

Annual Report of Quarterly Meeting Ministry and Counsel  
30<sup>th</sup> Seventh Month, 2011

Ministry and Counsel began its year with a day-long retreat at Tom Rothschild's home. We worshipped on the question of the Spiritual state of the Quarter and how we as a committee might enhance it. We were moved by concerns about keeping to our Spiritual Root and the sense that many of us had of a deepening Spiritual connection within the Quarter. We hold the Spiritual Life of the Quarter, in particular the Spiritual life of our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business to be our special concern. We work closely with the Quarterly Meeting clerk to help maintain that Spiritual Center during our gatherings.

In First Month of 2011 we sponsored an ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation Help) workshop to help friends interested in working with end of life concerns within our meetings. The workshop was well attended and a number of Friends have become trained ARCH visitors for their Meetings.

In Third Month we held a worship sharing around the relationship between Friends Seminary and other members of the Quarter. The meeting was deeply worshipful and felt like a good beginning. We will continue to find ways to help the Quarter speak to each other on these concerns.

In Fifth Month we invited all the clerks of the Quarter and Quarterly Committees to a potluck at Brooklyn Meeting. The goals were to increase conversation across meetings and committees and have a good time. We think we met those goals.

In Sixth Month we sponsored a workshop by FCNL on lobbying the government. There was a nice turnout for this workshop by both Friends and non-friends.

At the beginning of Quarterly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business in Fourth Month, we broke the meeting into small groups to worship share on three queries:

- 1) How do we know when we are Spirit Led?
- 2) What helps us be Spirit Led?
- 3) How can we help one another move cheerfully – even within disagreement or conflict-toward a Spirit-led understanding of and collaboration with one another?

We found the responses to these Queries deeply moving. We would like to share with you today a sampling and summary of those responses.

Query 1. How do we know when we are spirit led?

When what begins with myself moves to a concern greater than myself and leads to knowing that God is present.

When there is a power in the words and the silence.

When disparate messages come together to form a new truth and result in agreement on a clear step.

When we are listening deeply to all, especially those with whom we differ.

When every voice that needs to be heard is welcomed and respected.

Query 2. What helps us to be Spirit-led?

Preparation—a daily reminder to stay in touch with God: reading sacred wisdom, meditating, praying.

Trusting in the good intentions of everyone.

Emptying and quieting one's mind and body, becoming a vessel.

Releasing our attachment to the outcome.

Clerking can support us in being centered and in acting on our best intentions.

Query 3. How can we help one another move cheerfully—even in disagreement or conflict—toward a Spirit-led understanding of and collaboration with one another

Remember that conflict need not destroy community, but can strengthen it.  
Conflict can be used creatively.

Avoiding us and them—refusing to be enemies.

Remember humor, patience, the importance of silence and keeping a sense of proportion. Cheerfulness and suspicion are incompatible.

Do not lose sight of love and God's grace.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ed Elder, for the committee  
Clerk, Ministry and Counsel

Beverly Archibald, David Britton, Sally Campbell, Margery Cornwell, Charlotte Ehrmann, Patricia Glynn, Mason Jenkins, Tom Rothschild and Nancy Black, ex officio