

# NEWSLETTER

ASHEVILLE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Fourth Month 2003

## **Coming to Peace: FGC Gathering in Jonestown, PA**

The annual Gathering of FGC will take place June 28 - July 5 at the University of Pittsburg campus in Johnstown, PA. This year's theme, "Coming to Peace", reflects a presence that was felt by the planning committee from the beginning, of the struggle for peace in our lives, in our meetings and Quaker organizations, and in our wider world.

Each day will include opportunities for worship, workshops, and interest groups as well as art, dance, poetry, singing and musicmaking, and outdoor activity. Programs will be offered for young adult Friends, teenage (high school) Friends, and even younger folk as well.

Introducing the theme of this year's gathering on Sunday is South African Friend Duduzile Mtshazo. Her experience of living in Soweto under apartheid is carried with integrity, depth, and humor. Thursday evening will feature performance by Pat Humphries and Sandy Opatow, whose music has inspired thousands on the path to peacemaking. Friday night, Pendle Hill Friend Tony Prete will help us experience the Biblical concept of "shalom" as a faith-based freedom from anxiety and a supplication to end the suffering of our fellow beings.

In addition to each evening's focal event will be offerings of music, dance, and film. Other weeknight activities will include worship sharing, examination of queries, and intergenerational sharing.

A wide variety of workshops are available for Friends of all ages and persuasions. Intergenerational offerings include weaving and spinning, therapeutic touch, a sweat lodge, "Finding the Divine in Nature" led by FCUN Chair Ruah Swanerfelt, and "Applied Simple Living" led by SAYMA Friend Susan Carlyle. Other workshops offer exploration of theology (and nontheology), Quaker history, individual leadings, Quaker testimonies, nature, photography, dance, and song. Friends will also find several different leaders and foci for couples enrichment.

Younger Friends may choose from three themes for their week: play and plays, science and nature, or the Peaceable Kingdom. As always the high school program will be vibrant and full of love and community. This year will also feature special attention on Young Adult Friends.

Registration forms are available online or at the Meeting-house. Deadline is fast approaching, after which an additional \$50 fee is charged.



## **Experience of the Meeting Retreat**

by Steve Livingston

The Meeting retreat was a superb experience for me, and released a lot of pent-up energy in the thirty-some Friends who attended. Jan Hoffman was absolutely marvelous as a facilitator and an inspirer, there was good reflection time, the food was decent even for a root and twig eater! Time spent in small groups or one-on-one with Friends was consistent in quality and depth, and as a gathered meeting was Spirit-filled and guided.

The Bon Clarcken retreat center is located most favorably for a lover of nature like myself. On the grounds are huge trees, quiet pathways and open lawns, and gardens of native and cultivated plants, many in brilliant bloom at this time of year. The views across Bon Clarcken Lake, the strange architecture, the deep shade under the oaks, were all a delight for the appreciative eye. Sleeping quarters were rather austere and not at all in keeping with the rustic but pleasant surroundings; when in my room I often looked out of my window wistfully at the cabin in a nearby grove of tulip poplars.

Our facilitator led us through several exercises to seek the gifts of the Spirit in our midst. She helped us identify our hunger for community as a driving force to guide our actions as we seek to identify our elders and exercise our ministry. She encouraged us to always set aside time for worship, to center down in the Spirit before and during our process of discernment and decision making. I found that in the setting of the retreat, surrounded by the community of Friends, and in the absence of the distractions of my typical hectic daily life, I became essentially enveloped in worship before the first day was over. My communications, my interactions with other Friends were on a new level, a deeper level than I have typically experienced in the past.

Our intergenerational activities were great fun, but also enabled us adults to bond with, and benefit from, the blossoming Spirit within each of our children. As an adult who often feels awkward making the acquaintance of a young person, I found myself more open, more willing to trust my Guide to make the connection for me. I especially enjoyed a game led by Friend George Gjelfriend, in which he invited participants to use a simple prop – a blue blanket – to create an image or an action. Our very creative children, and adults, came up with an incredible variety of results, from a

*continued next page*

## Meeting Retreat *(continued)*

rock to a family eating dinner!

There were a few hours of free time to create new bonds of friendship and nurture some I already had formed: mealtime of course, an afternoon given to a hike up nearby Glassy Mountain with four wonderful Quaker women, a walk around the pond with a Friend whom I have long admired, and a very frank conversation with a new Friend that lasted into the wee small hours of two mornings. There may only be one or two opportunities each year to plant such seeds for deeper personal relationships with my fellow seekers; this one gave me ample reason to rearrange my life to accommodate the next one.

We had a mock business meeting in which Jan Hoffman, acting as clerk, posed the questions: what do you want to keep and nurture in your Meeting, and what do you want to shed and leave behind? There was hardly enough time to address the first query, but the backlash is that a truth has emerged: we aren't doing "the right stuff". The wrong stuff, it seems, is embodied in our meticulous business meetings and our sense of urgency that "everything" must be done. The right stuff, it seems, is found in our sense of community and the centrality of the Spirit in all of our endeavors.

On the last evening of the retreat, the generations mingled for a craft activity that also enabled us to see ourselves in a new way. With construction paper, scissors, glue, glitter, colors, string, and pipe cleaners, we each created an image of a growing plant with roots – most of us made flowers, some trees, my clumsy origami most closely resembled an unglued envelope. But that was only half the exercise. Once the creative part was done, we were all invited to write on each person's creation a word or phrase that reflected our sense of that person's gifts. The next morning as we sat in a circle the impressions were read. I found for the most part that they resonated with me, I recognized these gifts and the Friends they were attributed to. I found this a deeply affirming exercise, and was especially touched – and challenged – by one observation that was written on mine.

I had a lot of "aha" experiences in the course of the weekend, but the most magnificent one came at the very end, as we shared worship on First Day morning. The children came in and sat down in the center of our circle, each with a baby food jar filled with glycerin and glitter that they had made earlier. Remarkably, they began to minister to the adults, in strong but simple voices, speaking of our most deeply held Quaker beliefs with joy and enthusiasm. I thought of the kind of energy that these young people are bringing into the world. I thought of the kind of energy their parents were



*walking to breakfast in the mist of dawn*

infusing and inspiring in them. I thought of the loving guidance they receive in our Meeting, and especially of the devotion expressed and practiced by the one woman who shared the floor space with them.

