



Yardley Friends Meeting Newsletter

65 North Main Street, Yardley PA 19067

www.YardleyFriendsMeeting.org

Ed Snyder, Clerk

Meeting for Worship: 10:00—11:00

First Day School: 10:00—10:45 (except summer)

October 2008

Coming Events

Oct. 5—Committee Meetings after Meeting for Worship

October 12—Family Meeting for Worship, no First Day School Meeting for Business after Meeting for Worship

October 18— Meeting for Worship Adult discussion group, 11:30

October 26—Meeting for Worship Book discussion group, 1:00

November 2—Committee meetings after Meeting for Worship Road cleanup after Committee meetings

November 8—Family Meeting for Worship, no First Day School Meeting for Business after Meeting for Worship

Greeter for October: John Ceneviva

Superintendent for October: Linda Flower

Greeter for November: Drew Sites
Superintendent for November: Janet Zimmerman

POSTPONED FLEA MARKET DOES WELL

Preliminary figures from this year's Flea Market are close to last year's, thanks in large part to Sandy Gibson's hard work on the White Elephant and the silent auction (a new feature this year); and to all who worked hard to make this year a success. A little rain isn't going to stop Yardley!

Gross income	2007	2008
Parking	\$ 513	\$ 898
White Elephant	2,488	2,543
Silent Auction	-	1,017
Food	3,198	2,445
Vendors	3,960	3,030
Cash contributions	<u>120</u>	<u>330</u>
Gross totals	10,279	10,263
Net totals	\$8,836	\$8,840

CLOUDS IN FORECAST FOR BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The next book up for discussion will be The Invention of Clouds: How an Amateur Meteorologist Forged the Language of the Skies by Richard Hamblyn. This is a highly rated biography of an English Quaker chemist, Luke Howard, who in 1802 evoked an intense reaction when he presented his system of naming clouds—names we still use today. Reviews say it is both an interesting biography and examination of cultural and scientific history. At the end of his life he "occupied himself with obscure religious controversies." What might *that* mean?

Inexpensive used copies of the book are available on Amazon. Come join us on October 26, 1-3 pm at the Meetinghouse.

War stirs in men's hearts the mud of their worst instincts. It puts a premium on violence, nourishes hatred, and gives free rein to cupidity. It crushes the weak, exalts the unworthy, and bolsters tyranny.

—Charles DeGaulle

Around the Meetinghouse

Holding in the Light...

Kimberly Fulton's mother Dorothy Weaver, who has recently been hospitalized with congestive heart failure.

Dear Friends,

This is a note that we never imagined writing and words seem inadequate to express our appreciation. We wish to thank all of you for your support during this difficult time. Your prayers and kind words of sympathy have provided a great deal of comfort to us. Thank you for the beautiful flowers, the delicious meals and the help with Blake's Memorial Service. We are fortunate to be under the care of Yardley Friends Meeting.

With Love-

Mark, Kimberly and Shane

The monthly adult discussion group will meet on October 18 after Meeting for Worship (and elevenses). Join us this month as we discuss the query on Meeting for Business.

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter digitally, please let me know and I'll take your name off my mailing labels. If I don't hear from you, I'll keep you on my "paper route."

Do YOU have news for the Newsletter? Contact Betty Steckman at alphabetty123@earthlink.net, 609-393-0015. Deadline is the 25th of each month.

REMINDER: BABY FOOD AND PLASTIC BAGS NEEDED

The food pantry at the Morrisville Presbyterian Church has a growing need for baby food donations: formula and/or any kind of baby food items would be greatly appreciated. As we all know, there is a great need locally for food and sometimes the youngest are overlooked. A box will be in the entrance way hallway if you would like to help out.

Another ongoing need is for those plastic grocery bags we are all trying to avoid and replace with recyclable ones. If you have any left over, the pantry can use them for the clients to carry home their food; if they are not donated, they have to be purchased.

For further information, contact Christine Breidenbach at 215-736-0426, or email chrisbreid@msn.com.

A STATEMENT FROM PASTORAL CARE

Partisan political issues have been raised during vocal ministry at recent meetings for worship. Politics should not be a part of our meeting for worship.

