preparation for yearly meeting sessions.

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Updates on 2021 Yearly Meeting planning:

Hanna Passmore Hobson presented the Hospitality Report. Friends accepted the report and expressed gratitude for Ray Treadway's many years of faithful service as registrar for Yearly Meeting sessions.

As we ease our way out of the remote mode that we have been functioning in for over two years we recognize that things will not immediately return to how they were before March 2020. As such it is very hard to estimate the number of attendees we can expect at Guilford this summer. Pre-covid we would have expected in the range of 85 folks in person at a yearly meeting session, this summer we could see much smaller numbers in person at our sessions.

Additionally, costs this summer are higher than they have been in previous years. Estimated costs for our sessions this summer (Meeting Rooms, Golf Carts, Speaker Honoraria, etc.) currently appear to be around \$7,000. Should we only have 35 Friends Register to attend yearly meeting in person we would need to charge \$200 per person before room and board to cover this cost.

Luckily Friends were very generous last summer and donations exceeded our costs. We have a balance of around \$2000 in the bank account from our last sessions. We propose that we use that balance to offset the registration cost. Additionally we plan to suggest that Zoom attendees use our registration cost as a suggested donation amount.

In the past in-person sessions (both at Wilmington and at Guilford) registration costs have ranged from \$45-\$58. With the use of the \$2000 from last summer's sessions, if we set the registration cost/ suggested remote attender donation amount at \$60, we would still need 85 attendees to recoup the cost of this summers sessions, however we feel that this would be the best

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course of action in the hopes that if we do not have enough folks register maybe we can recoup some of the cost in additional donations this year.

Planning Committee

Elizabeth Wintermute presented the Planning Committee Report. Friends accepted the report and were easy with providing more interest sessions and unstructured social opportunities to the ZOOM schedule than were available last year.

Planning Committee: Report for interim body

- Interest group invitation: please email Tom Bertrand if you would like to offer an interest group at Guilford during yearly meeting sessions. tbertrand45@gmail.com
 - o Email invitation re interest groups will be sent in the week after interim body
- Theme & Programming
 - o Theme: Let Truth Lead Us
 - o Bible study: Dwight Wilson
 - 12:45-1:30, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday
 - In-person only
 - Dwight will be with us for the entirety of our yearly meeting, God willing. He will lead Bible study and will also be an elder presence among us.
 - o Thursday evening program: readings from the journals of Fox & Edmundson re their visit to NC & VA, to include worship / worship sharing

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- Probably hybrid
- o Friday plenary
 - Margie Dingham, possibly with others – still in discernment
 - Hybrid
- o Saturday evening program: Kathleen Hannan will lead singing and dancing, preferably outdoors
- o Sunday morning worship to include Dwight's reflections on our yearly meeting time together
 - Hybrid
- o Budget request
 - Total request of \$2500, to include:
 - Travel + full YM registration for Dwight
 - One meal for Kathleen + mileage to and from her home in Durham
 - \$1200 - \$1600 honoraria, \$400 each for: Bible study; person of presence; intergenerational programming presenter; and (possibly) outside co-presenter w/Margie, if needed

Friends realized the necessity of making concrete arrangements for tech support during Yearly Meeting sessions. The clerk will seek Friends to serve on a committee to plan for this.

Andrew Wright of Durham Meeting raised a possibility of a COVID-safe camping event in late summer or early Fall for the

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youth and the adults of the yearly meeting. Be in touch with him if interested.

Friends are grateful for today's opportunity to maintain our bonds of relationship despite limitations imposed by the pandemic. Deep thanks to our technical hosts. The Interim Body purposes to meet on 10-23-2021 if, and in a manner, in accordance with divine will.

Anne Olsen, Clerk
Marguerite Dingman, Recording Clerk

Ministry & Oversight Minutes

The Ministry and Oversight Minutes were accidentally omitted from the 2021 minute book, so the minutes are presented here in chronological order up to the M&O meeting held in conjunction with the 2022 yearly meeting.

Ministry & Oversight 10-24-2020

The meeting began with a period of waiting worship.

Friends shared regarding the spiritual condition of their meetings.