If there was a call to action that emerged from the retreat for our meeting as a whole, I think it was the need to nourish the gifts of our community, to take the time to prepare, to manifest the Spirit, to exercise our testimonies as a family of kindred souls. I sensed a clear and compelling metaphor from my own life: too often I find I am so caught up in the busy-ness of everyday life that I lose sight of the precious gift of each breathing moment to commune with the Divine and with my fellow creatures. So it is with our Meeting, I believe. As we plummet along our responsible way, attending to every mundane detail that seems thrust into our stewardship, we too often fail to remove the temporal husk of dictum and practice to savor the sweet meat of the Divine within.

### Meeting House Phone

(828) 258-0974

### Clerk of the Meeting

Evan Richardson

### Recording Clerk

Margaret Farmer

### Treasurer

Susan Williams

### Newsletter Committee

Steve Livingston (ed.),  
Margaret Farmer, George Gjelfriend,  
George Oldham, Bob Payne

The Asheville Friends Meeting *Newsletter* is published monthly. Friends are welcome to contribute letters, book reviews, announcements, articles, and quotations. Please submit copy via email to

[newsletter@ashevillefriends.org](mailto:newsletter@ashevillefriends.org)

Hard copy is acceptable. Deadline is third First Day.

The Asheville Friends Meeting is located at 227 Edgewood Road, between Merimon Avenue and the University of North Carolina campus. Friends meet for singing at 9:40 and for worship at 10:00 a. m. every First Day. First Day School begins at 10:00. Friends meet to conduct business on the second First Day at 11:30 a.m. On other First Days, the hour following meeting for worship is used for adult education or for fellowship.

# MINUTES

## OF THE MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS FIFTH MONTH, ELEVENTH DAY 2003

CLERK: EVAN RICHARDSON  
RECORDING CLERK: MARGARET FARMER

### Opening of Meeting

1. The Meeting opened at 11:57 a.m. with silent worship. Out of the silence clerk Evan Richardson read from Quaker Faith and Practice section 1.02: Advices and Queries, number 18.

*How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.*

2. There were twenty-eight in attendance, including: Christy Bischoff, Lindsay Bridges, Alice Brown, Karen Cernek, David Clements, Carrie Coward, Steve Coward, Agnita Dupree, Al Dupree, Barbara Esther, Margaret Farmer, George Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Joy Gossett, Carolyn Haag, Nicholas Kmecza, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Michele Mitchell, Jeannette Reid, Evan Richardson, Elizabeth Roebling, Ursula Scott, Lillie May Shadle, Eda Smith, Gerald Smith, Jennifer Walker, and Robin Wells.

### Introductions

Attending Asheville Friends Meeting for Business for the first time were Michele Mitchell, Carolyn Haag, Nicholas Kmecza, Steve Coward, and Carrie Coward.

### News of Ourselves

1. Lindsay Bridges shared that the adoption process

should be moving forward with the I.N.S. soon; please hold her family and the process in the Light.

2. Alice Brown's son and daughter-in-law Bill and Sarah Brown have moved to Hickory. Sarah will be working part-time at Arden Woods in Buncombe County.

3. Lillie May Shadle will be leaving Wednesday for summer in Wisconsin, to return to us in August.

4. Robin Wells reported that Susan Mitchell completed her nursing degree and was "pinned" yesterday.

5. Another graduation: Elizabeth Baltaro, granddaughter of Edith and Talmadge Neece, graduated from Guilford College yesterday.

### Nominating

1. Joy Gossett read the report of the Nominating Committee.

2. "In the past month, Nominating Committee contacts have been made with a number of Friends and are still in process with others regarding leadings for service on Asheville Friends Meeting committees.

3. "The following are offered to the larger Asheville Friends Meeting, some Friends requesting release from current committee work, and other Friends indicating willingness to begin such service.

4. "AFM Nominating Committee offers in nomination for membership on Care and Counsel Committee: Margaret Farmer. Other Friends are also examining their leadings to serve with this committee, for instance making plans to attend a Care and Counsel meeting in order to give that further examination. These will be presented to a subsequent Meeting for Business, after sufficient seasoning and consideration by these Friends.

5. "Nominating Committee offers the nomination of Friends Lillie Mae Shadle and Mark Cobb for membership on the Spiritual Enrichment Committee. Both have already been participating in the life and work of this committee.

6. "Virginia Redfield requests release from current service on this committee due to other present obligations. This Friend will notify us when she is again available for committee/other service.

7. "Virginia Redfield asks release from current service on Ministry and Worship Committee due to other present obligations. This Friend will notify us when she

### Contributions

Contributions to the Asheville Friends Meeting are welcomed. Gifts may be placed in the small wooden box marked "contributions" which is located in the entry way, or mailed to

Asheville Friends Meeting  
227 Edgewood Road  
Asheville, NC 28804

## BUSINESS MEETING

[*Nominating, Ministry and Worship*]

present obligations. This Friend will notify us when she is again available for committee/other service.

8. "Nominating Committee offers the nomination of Kitti Reynolds for membership on the Peace and Earth Committee. She has already been a regular participant in the life and work of this committee. Sue Stigleman requests release from the Peace and Earth Committee due to other current and ongoing obligations.

9. "Nominating Committee offers the nominations of Ellen Oldham and Alice Brown for membership on the Library Committee. Both Friends have already been regularly participating in this committee's work, making real contributions to the organization and functioning of Asheville Friends Meeting Library.

10. "Nominating Committee requests the assistance of Asheville Friends Meeting, and Ministry and Worship Committee for designation of additional Friends to the work of this [Nominating] Committee.

11. "The Nominating Committee Clerk is also in the process of producing an updated list of Friends serving on all AFM Committees and in individual positions. After completion of this Clerk's contacts this month to confirm certain Friends' current leadings, this updated listings will be offered to AFM for Friends' general reference and use."

**12. Friends approved naming a Naming Committee to ensure that we have four people to serve on the nominating committee.**

13. Karen Cernek, Elizabeth Roebing, Steve Livingston, and David Clements stepped forward to serve on the Naming Committee.