We are reminded that meeting for worship is a place where each of us has the opportunity to seek our own understanding in silence. When the silence is broken, the speaker must consider the weight of his/her comments on those who continue to seek in silence. We are always committed to creating a safe worship space for each other and any new attenders who seek us out.

At the rise of meeting when the superintendent of the day invites afterthoughts, we are being invited to elaborate on our concerns.

At our social time after meeting for worship and during appropriate adult education classes, we have the opportunity to share our political views.

Editor's note: What do you think? May our deeply held religious convictions lead us to speak out appropriately on political issues in meeting? How do we distinguish Spirit-led witness from secular political opinions? Are we open to other perspectives as well as our own?

TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK: VOCAL MINISTRY IN THE MEETING

The deep, Spirit-centered stillness of the unprogrammed Friends Meeting seeps into our being, healing, comforting, and sometimes challenging. And out of that deep stillness may come vocal ministry that heals, comforts, and sometimes challenges.

When we settle into silence and open our minds and hearts, we may find a message that catches at our minds. It may be an insight for our own private contemplation; but sometimes we feel a leading to share it with others. Howard Brinton observes in his *Guide to Quaker Practice*, "It is no light matter to break the living silence." How do we decide whether to rise and speak?

Faith and Practice says, "When the leading is to be shared, the worshiper feels a compelling inward call to vocal ministry." Such an inward call may take a physical form such as clammy hands or thumping heart. Not speaking can leave one with a sense of omission, a burden not properly shared.

Brinton and other writers describe some characteristics of an acceptable spoken message.

- Religious. While there is no limit on the topics one might explore, the tone of a Spirit-led message is religious rather than secular or purely intellectual. What is God saying to or through you?
- Spontaneous. A prepared text is rarely considered an expression of true vocal ministry. We are advised not to come to Meeting determined to speak, nor determined NOT to speak—and let ourselves be led as Spirit wills.
- Non-argumentative. Quaker meeting is not the time to engage in repartee, in debate or "setting straight" another speaker.
- Brief. Usually a message can be given in

a few minutes, a few sentences. Most of us lack the skill or the inspiration to deliver a sermon!

- Seasoned. Sometimes a message is improved by further reflection. If someone else has just spoken, perhaps more space is needed before another message is shared. Even if one feels a strong urge, it can be helpful to sit with that feeling for a while and see whether the message seems to be for you personally or needs to be shared.

You may never know the importance to someone else of what you have said. On the other hand, if you are not clear about the necessity of speaking, sit quietly and wait. It may be that someone else will rise to deliver that message more articulately than you might have. It may be that your message will arise with more power and urgency at some future time.

Must a message always be somehow inspirational? Not necessarily. If you are in great spiritual distress, feeling lost, grief-stricken or despairing, you may find that asking for the prayers and compassion of others is the best thing you can do. One of the great gifts of a spiritual community is the ability to offer support to its wounded members. Let the Meeting help you through your times of darkness.

In summary, vocal ministry requires thoughtfulness and discernment. It has a spontaneity in that it rises unplanned from somewhere deep inside us, demanding our consideration. It may be expressed awkwardly or with polished phrases, depending on the clarity of the message and the skill of the speaker, but it is honest, heartfelt and inspired by Something or Someone more profound than our ordinary selves. It's a matter of waiting, listening and discerning what we are called to do—and then following that call.

—Betty Steckman

SECOND QUERY: Meeting for Business

Is our meeting for business held in the spirit of a meeting for worship in which we seek divine guidance?

Are we careful to keep in the spirit of worship each of the concerns that emerge, whether of nurture, of Spirit, of social concerns, of property, or of finance?

Are Meeting decisions directed by prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and are difficult problems considered carefully with patient search for truth, unhurried by the pressure of time?

How do we respond if we notice the meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God?

Do we recognize that we speak through our inactions as well as our action?

Do I regularly attend meeting for business and in a spirit of love and unity? If unable to attend, how do I attend to my responsibility?

Do I consider prayerfully the many concerns that are lifted up on any issue, acknowledging that the search for truth in unity involves what God requires, being open to personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the meeting?

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