Friends are working on taking care of those who do and do not participate in virtual worship and social opportunities. It can begin to feel like two meetings and it is challenging to maintain a sense of the whole community. Some meetings have begun outdoor in-person meetings or have a very small number of Friends meeting in the meetinghouse with or without a zoom connection to those gathered at home. There can be technical challenges that crop up and heighten the sense of disconnection. Still, we celebrate that those who cannot come in person due to health or distance are able to join together via Zoom. Visitors

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show up from surprising places. There are social gatherings, book clubs, racial equity learning groups and spiritual nurture groups meeting virtually. Attention is being paid to possibilities for hybrid gatherings so that all who wish to can attend and experience being one body.

We feel tender toward each other during these times when anxiety and depression are common. We feel the need to reach out and not take for granted that Friends are OK. Our hearts remain focused on how to love each other through joy and loss amidst very challenging circumstances.

We are reminded that care for our communities begins with care for ourselves. Friends are encouraged to attend to our own practices for spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Deborah's proposal for a retreat style gathering in 1st month via zoom, open to all in the yearly meeting, was well received.

Deborah Shaw, clerk
Marguerite Dingman, recording clerk

Ministry & Oversight 4-24-2021

Friends gathered on ZOOM, began with some informal greetings and then settled into waiting worship.

Nan Bowles shared a leading that has been on her heart - a "love letter" to NCYM-C reflecting on how the guidance and modeling of Friends have affected her in her growth in the Spirit. Friends were deeply moved and received her offering with gratitude and love.

Friends approved 5-29-2021 as the date of our next meeting. We will consider how we nurture members of our meetings who feel the fresh seedlings of a leading.

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Deborah Shaw, clerk
Marguerite Dingman, recording clerk

Ministry & Oversight 7-15-2021

On the 15th day of Seventh Month Ministry & Oversight gathered, again via ZOOM due to ongoing risk from COVID-19. The meeting opened with a period of waiting worship out of which the clerk read from Francis Howgill :

The Lord of Heaven and earth we found to be near at hand, and, as we waited upon him in pure silence, our minds out of all things, his heavenly presence appeared in our assemblies, when there was no language, tongue nor speech from any creature. The Kingdom of Heaven did gather us and catch us all, as in a net, and his heavenly power at one time drew many hundreds to land. We came to know a place to stand in and what to wait in; and the Lord appeared daily to us, to our astonishment, amazement and great admiration, insomuch that we often said one unto another with great joy of heart: 'What, is the Kingdom of God come to be with men?'

Friends were present from Davidson, Durham, Fayetteville, Friendship, Rich Square, Virginia Beach, West Grove - all of our monthly meetings, as well as several welcome visitors from ohioYM, Iowa ym cons, SAYMA, Illinois YM and Western YM

The clerk invited Friends to consider if they are led to draft a description of M&O to go in the yearly meeting Discipline.

Reflections on the spiritual condition of the meetings:

Our meetings have made major adjustments in order to continue worshiping when the pandemic precluded meeting in person. Now we are needing to make big adjustments as the urge grows to come back together in person.

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Some meetings find that several cohorts have developed - those who have never met on ZOOM, those who have never met in person (mostly geographically distant), those who have done both. Some are uncomfortable with zoom technology in the meetinghouse yet Friends also feel some connection with, and even at this point obligation toward, those who would be left out without use of that technology. It is a quandary how to meet the needs of all as we return to in-person worship - either with or without social distancing and technical innovations.

Pastoral care has been challenging. The needs have been greater and more urgent than usual, and sometimes difficult to meet since the usual ways of meeting them have not been possible. Still, other opportunities have presented themselves, such as meetings finding themselves using their facilities for emergency housing and food distribution.

Needing to do all this adjusting has revealed pre-existing difficulties in openly facing disagreements among Friends. We feel ourselves stretched in our ability to accept and live with differences of many kinds, from use of new technologies to theological diversity. We are learning to be more open to change and uncertainty.

ZOOM has enlarged our Quaker community and raised questions about the nature of community. We will be living into these questions for a long time and are grateful for the accompaniment of each other and ever-reliable guidance of the Divine.

Friends approved that the clerks at the table continue for the coming year.

Friends approved the publication of Ministry and Oversight minutes in the NCYM-C minute book.

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The body will meet again at the call of the clerks.