**14. The committee's report was accepted.**

### Ministry and Worship

1. George Gjelfriend presented the report, submitted by Christina McQuiston, clerk of the committee.

2. "The following report arises out of a sense that some of the core work of the Meeting is not grounded in Spirit. We see as 'evidence' of this concern the following:

- "Three of our key committees (Ministry and Worship, Care and Counsel and Nominating) are struggling to attend to their business due to a lack of manpower coupled with a sense of overwhelm with the amount of business that comes before them. These committees are not in a state of health, which ultimately affects the health of the whole meeting.

- "We hold as a meeting a sense of frustration and fatigue about our meeting for business as we continually push ourselves beyond the point of worship to attend to our long agendas.

- "We struggle to make newcomers welcome at the rise of meeting as we break into a time of business centered on the work of the meeting. Many individuals are too caught up in their business to slow down and focus on and benefit from our after meeting fellowship time.

- "We feel a hunger as a meeting to deepen our personal connections to each other and our bonds as a community.

3. "We wish to reaffirm to Meeting a core Quaker tenet that our actions be based on the leadings of the Spirit. We challenge the Meeting to listen deeply to the Spirit while considering the following recommendations.

4. "Ministry and Worship recommends to Meeting that we lay aside all committee work for three months or until we are moved by Spirit corporately or individually to resume such work. We further recommend that Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business be the proving ground for our corporate discernment regarding our priorities and needs as a community. We want to recognize that some committees and individuals in the meeting may be working from a place of vitality, centered in Spirit. We want to encourage those committees and individuals who feel a sincere leading to continue with their work. We would ask, however, that business from these committees be held from the floor of the Meeting for Business during this time of corporate discernment regarding our priorities and needs as a community.

5. "We recognize that there will be a need for some 'essential' functions to continue and propose that we attend to these functions by:

- "supporting the work of four individuals in the meeting – the Treasurer, the First Day School Coordinator, the Clerk and the Meetinghouse Use Coordinator;

- "identifying a small group of Friends who feel led to attend to any House and Grounds emergencies that may arise during this time, which may consist of the current House and Grounds committee;

- "asking the Clerk to serve as a contact person for individual concerns or requests and to draw on the support of individuals in the community to help attend to these concerns or requests (on occasion, there may be the need to bring some business that arises out of this process to the floor of meeting for business, such as a request for membership, scholar-

*Success is loving life and daring to live it.*

Maya Angelou

## BUSINESS MEETING

[Ministry and Worship]

business, such as a request for membership, scholarship, etc.);

- encouraging Friends to pay close attention to the needs of each other and the Meeting and to seek to attend to these needs as they feel led – in this way, the functions of greeting, hospitality, arranging the chairs on First Day, etc. can be met.

6. “It is important that Friends know that those persons attending the last Ministry and Worship committee meeting were led to this recommendation individually and affirmed their leading by corporate discernment.”

7. Our clerk clarified: *Laying down* is a permanent dissolution. *Laying aside* is a temporary suspension. She clarified that the decision for today would be: how to carry this further? We agreed to spend 30 minutes listening for Friends to speak to this out of the silence. Here follows the essence of what Friends shared:

- The proposal deeply speaks to me, to my hunger for us to explore our community bonds and to deepen our spiritual bonds together. We could explore the questions underneath this proposal. Appreciated Jan Hoffman’s queries: what do we need to nurture; what do we need to let go of. We could do this before meeting for worship or committees could sit with those queries.

- At first glance; I felt this is radical. On hearing it: there is a real sense of relief — I have had the passing wish my datebook would get lost. Repeatedly failing at simplicity: I think if my house burned down I could start again more simply, more authentically. This is an opportunity for taking a break, to get back at what is essential; and focusing on what is the moving power behind all we are doing. This could be a breakthrough, a means of re-centering for our meeting.

- Rufus Jones, in 1927, wrote that Quaker history has changed from one era to another. We are carrying a lot of baggage that doesn’t apply now. We’re living at a different speed. Our customs, what is acceptable in our society has changed. We have to discern how we can diminish our frenzied pace of life; make this a more quiet, less busy place. List of committees; who does what tasks. Where does a new person fit in? Who does the essential work at the Meetinghouse. We have no paid staff; the work of

Meetinghouse. We have no paid staff; the work of the Meeting depends on each of us. In working on the Meetinghouse, we get to know each other. The load on the clerk would be formidable for three months. We need to get into this century. Are you serving on a committee? If not, why? Is it because you are not aware of what they do?

- I feel concern about our clerk being overloaded; I propose an assistant clerk to share the load for this three month period, especially if there are Friends who might later like to serve as Clerk.

- Last Sunday was a wonderful worship: it was small, with half of the Meeting at the retreat. The small group work has been the best of my experiences in this Meeting. Why did the welcoming committee fall by the wayside, as did Friendly Eights? Our spiritual life would deepen if our personal connections were deepened.

- George Fox recommended when the meeting gets to be 40 in number, it should subdivide. Would it be helpful for the clerk to have an assistant clerk to help take care of the vast volume of business that a meeting this size generates?

- I had a sense of dismay when I first heard of this: I felt like the importance my committee’s work was not recognized. The salvation of this recommendation is that we can continue our work if so moved; the committee work deepens our connections to one another. I would like to feel that we can encourage those who feel grounded to continue their work.

- I have been attracted to Meeting for Worship because it has felt good not to be talked at and preached to about someone else’s agenda, and to be released from doing. Outside of Meeting it may be that as a community, we would like to live more closely to what Quakerism is about. Do you need committees to get things done at each step? Are there ways to make the community aware so they can act out of leadings? Part of my inaction is that I know there are committees to “take care of everything.”

- The clerk expressed that having an assistant clerk would be very helpful to the Meeting. It is not up to the clerk to take care of everything; one can connect individuals to others in the meeting.

- Support the desire for being grounded in spirit and interconnected. We should not dump things heedlessly. On the four points: we can feel overloaded, but we can get rabid about our need to take care of business, and to be spiritual. Third and fourth

*To attain knowledge, add things every day  
To attain wisdom, remove things every day.*

Lao Tsu

## BUSINESS MEETING

[Ministry and Worship]

care of business, and to be spiritual. Third and fourth are individual challenges. The hunger to deepen our connections can be nourished in committee work. We can look at the interrelationship between spirit and business. Some of the most spiritual gatherings can be the gatherings for business.