Deborah Shaw, Clerk; Marguerite Dingman, Recording Clerk

Ministry & Oversight 10-23-2021

Friends met via ZOOM and began our time together with waiting worship. The clerk then shared these words: *Mind that which is eternal, which gathers your hearts together up to the Lord, and lets you see that ye are written in one another's heart.* George Fox, 1653

Jan Ansell reported that work of the Ad Hoc Committee working on a description of Ministry & Oversight is ongoing. This committee was formed in response to a request from the Discipline Revision Committee.

Jim Henderson gave an update on Five Rivers Friends of Conway South Carolina. They usually have three or four in person at worship on first days. They have received visits and also traveled to meetings in our Yearly Meeting. They are reading the revised sections of the Yearly Meeting Discipline as they are offered. They continue in their hope to become a part of this yearly meeting.

How does Truth prosper in our meetings? Several meetings reported a sense of being scattered. Due to ongoing COVID concerns, many have not met in person for over a year and a half. Meetings have small indoor worship, worship on Zoom, hybrid worship, outdoor meetings, other options for worship and learning, and various combinations thereof. Friends experience a loss of a sense of the large body being together. There is a sense of weariness. Nonetheless the smaller groups have been fruitful and some will wish to continue these options even while enjoying the whole gathered meeting again in the future. Some

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meetings have experienced more fragmentation and frustration in trying to do challenging work in business meeting over ZOOM. Anti-racism work is challenging enough in person and attempting to do it at physical distance has created difficulties. Some members have left during this time. Some meetings are enjoying the Discipline revision process, especially looking at the queries, and find that it renews awareness of our deep values and commitments.

We feel the love that gathers us regardless of our physical proximity and during these times we hold each other in our hearts and hold hope for renewed vitality.

We welcomed Michael Eric Hund of First Friends who joined us today.

The following queries were offered for ongoing contemplation:

What can you think of that would be helpful and/or supportive for your committee, for your meeting from the Yearly Meeting body of Ministry & Oversight? More retreats? Some kind of visitation? What else?

The body intends to gather again at the call of the clerk.

Deborah Shaw, Clerk
Marguerite Dingman, Recording Clerk

Ministry & Oversight 4-23-2022

Friends met via Zoom and began with waiting worship. Janis Ansell, who clerked the meeting, shared this quotation from Caroline Stephen:

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“Words may help and silence may help, but the one thing needful is that the heart should turn to its Maker as the needle turns to the pole. For this we must be still.”

Friends were present from our monthly meetings,

Davidson, Durham, Fayetteville, Friendship, Rich Square, Virginia Beach, Wilmington, and also from Five Rivers Meeting in South Carolina.

Barbara Gosney read a letter from Deborah Shaw in which she says in part, “In the late summer of 2021 I felt called into a process of discernment about all that I had been doing in terms of ministry. After some time I came to a sense of clarity that I was being led to step away from all committee work and leadership roles at this time.”

Friends approved Jan Ansell as interim clerk.

Condition of the monthly meetings:

Some meetings are increasing in membership and thriving in engaging with each other and with their wider communities. Zoom has enabled an expansion of who can attend while at the same time not providing the normal person to person exchanges that hold people together.

Zoom (or any virtual format) is an awkward space for staying connected while addressing issues that stir passions. Some meetings have had difficulties intensified by trying to do hard work, such as anti-racism work, over Zoom. Others have held off on dealing with intense issues until groundwork is done to create safe places to disagree together. We are all in a process of regrowing our communal life in various ways.

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Meetings that established hybrid meetings (in which in-person and virtual meetings are linked as one) don't anticipate dropping the virtual connection because "we cherish our Zoomers." Still, Friends are looking for opportunities to get together in person, often outdoors for COVID safety reasons. We have missed eating together!

Friends are encouraged to look into the Faithful Meetings Project of the School of the Spirit for support in establishing and maintaining communities of love and trust.

In response to the conditions of our meetings these queries arose: Does the body of Ministry and Oversight see itself as having a role in supporting monthly meetings in times like this? Do we have a corporate role and responsibility to provide resources of nurture for our monthly meetings?

Friends have found our more frequent meetings to be helpful. A Friend encouraged us to think of M&O as the heart of our part of the Religious Society of Friends and what binds our separate meetings together.