8. A Friend asked for a description of the retreat business meeting with Jan Hoffman: what do we need to nurture; what do we need to let go? The things we need to nurture we already have; we need to strengthen them. We never really got around to what we need to let go. It would be useful to hear the sense of the meeting for what we need to nurture (from the retreat last Saturday).

9. The clerk, as requested read the minutes from the retreat business meeting.

10. "Agenda: What in the meeting needs to be nurtured? What needs to be let go?"

11. "Some things that need to be nurtured can be categorized as the underneath part, such as a sense of celebration and play, compassion and love, friendship, and capacity to listen. Then there are nurturing the disciplines, such as the sense of silence and what happens in it. Or more specifically, nurturing the Spirit that moves us to vocal ministry, discerning what this Spirit is. Also there is the specific nurture of people who take on responsibility for the meeting. In all of these cases, we are nurturing what is already present in the meeting.

12. "The question turns to how to nurture these things in their nascent form? Rather than address these needs institutionally with more committees or more work for committees, we look to re-focus the attention and awareness of the meeting and address the underlying pain and hurts in the meeting.

13. "One friend asks should we continue to consider this question of pain and hurt in the meeting at this point? Another friend questions if Care and Counsel should be asked to explore this further? Clarification was offered that there are both specific hurts that Care and Counsel could explore and general hurts related to how we relate to each other that could be explored corporately.

14. "There is a sense of the question of what needs to be let go, including 'busyness', that may need to be addressed in harmony with the things that need to be nurtured. We are sorry that we do not have time address this question today.

15. "We do affirm the potential and actual strengths of the meeting. We raise the question of the specific and

of the meeting. We raise the question of the specific and unspecific hurt and anger that may be limiting the capacity of individuals to be open to the meeting and the Spirit. There is no agreement on how best to address this question."

[continuation of sharing]

- I am moved, excited, and a little afraid. It's not a dispersal; just a call to focus on the spirit. Attending to too much business keeps me from the hard work of growing in the spirit. Searching for the spirit is what will help us build that deeper community. We can lay aside our nuts and bolts, we can work on getting and staying centered. I'd like to see this happen in both committees and in Meeting for Business.

16. The following comments were responses to the question of how we move forward on this.

- Could we send a copy of this to everyone, along with a copy of the sharing by email and post this week?

- We deliberate too much; most of the people concerned with the life of the Meeting are here. What would be really wonderful is if we just went ahead and did this, which clearly has come as a leading. Whatever work there is to be done we trust will get done. We should go ahead and take the summer to get to know each other better.

- Many people were sorry that they could not be here and wanted to be part of the process. We could get the word out and hold a called meeting for business next week, May 18.

- Business meeting is a time for corporate reporting and corporate business. Business meeting becomes the discernment process of the whole meeting. If it's on the table I'm available for however long it takes. If we're trying to look past our identities, we're all peers of each other, it's not a hierarchical process.

- I have concerns about our process today. Our tradition would lead us to allow those who are gathered in the Spirit to proceed with the business before us if there is a clear sense of the meeting. If we must ignore that sense out of concern that some might feel left out of the process, we are not allowing those not present to trust the clarity we have found. I had a feeling there was a clear sense of the meeting about this report. Friends were very clear and enthusiastically supportive of the sense of this report.

- Was this report common knowledge? We can wait one more week. Several Friends spoke to this.

- There are two Quaker principles operating:

*Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance.*

Samuel Johnson

## BUSINESS MEETING

[Finance, Fourth Month Minutes, Correspondence]

sense of meeting go forward; waiting for a second reading.

- We approve the sense of this report; this report contains a large number of details; could be in our best interest to send this back to Ministry and Worship and/or Care and Counsel to season this report.
- Committees haven't had a chance to react to this; a Friend would like the committees to look at this also.

**17. It is the sense of our meeting we welcome with enthusiasm the recommendation from Ministry and Worship. We want to honor the work of the spirit present among us, inviting our entire community to participate. We look forward to the benefit of additional seasoning at a called meeting for business on May 18. We encourage individual committees to reflect on this proposal at their next committee meetings. Friends approved. The report of Ministry and Worship was accepted.**

### Finance

1. David Clements presented the report.
2. "The Finance Committee is considering asking for the help of an accountant or other such specialist in reviewing our accounting methods. We feel that this is a reasonable substitute for a formal audit, and will help the Treasurer with her work. We ask for \$200 to be used if and when we find it necessary.
3. "So far we have not found a member able or led to serve on the Concerns Support Fund Committee. We encourage the Meeting not to let the lack of a member from the Finance Committee hold up the progress of the Committee's work.
4. "We have requested that the Nominating Committee try to find two more members to help with the work of the Finance Committee.
5. **Friends approve authorizing \$200 (from the General Fund, Miscellaneous Line) to have an accountant audit. The report was accepted.**

### Review of Minutes from 4th Month 2003

1. Since Lillie May Shadle was not present at the meeting, she should not be listed as attending.
2. In Religious Education report [paragraph 4, 2nd bullet], Family Fun Day was May 10 rather than May 18.
3. In FGC Religious Education Institute [RE report, paragraph 4, 7th bullet], Robin Wells is co-facilitator rather than leader of *Illuminating our Divine Connections* rather than *...the Inner Teacher*.
4. **The minutes were approved with these cor-**

*Connections* rather than *...the Inner Teacher*.

**4. The minutes were approved with these corrections.**

### Correspondence

1. The clerk wrote three letters on behalf of the meeting; one to Frosty Sinclair, one to Edith and Talmadge Neece, and one to Rivka Maher. Copies of these letters will be made available to anyone who is interested.

2. The meeting received a request from the Clarence and Lilly Pickett Fund for Quaker Leadership regarding an application for a grant made by Lauren Mitchell. The clerk sent a letter confirming Lauren's participation in the meeting and recommending her for a grant. The clerk read the letter.

3. The Meeting received a mailing from Nancy Milo of the Committee for an Active Non-Violent Response to Terrorism, Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting, sharing their work in support of legislation opposing the policy of preemptive war. The letter was passed to Peace and Earth for seasoning, and read to the Meeting so that Friends might be aware of how other Quakers are responding to the challenges that face us in these current times.

4. The meeting received a letter from Friends United Meeting with news of the Ramallah Friends School. The letter was circulated and posted.

5. The meeting received a letter dated 3/18/2003 from AFSC thanking us for a recent contribution of \$86.00 to defray cost of Iraq health kits.

6. The Meeting received from SAYMA an annual census worksheet to help collect information that will serve to allow SAYMA to reflect on itself and prepare SAYMA's annual census report to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). For those who are not familiar, FWCC's role is to enable 340,000 Friends and their yearly meetings in more than 70 countries to work more cooperatively.

7. We have received a card from Dudley Wilson and Alice Coblenz announcing the graduation of Rose Wilson from Guilford College. We also received a letter from FWCC thanking us for our support and sharing information

### A Full Hour of Worship

All of us benefit from having a full hour to share in worship each First Day, and to that end we are all encouraged to arrive at Meeting before 10 a. m. so we may all get seated and situated and be ready to center down as meeting commences.

Ministry and Worship would also like to encourage Friends who arrive earlier to accommodate those less punctual by first filling the seats in the center of rows, so later arrivals may more easily be seated nearer the aisles.

## BUSINESS MEETING

[*Individual Concerns, State of Society Report*]

about some of the organization's recent work. These letters were circulated.

### Individual Concerns

1. Alice Brown has offered to purchase books or gift certificate to Pendle Hill or FGC Bookstore on behalf of graduating high school and college students.

2. The Clerk expressed joy at the centeredness everyone held during meeting today. She acknowledged the eldering apparent as we were holding Meeting in the Light, helping us remain clear.

### Second Reading of State of Society Report

1. The first draft of the report was revised by Ministry and Worship. The second draft was distributed and read by the clerk.

2. "State of Society Report, Asheville Friends Meeting, 2003:

3. "In the past year our meeting has paid specific attention to its growth as a spiritual community. We have recognized that we are in a time of transition as many of our former leaders age. The Meeting is now in the hands of the 'younger generation'. We recognize as well that the formation of the Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting has had a great impact on our community as we lost some of our most experienced elders to the new meeting. We celebrate the growth and vitality of our sister meeting and our own regeneration.

4. "As we attend to the life of our meeting we have found it essential to commit ourselves to building firm connections with our children and young people. To this end we have introduced periodic intergenerational worship for which we suspend our usual First Day School activities and meet for worship as a community. Our First Day School focus has been on Quaker Testimonies. We continued our Summer Youth Internship program, bringing youth and adult Friends together in community service. We have also grown in our support of our college-aged Friends. This year the meeting celebrates and supports the enrollment of six Friends in Quaker colleges and one Friend at Earlham School of Religion. We have begun the practice of writing to our college-aged Friends to offer our support in their continued educational, spiritual and personal development.

5. "As we grow we find we are continually challenged with how to welcome newcomers and sustain a sense of community. Our newsletter continues to flourish, we have established a meeting Internet list serve and web site, [www.ashevillefriends.org](http://www.ashevillefriends.org). We take time for fellowship after our Meetings for Worship, on sandwich Sundays, during our annual campout and picnic, youth celebration, and holiday party.

6. "With attention to the spiritual life of the Meeting, our Spiritual Enrichment Committee helped to organize dinner gatherings earlier in the fall. These were centered on specific themes, such as a book discussion or for friends interested in membership in the Religious Society of Friends. We have seen the reinitiation of a mid-week meeting for worship with a specific focus on prayers for world peace, followed by a 'stone soup' meal. We have had an active Spiritual Formation Group, after the model of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting program, and several Spiritual Friendships at work.

7. "We continue to nurture the spiritual development of attenders and members through the offering of retreats and forums. This year we have been blessed with several opportunities to gather with Friends from Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting to explore topics related to our continued development and formation as Quakers. These events included a retreat led by Michael Birkel of Earlham College on the work and life of John Woolman, 'Quaker Basics' led by Beth and Mel Keiser and Elizabeth Kirk, and 'Experiment with Light' led by Rex Ambler. We have an ongoing discussion and worship sharing group focused on unraveling racism. We held a residential retreat in May at Bonclarken in Flat Rock, NC. Jan Hoffman of New England Yearly Meeting led us in the theme "Encouraging faithfulness: listening to the Spirit and each other". We look forward to the changes that will come out of this time together. We seek to grow in our faithfulness to the Spirit by developing guidelines for the support of Friends Traveling in the Ministry, including financial support. We currently have three Friends working under a traveling minute from the Meeting.

8. "Our concern for the war in Iraq has brought our community closer together in support of peace. The work of the Spirit in leading Friends among us brought us the opportunity to discern corporately a statement on the war with Iraq. Our process was deeply enriching, and helped us to reaffirm our commitment as individuals and a corporate body to the Peace Testimony. Many of our Friends have been working for peace locally, nationally,

*When one door of happiness closes, another opens;  
but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see  
the one which has been opened for us.*

- Helen Keller



## BUSINESS MEETING

[*State of Society Report*]

and globally. As a meeting we have sent health kits to Iraq through AFSC and seen the development of the Peace Resource Service to focus on issues related to youth and militarism in the wider Asheville area.

9. “As we look to the year ahead there is a sense of going “back to Quaker basics” for guidance. We recognize a need to continually nurture our meeting for worship and vocal ministry as well as our meeting for worship with attention to business. We are aware of a need to look at the role of eldering in our community as we seek to grow in our ability to love each other, including how we handle conflict as a meeting community. We seek to make explicit our guidelines and procedures for membership and marriage, including a deep consideration of the meaning of membership in Asheville Friends meeting and of same gender marriage and union.

10. “We have witnessed a wealth of physical changes and improvements to our meetinghouse this year, including the refinishing of the hardwood floor in our meeting room and new paint and carpet upstairs in our First Day School rooms. A complete overhaul of the upstairs bathroom is underway. Our House and Grounds Committee, with the help of so many others, has created for us an outward manifestation of the revitalization that we feel corporately. Work on expanding the meetinghouse to include a new worship space was quiet this year. It is unclear when we will be led to move forward on this idea.

11. “We welcome this year six new members to our meeting community. Two Friends became members of Asheville Friends Meeting and four Friends’ memberships were transferred to Asheville Friends Meeting. One Friend became a sojourning member of Green Street Meeting, in Philadelphia. We transferred the memberships of two Friends to Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting. We record no deaths, no marriages, and no births in our community during this past year.”