Another query arose: How do we reach out to incorporate people at the monthly meeting level who may not come to annual sessions of Ministry & Oversight and the Yearly Meeting?

Nancy Craft presented the process of selecting a new clerk as a spiritual process of seeking God's will for the Body. We are asked to hold this in prayer and gather in discernment at our annual sessions on 7-14-22 if in accordance with divine will.

Janis Ansell, clerk; Marguerite Dingman, Recording clerk.

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Ministry and Oversight 7-13-2022

On the 13th day of Seventh Month 2022 Ministry and Oversight met at Guilford College, with a zoom connection for those not attending in person. The meeting opened with a period of waiting worship out of which the clerk shared these words from George Fox

Let not hard words trouble you nor fair speeches win you,
but dwell in the power of the Truth.

Friends were present in person or via Zoom from Davidson, Durham, Fayetteville, Friendship, Rich Square, Virginia Beach and West Grove monthly meetings along with the following visitors:

Dwight L Wilson, Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting; Keith Burroughs and Greg Fuquay, Fairhope Monthly Meeting, Alabama, Independent; David Eley, Keystone Fellowship, Ohio Yearly Meeting; Wayne Finegar, Quaker House and Baltimore Yearly Meeting; Emma Hulbert, Friends Committee on National Legislation; and Mary Linda McKinney, School of the Spirit, Faithful Meetings Program.

Janis Ansell, Interim Clerk, reviewed the agenda and the process by which she became interim clerk. She then presented a report from the Ad Hoc Committee for Revision of the Ministry and Oversight section of the NCYM(C) Faith and Practice-Book of Discipline and the body considered the draft description.

DRAFT DESCRIPTION of the Body recently known as Ministry and Oversight and referred to in this draft as Worship and Nurture:

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The purpose of the Body of Worship and Nurture is the spiritual nurture of the yearly meeting and the monthly meetings that comprise it.

Worship and Nurture is an inclusive body consisting of Friends who are led to take responsibility for carrying out this purpose. These Friends arise from the monthly meetings that comprise the yearly meeting. Often, but not always, these are Friends who serve on monthly meeting committees charged with spiritual care of their meetings or are Friends who are recorded by their meetings as those who carry this concern.

The Yearly Meeting itself consists of two entities, the Meeting for Business with its clerk and the Meeting for Worship and Nurture with its clerk. These bodies have interwoven membership yet have distinct responsibilities which together form the organizational structure and spiritual heart of the Yearly Meeting. The following graphic is a way of illustrating this interrelationship:

Providing spiritual nurture for the yearly meeting foremost involves grounding and surrounding all yearly meeting business in the living Spirit of Christ. This is done by holding all business sessions in prayer, articulating the spiritual root and purpose of all business, and providing/supporting worship opportunities before and throughout business sessions. On occasions when those gathered have lost focus on listening to Spirit and are trending toward argumentation, Worship and Nurture has a role in inviting the meeting to recenter in the Spirit.

Providing Spiritual nurture and accompaniment also involves outreach to monthly meetings by means of

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check-ins and spiritual listening for monthly meeting bodies charged with spiritual care of their meetings.

Worship and Nurture may also offer resources and education to support monthly meetings in matters of worship, nurture and membership and may offer opportunities for Friends to develop feelings of closeness, trust and safety in the knowledge that we are loved unconditionally. This kind of safety does not insulate us from being challenged and feeling uncomfortable at times. It does support us in taking the risks necessary for spiritual growth.

A question arose concerning whether it is still in right order for this to be a separate body or whether an extremely robust committee would serve better. There was not unity to change the body's status at this time.

Friends approved the draft for inclusion in the Interim Discipline. It will be reviewed again next year prior to final approval. This provides opportunity for monthly meetings to provide feedback to this Ad Hoc committee.

Friends entered into worship with attention to who is called to be the next clerk of this body.

A name arose and that person is now in discernment.

Friends approved Janis Ansell to continue as interim clerk until 10th Month

Friends approved Marguerite (Margie) Dingman to continue as recording clerk.

Friends approved the publication of our minutes in the NCYM-C minute book.

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With gratitude for the fellowship experienced this evening the body adjourns with intention to meet again on 10-22-2022 if in accordance with divine will.