12. **The report was approved with one substantial revision: “Our concern for the war in Iraq has brought our community closer together in support of peace” and a number of copy edits. Friends expressed deep appreciation to Christina McQuiston for her editing of this report and for her strong and faithful leadership on Ministry and Worship.**

### Closing of Meeting

The Meeting closed at 1:58 p.m. after a period of unprogrammed worship.



**If** you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75 percent of the people of this world.

**If** you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than one million who will not survive this week.

**If** you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of five hundred million people in the world.

**If** you can attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than three billion people in the world.

**If** you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top eight percent of the world's

## MINUTES

### OF THE CALLED MEETING FOR BUSINESS FIFTH MONTH, EIGHTEENTH DAY 2003

CLERK: EVAN RICHARDSON

RECORDING CLERK: MARGARET FARMER

#### Opening of Meeting

1. The meeting opened at 11:55 am with a period of silent worship.

2. There were twenty-nine Friends in attendance, including: Linda Alfredson, Christy Bischoff, Lindsay Bridges, Alice Brown, David Clements, Agnita Dupree, Al Dupree, Paul Endry, Barbara Esther, Margaret Farmer, George Gjelfriend, Joy Gossett, Martha Huggins, Nancy Kuydendall, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Christina McQuiston, Michele Mitchell, Philip Neal, Evan Richardson, Elizabeth Roebing, Ursula Scott, Ira Shader, Tahani Sticpewich, Jennifer Walker, Betsey-Rose Weiss, Robin Wells, Susan Williams, and John Wykle.

#### Introductions

Friends introducing themselves for the first time in Meeting for Business include Betsey-Rose Weiss, Tahani Sticpewich, Linda Alfredson, Michele Mitchell, and John Wykle.

#### Sixth Month Business Meeting

1. **Friends approved changing the date for June Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business to the 16th day, (3rd Sunday).**

2. This will enable Friends to attend both SAYMA and our next Meeting for Business.

#### Agenda

1. The clerk proposed a process for proceeding today, which meeting agreed to, consisting of a period of worship sharing followed by a brainstorming session. Queries for the worship sharing would be: What needs to be nurtured in our meeting? What needs to be let go? What are we trying to make space for? What are we seek-

ing from the time we share? What comes alive for you out of the Ministry and Worship proposal? What blocks us? What nurtures us? What is our vision?

#### Worship Sharing

Out of the silence, Friends spoke to the queries:

1. Ministry and Worship's statement is a paradoxical process (parallel teaching); it challenges us to consider what hasn't been in the recipe. Meeting for Worship is the most common denominator; we defend it, hoping it will work for just one hour. Meeting for Worship has been defended from programmatic things (singing). None of us want a prepared message that is not in some sense newly discovered. This Ministry and Worship proposal is for us to have new discoveries, not so busy coming to Meeting for Worship overly prepared, overly busy – make space for things to happen, expect good things to happen, both in Meeting for Worship and in the community we say we are in, and in the rest of our relationships with one another.

2. During family concern over a fundamentalist relative, I visited his loving, nurturing community. A question about my meeting arose: "Are they in your life?" We have had a lot of new people; now our newcomers don't get as much attention as they used to. I've been blessed with a radical trust: how Quaker process operates. I have great confidence in the process; I want to share this with everyone beyond Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, and in the best of committee work done in the spirit. Many have not had this Quaker experience, e.g. when three Friends listen deeply during the clearness process, and without judgment reflect on what they hear, what the next step is. My recommendation is that we get into each others' lives.

3. There are two sides to every question: here, the individual and the meeting. Here the concern seems to be with individuals. It depends on each of us as individuals as to how we develop and deepen in our lives. How do we as individuals do this? It's up to you; it's yours to find. It isn't easy. As each of us deepens, it enlarges the community. Is it important for us to come every Sunday, is it important for me to find a way to serve. Fox said: it is a matter of personal experience. Maybe we have some straightening out to do in our own lives.

4. I think by far the most important thing is the sense of belonging to a tribe, a group in which I am an owner. I am so important that I have a voice, that I have a place. It is difficult for people who come into the community to feel this. It seems to be an ancient human need to be able to do our best when we have a community. Our way of life encourages fragmentation into individuals, couples, family units. I hope everything that we do nurtures this sense of community. Sometimes we have not taken enough time to build what we need to be able to incorporate everyone's needs when we tackle more controversial issues. We are very special because we have no creed, there are many beliefs here.

## CALLED MEETING FOR BUSINESS

issues. We are very special because we have no creed, there are many beliefs here.

5. One way we move toward belonging is to participate in small groups in which you can build relationships and have that sharing (Friendly Eight's, small groups, or committee work). In committee work we share our specialty in the life of the meeting – in this way we get to know one another. If you are on the right committee, it is not so burdensome, and draws you closer, in to some of the real feelings that we all share.

6. Many Friends have spoken my mind, but there is a sense of trying to do too much. We bring this from the world out there. I suggest we lay things down. I want Friends Meeting to be a part of the world, but also a quietness in the world. It's a matter of priorities – one Friend said “maybe we should sell the Meetinghouse, if it's too much to take care of.” We need to quiet things down a little, the adults, the children.

7. Truly our real nurturing is directly to the divine; to share our needs, to pray for the divine comforter to be with others; there is so often alleviation of pain. We cannot get real nurturing without the Spirit. Sometimes we have to say we need it, and we need to share it. It is part of our humanity and part of what connects us is that connection to that divine caregiving.

8. Space for: fellowship, interconnectedness, ownership, custodianship . . . Blocks: guilt, preoccupation, shortness of available time, insecurity with others in meeting – sense of alienation . . . Nurture: contacts, talking with each other, silent meeting . . . Vision: recognizing needs of fellow members, oneness of spirit, strong structure of meeting . . . If we are unhappy, we do not feel united with others.

9. I carpooled a first time attender to meeting; during worship, I had to go upstairs. When I came down after First Day School, he was standing in the corner of the porch alone. Few people had spoken to him. “Everyone is too busy: I guess all churches are like this.” He's not been back since.