Yearly Meeting Officers 2022-2023

Clerk Anne Olsen (Davidson)

Assistant Clerk Michelle Downey (Fayetteville)

Recording Clerk Marguerite Dingman (Durham)

Treasurer David French (Virginia Beach)

Clerk of Ministry & Oversight Janis Ansell, interim,
(Friendship)

Recording Clerk of Ministry & Oversight Marguerite
Dingman (Durham)

The Interim Body

Davidson: Anne Olsen, Kristin Olson-Kennedy, David Perry,
Brandi Murko

Durham: Marguerite Dingman, Kent Wicker, David Haines,
Jessica Barnhill, Chaz Lang

Fayetteville: Susan Lees, Melidy Poole, Michelle Downey

Friendship: Deborah Shaw, Carole Treadway, Lloyd Lee
Wilson, Hanna Hobson

Rich Square: Barbara C. Gosney, Robert E. Gosney, Edward
Pearce, Patricia Deneen, Bob Parker, Mary Kay Glazer, Mark
Moss

Virginia Beach: Nancy Craft, David French, Tom Bertrand,
Elizabeth Waitekus

West Grove: Charles Ansell

Wilmington: Huey Marshall

Ex Officio: Anne Olsen (clerk), Michelle Downey (assistant

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clerk), Marguerite Dingman (recording clerk)

Standing Committees 2022-2023

Book Committee: *Receive books from the bookstore, set up book sale table at YM and collect book money, return unsold books to the bookstore. (Note: Volunteers are always appreciated to help in bookstore set up and take down, and with the operation of the bookstore).*

Nancy Craft (Virginia Beach MM)
Carole Treadway (Friendship MM)
Michelle Downey (Fayetteville MM)

note: additional staffing is encouraged at YM sessions

Documents Committee: *Committee examines Epistles sent by other yearly meetings and Friends' groups and chooses those they feel deserve circulation among our members. In conjunction with the clerk of yearly meeting they make available links to the Epistles online.*

Susan Lees (Fayetteville MM)
Nancy Craft (Virginia Beach MM)

Financial Review Committee: *In Fourth Month the Nominating Committee presents two or three names to constitute The Financial Review Committee for approval by the Interim Body. This committee, with the assistance of the yearly meeting treasurer, annually reviews financial records of the yearly meeting.*

Tom Kennedy (Virginia Beach MM)
Carole McCleery (Durham MM)

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Journal Editorial Committee: *Plan, publish and distribute the occasional “Journal of North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative).”*

Kent Wicker, (Durham MM)
Carol Passmore (Durham MM)
Carole Treadway (Friendship MM)
Janis Ansell (Friendship)
Lloyd Lee Wilson (Friendship)

Minutes Publication Committee: *Prepare the minutes of yearly meeting sessions for publication, including gathering written reports, formatting, and proofreading.*

Ad Hoc Committee named:

Mark Wutka (Friendship MM and Nashville MM)
Mark Moss (Rich Square MM)
Nancy Craft (Virginia Beach MM) - directory

Travel Support Committee: *To contact yearly meeting officers and those appointed or are considering whether to serve as North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) representatives to outside organizations to facilitate adequate funding and other needs the representatives may have.*

Charles Newlin (West Grove MM)
Kristen Olson-Kennedy (Davidson)
Pat Phelan Young (Virginia Beach MM)

Trustees of Trust Funds: *Trustees for the fund for travel in the ministry.*

David Perry (Davidson MM)
Carey Reece (Rich Square MM)

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Hospitality Committee: *Plan accommodations for yearly meeting sessions, coordinate with the host facility, assist with accommodation problems during yearly meeting sessions.*

Hanna Hobson (Friendship MM), registrar
Ray Treadway (Friendship MM), assistant registrar
Susan Wilson (Friendship MM)
Judy Reece (Friendship MM)
Sid Kitchens (Friendship MM)
Deborah Shaw (Friendship MM)

Yearly Meeting Planning Committee: *Plan the yearly meeting program.*

Tom Bertrand (Virginia Beach MM)
Kristin Olson-Kennedy (Davidson MM)
Toby Berla (Durham MM)