10. I'd like to thank Ministry and Worship for this suggestion that we take a summer break. The real issue is about what kind of community we are: basically we are not making space for each other. How can we make space for each other no matter what we are doing? We are a loving community is a statement of hope. We are not there.

community is a statement of hope. We are not there. We need more ways to hold each other to this.

11. For me, we are trying to make space for the sake of space itself: that is what allows the divine to come in. Because my life is so frenetic outside of Meeting, that if there is not space, I have to stay away in order to find that space.

12. We need to remind each other of these things, for our agenda not to drive us, but to allow spirit to come through.

13. I question use of term Quaker process: I think it's divine process. It is the spirit that should be leading us, not a specific process.

14. Someone shared that Quakers are an elitist religion; not everyone may be willing, able to do the work involved in being a Quaker. While we say we wish to make time and space for each other, it will take a leap of faith and trust in each of us to let down the barriers built in our culture to allow someone to become an instrument of God in our lives. What we are about is making a spiritual community not a church. While we might be faulted in lacking politeness, in manners in having the time. When in deep spiritual crisis, there has been nothing more nurturing in the presence of Friends (kindness, attention, love).

15. I urge myself and anyone else: hold on to a proper humility and respect for others' diversity. Our idea of care may not match the other person's ideas. I've heard three statements today about the search of the divine in the work we do as well as searching outside.

### Sense of the Meeting

1. The clerk offered the sense of the meeting.
2. **We seek to make space in our lives as a community to provide a sense of rest from the busy-ness of our lives and the outer world in order that we have an openness for the divine. We seek the comfort that comes from that of God in each of us, that nurtures us as we both give and receive. We seek to make space for each other. We seek to grow into being a beloved community. We seek to bring to all aspects of our meeting life that which nurtures us in meeting for worship – the silence, the meaning beyond language, the love connections. We seek to bring newcomers more deeply into the community, to deepen our sense of connection with each other, to empower each of us with acceptance and love. We seek to nurture our individual and community experience and understanding of divine process. We seek to hold the space for individual discernment**

*We see ourselves as broken, and then set out  
on a long and frustrating journey to fill our emptiness.  
But it is not fixing that we require; it is awakening.*

Alan Cohen

## CALLED MEETING FOR BUSINESS

**We seek to hold the space for individual discernment and development of a sense of oneness with spirit, and trust that this will bring our community closer together. We recognize that it will take a leap of faith and trust to let down our barriers to each other to make a space in our lives, in our hearts, and in our spirits for each other. We hold each other and the Meeting in the Light.**

2. **This final sense of the meeting was approved.**

3. **Do we need to move into a place of concrete decision on how to bring these out. Meeting approved this course.**

4. The clerk asked us to offer ideas, without comment on ideas; each is tender growth that does not need to be stomped on. She shared information from two other Monthly Meetings who have worked these same concerns. (See article for summary of this information.)

### Brainstorming

1. The biggest drain of energy comes from people with great ideas who don't volunteer to carry through; we refer everything to Ministry and Worship. I suggest we volunteer to clerk our own good ideas.

2. If the community agrees to maintain our committee structure, can our nominating process change a little: the requests be tested in a corporate situation. I say yes without giving it due process. The person's leading to serve could be part of the corporate process.

3. The release of laying it all down feels like it's getting blocked up here; we were talking earlier today about how it works for each individual. I want a process for getting to know each other and ourselves so that the gifts that we bring become who we are. Trust in the divine that we will have the meeting we were meant to have. We need to discern who we are and what gifts we bring.

4. I have a vision of Meeting for Business starting at 10 a.m., with an hour of corporate worship and reflection followed by fellowship and then resume meeting for business.

5. Two things were hard for me to reconcile for a long time: an army marches on its stomach: does the army eat while it's marching or eat while it's in battle? Two things we've done: assumed that food is always necessary for human discourse – must be supported by snacks. If there is nothing nourishing in meeting face-to-face, then we are in trouble; sometimes food is a barrier to discourse. The second thing is that we let forum go into automatic pilot mode. If we are moving to something intense; too much is stuffed into too little time. We need to find ways to support the offerings of our individuals so that it really meets the needs we are talking about. We need to help

meets the needs we are talking about. We need to help the speakers integrate their work into this whole process.

6. Many churches have times for adults to come together to explore spiritual lives and to worship share; this supports the life of Meeting for Worship. We need more of this in addition to committee and forum times. I'd like to see this happening purposefully to explore our spiritual lives outside of our Meeting for Worship.

7. I need food if we're going to be here. Can there be a commitment to staying here longer than an hour and a half to do this work? Can we have a meal?

8. Meetinghouse and grounds are being maintained in a laid-back manner. We are unique in our ability to be less meticulous about this than other churches. It speaks to our general condition. We should look at this and consider what we are saying about ourselves in this when we appear a bit scruffy. Should we consider hiring someone to do this work?

9. Would recommend the nominating process from the Strawberry Creek Meeting: the "gifts and leadings" approach, including clearness process offered by another Friend earlier, and testing the waters in corporate discernment. During a forum time, we had sat around and talked with each other about our lives, sharing personal information. The sharing has made all the difference in our community life.

10. Love our neighbors as ourselves. Address the mourning over destruction of the earth. Pray and understand spiritual blueprints for community. Real community is spiritual; maybe there is such a need for nurturing, to avoid deception.

11. As to the appearance of the yard; casualness is a tendency among Friends. Neatness, attention to detail makes a big difference in the feel of the place. Meeting workdays could be part of our worship outside. I suggest minimal snacks; less time eating, and simple meals. Put the responsibility on one person each week to bring a minimal snack for the community.

12. In Peace and Earth, we came up with ideas for how to nurture the meeting. Many Friends are doing things outside the meeting that are consistent with Quaker values. We will be making a poster for getting to know each other better by the works we do. Could committee meetings and meeting for business be held before meeting so those of us with children could be finished on Sunday afternoon?

### Closing of Meeting

1. The clerk pointed out the depth of our worship experience today, for us to honor the work we have done together.

2. **Friends approved continuing this process at June Meeting for Business.**

3. The meeting closed at 2:00 p.m. after a period of unprogrammed worship.

## The Experience of Lightening and Deepening

by Evan Richardson

I recently was able to talk to Friends at Beacon Hill (Boston) Monthly Meeting and Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting and hear about how both of these meetings have addressed concerns about “lightening” the sense of work in the meeting and “deepening” the sense of community. What follows is a synopsis of what I heard.

Beacon Hill declared a “Jubilee Year” six or seven years ago. It came out of a felt need to “lighten” the sense of the work in the meeting. They did three simple things as a meeting.

1. Committees were given “permission” to send back items referred to them by meeting if they felt that there was not a leading on the part of the committee to attend to the item. In this case, the meeting would have to discern if the item continued to hold import for the community and if so, how to attend to the item.

2. Individuals were given “permission” to declare a Jubilee Year, taking a year off from service to the meeting to explore their spirituality or other leadings.

3. The name of their nominating committee was changed to “Gifts and Leadings”, and they adopted a process developed by Strawberry Creek Meeting which rises out of corporate worship/discernment and focuses first on the gifts needed and then the names of Friends who offer these gifts.

The reported result of these actions was that there was a sense of “lightening” around the work of the meeting and meeting for business. This sense seems to have continued to the present time.

Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting declared a “Sabbath Year” two years ago. It came out of a felt need to “deepen” the sense of community in the meeting. They put a year of preparation into their Sabbath Year program, and in the end, they feel, it would have been more aptly called “Year of Renewal”. They have written an article about their experience that will appear in *Friends Journal*. I have a copy of the draft article for anyone who is interested. They focused their year in three ways.

1. They divided the year into quarters and assigned themes to each quarter: right relationship to God, exploring our Quaker roots, living Quakerism today, and what have we learned? Each quarter they offered a residential retreat in relationship to the theme. They spent the first part of meeting for business in corporate discernment about how the theme was at work in the life of the meeting. They organized small discussion and worship groups that met one or more times in the year. They published related articles in their newsletter and developed packets of relevant reading material and quotes for each family or individual.

2. They developed a process called the “consent agenda”, for making meeting for business more efficient. A steering committee made up of the clerks of meeting,

ministry and worship, care and counsel and finance would meet or discuss via email each month which items for the meeting for business could be included on this agenda. The criteria for inclusion were that the items were straightforward and there was some degree of history or clear guidelines already established by the meeting. A copy of the items, with supporting information including a contact name and number, was sent out to everyone in the meeting two weeks prior to meeting for business. Friends with questions were encouraged to address them to the contact person(s). All items for which there were no remaining unresolved questions were brought forth together at meeting for business as the “consent agenda”.

3. They encouraged each committee to reflect on how they would live out the year under the “Sabbath” theme, by considering what of their work could be laid aside for the year and what of their work would need to continue. For the work that would need to continue, they encouraged the committees to consider how they might go about this work differently. The result was that nearly every committee incorporated more worship into their meetings. There are plenty examples of how committees responded to the theme and queries. For instance, the Finance Committee prepared a two-year budget. First Day School continued, of course, but the curriculum followed the quarterly themes as much as possible. Care and Counsel (or their equivalent) decided that they were not led to continue processing requests for membership and clearness. Feeling that these were important aspect of meeting life and would need to be continued, the meeting relieved Care and Counsel of this responsibility and created a committee to process these requests, calling on a list of Friends from the community who were more than happy to serve on clearness committees. They found that this worked so well that they have continued this process in the year after their Sabbath year.

There were many effects of the Sabbath Year. There was a general sense among many individuals of having been glad that they did it. There was over 75% participation in some aspect of the year. There was a reported deepening of the sense of community and of the meeting for worship. Newcomers were brought more easily into the life of the meeting. Friends who had been on the perimeter of the meeting were brought back into the life of the meeting. No one was lost to the meeting, although some Friends who were uncomfortable with the process did stay on sidelines for this year.

There is one additional monthly meeting that declared a Jubilee Year, Fifty-Seventh Street Meeting in Chicago. I have not been successful at contacting this meeting but will keep trying. Interestingly enough, New York Yearly Meeting, several years ago, declared a Jubilee Year for the Yearly Meeting and held their annual gathering without any business.

## Asheville Friends Meeting

**Weekly Meeting for Worship:** First Day singing at 9:40, regular worship at 10 a.m. 227 Edgewood Road, Asheville (258-0974).

**Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business** takes place on 6/15, beginning around noon. As agreed upon in our fifth month meeting, we will continue to seek clearness on the queries "what do we keep, what do we leave behind?"

**Sandwich Sunday:** Loaves, fishes, and fellowship after Meeting for Worship on fourth First Day (6/22). Your presence is encouraged, there's always plenty of food!

**Midweek Peace Prayer Meeting:** each Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. 30 minutes of silent meeting for the purpose of praying for peace, followed by 30 minutes of worship sharing, then a stone soup meal.

## Other Nearby Meetings

**Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 9:30 a.m., Black Mountain Arts Center.

**Boone Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 10 a.m., at the home of John and Judy Geary, 175 Edgewood Drive.

**Brevard Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 11 a.m. at the Sharing House, corner of Oakdale and Duckworth.

**Celo Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 10:45 a.m., 445 Hannah Branch Road.

**Clemson Worship Group:** each First Day at 9 a.m., Clemson Unitarian Church.

Asheville Friends Meeting  
227 Edgewood Road  
Asheville, NC 28804

*address correction requested*

## Mark Your Calendar

**Friends General Conference** "Coming to Peace" is the theme of this year's Gathering at the University of Pittsburgh in Johnstown, PA, 6/28-7/5. See front page for details..

*Not to be deluded by dreams.  
To know that great civilizations  
have broken down into violence,  
and their tyrants come, many times before.  
When open violence appears, to avoid it with  
honor  
or choose the least ugly faction;  
these evils are essential.  
To keep one's own integrity, be merciful and un-  
corrupted  
and not wish for evil; and not be duped  
By dreams of universal justice or happiness.  
These dreams will not be fulfilled.  
To know this, and know that however ugly the  
parts appear  
the whole remains beautiful.  
A severed hand  
Is an ugly thing  
and man dissevered from the earth and stars  
and his history... for contemplation or in fact...  
Often appears atrociously ugly. Integrity is whole-  
ness,  
the greatest beauty is  
Organic wholeness, the wholeness of life and  
things,  
the divine beauty  
of the universe.*

*Love that, not man  
Apart from that,  
or else you will share man's pitiful confusions,*