Youth Program Planning Committee: *Plan and coordinate yearly meeting activities for babies through teen-agers. (Note: Volunteers are always appreciated to assist the children and teenagers as they are involved in the planned activities.)*

Andrew Wright (Durham MM)
Goldie Walton (Wilmington MM)

Standing Committees composed of Monthly Meeting Representatives as reported to the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee

Records Committee: *Oversee the preservation of yearly meeting and monthly meeting records in the Friends Historical Collection at the Guilford College Library.*

Quaker Librarian Gwen Erickson (Convener, ex officio)

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Davidson
Durham Jennifer Killen
Fayetteville Michelle Downey
Friendship Claire Koster
Rich Square Barbara C. Gosney
Virginia Beach Nancy Craft
West Grove Katherine Newlin Hadley
Wilmington Terri Butler

Nominating Committee: *Composed of one appointee from each monthly meeting and one ex officio member from Travel Support Committee, prepare nominations for presentation to yearly meeting sessions, or as needed, for clerks, standing committees, and special appointments.*

Davidson Brandi Murko
Durham Marguerite Dingman
Fayetteville Susan Lees
Friendship Judy Reece
Rich Square Edward Pearce (co-convener)
Virginia Beach Tom Bertrand
West Grove Charles Ansell
Wilmington Cheryl Fetterman
Travel Support (*ex officio*) Kristin Olson-Kennedy

Finance Committee: *Composed of the treasurers of monthly meetings or an alternate designee appointed by each monthly meeting: review and make recommendations for the yearly meeting budget. Yearly meeting treasurer is ex officio.*

YM Treasurer David French
Davidson David Perry
Durham Larry Chapman

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Fayetteville Susan Lees
Friendship Stephen Holland
Rich Square Bob Parker - *convener*
Virginia Beach David French
West Grove Charles Newlin
Wilmington David Hensler

Web Page Committee: *Recommends content, oversees content and functionality, reviews content for timeliness, promotes use of the web page and monitors appropriate access. They meet at the call of the convener with email communication used to consult concerning web page content.* Davidson Kristen
Olson-Kennedy - *convener*

Durham
Fayetteville
Friendship
Greenville
Rich Square Barbara Gosney
Virginia Beach Natalie Bray
West Grove Corena Owens
Wilmington Connie Keller

Special Appointments, 2022-2023

AFSC Corporation: *Representatives to attend the annual board meeting in Fourth Month (up to 4 representatives).*

Toby Berla (Durham MM)
Laley Lippard (Virginia Beach MM)

Coordinators to Work with other Conservative Yearly Meetings: *Maintain contact with and visit other Conservative*

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yearly meetings in Ohio and Iowa during Eighth Month and promote a presence and understanding of Conservative Friends.

Nancy Craft (Virginia Beach MM)

Friends Committee on National Legislation: *Six representatives with 3-year terms to attend annual board meeting, which is typically held in late fall or early winter in Washington, DC, area.*

Eric Ginsburg (West Grove MM) term ends 12/2022
Tom Bertrand (Virginia Beach MM) term ends 12/2023
Peter Klopfer (Durham MM) term ends 12/2023
Claire Williams (Durham MM) term ends 12/2024
Keith Williamson (Virginia Beach MM) term expires 12/2024

Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas: *Four representatives with 3-year terms to represent yearly meeting at annual meetings and serve on national and regional committees.*

Michael Misenheimer (Durham MM) term ends 12/31/2024
Elizabeth Parrish (West Grove (MM) term ends 12/31/2022
Bob Parker (Rich Square MM) term ends 12/31/2023
Gwynne Wells (Virginia Beach MM) term ends 12/31/2025

Quaker Earth Care Witness: *One representative to attend annual meeting in Tenth Month and serve as a liaison between Quaker Earth Care and the yearly meeting.*

Quaker House, Fayetteville, Board of Directors:
Represent yearly meeting on the board, which meets approximately every 45 days, on a Seventh Day, for a few hours.

Mark Moss (Rich Square MM)

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Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation

Eric Ginsberg (West Grove MM)
Debbie Parker (Durham MM)

Discipline Revision Committee

Lloyd Lee Wilson (Friendship MM)
Andrew Wright (Durham MM)
Janis Ansell (Friendship MM)
Need additional member