

Minutes
eleventh month 2005
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

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Worship

In Attendance:

Sam Rizzo, Eda Smith, Alice Brown, Linda Alfredson, Susan Mitchell, Katherine Kowal, Gerry Smith, Evan Richardson, George Gjelfriend, Lindsay Bridges, David Clements, Martha Huggins, Kitti Renyolds, Margaret Normile, Phil Neal, Karen Cernek, Adrienne Weir, Barbara Esther, Jim Cavener, Kristi Gjelfriend, Alan Robinson

Clerk-Steve Livingston

Recording Clerk-Lynnora Bierce

Opening reading:

Never so act, in any manner, in any inclination, that there may ever be an experience of regret within self. Let the moves and the discourteousness, the unkindness, all come from the other. Better to be abased . . . and have the peace within!

. . . act ever in the way you would like to be acted toward. No matter what others say or even do, do as you would be done by; and then the peace that has been promised is indeed your own.

—Edgar Cayce

Introductions

Review of Agenda—Approved

A friend asked that we be open to ending meeting when spirit has waned.

Ministry and Counsel report

Minutes from 10/18/05 Ministry and Counsel Meeting

We convened at 5 p.m. with Alice Brown, George and Kristi Gjelfriend, Martha Huggins and Steve Livingston present.

After a period of worship we reviewed the tenth month meeting for business. Steve said that he felt supported by the meeting and reported that the meeting proceeded in good order.

We reviewed the Board of Trustees meeting held during business meeting 10th month. Ministry and Counsel recommends that the Board of trustees meet at a time other than business meeting and make a report at the business meeting.

The ad hoc committee on restructuring our First Day time structure will distribute the minutes from the three threshing sessions to the meeting and a new date for the called meeting will be scheduled.

Laura Maynard was joyfully accepted as a member of Asheville Friends Meeting and we look forward to celebrating with her at a date and time to be announced.

A worship sharing around the Earth Stewardship section as a proposed addition to the SAYMA Guide to our Faith and Practice will be held on October 30th at the rise of meeting. The proposed section will be sent via email for review prior to the worship sharing.

We gratefully thank Rusty Maynard, Evan Richardson and Margaret Farmer for their years of service and dedication as they step down from the committee. We are also grateful to Alice Brown for being willing to continue to serve until new members join the committee. We appreciate the nominating committee's work in finding members willing to serve.

The meeting ended at 8pm following a period of silence. We next meet on November 15th at the meetinghouse at 5pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Huggins

A Friend informed us that we have a Board of Directors and not A Board of Trustees... correction to be made.

We gratefully thank Rusty Maynard, Evan Richardson and Margaret Farmer for their years of service and dedication as they step down from the committee. We are also grateful to Alice Brown for being willing to continue to serve until new members join the committee. We appreciate the nominating committee's work in finding members willing to serve.—Approved

Review of Pastoral Care Committee

Susan Mitchell

Abridged report of Pastoral Care Committee for Presentation to Monthly Meeting.

Ministry and Counsel was given a report on 9-4-05 about the Pastoral Care Committee's progress. Members of Pastoral Care found the committee's format has proven to be a good one for organizing communication among Friends regarding needs in our faith community. It has served as a central communication point to help coordinate care that has not been already addressed by members of the meeting community. The committee is grateful for the work of the community in attending to each other and remains open to friends who identify needs but feel that they cannot meet these needs themselves.

The committee has organized lists of friends who might benefit from ongoing contact and has endeavored to be in touch with these friends. These lists will remain fluid as long-term needs arise and ebb. Due to the confidential nature of pastoral care, names are brought to ministry and counsel only when the Pastoral Care committee identifies a need that cannot be met without guidance and counsel.

In addition to its work with individuals, the committee has looked at and recommended specific updates to the meeting's welcoming brochure. It recommends that Ministry and counsel committee retain responsibility for: 1) organizing/conducting memorial services, and (2) written communication with absent and distant Friends as identified during the periodic review of our membership roster. Pastoral Care members are willing to assist with some aspects of these tasks, especially care and nurture of surviving family in the event of death; however, the committee was united in recommending that Ministry and Counsel retain primary responsibility for memorials and roster reviews.

The committee was united in the view that more communication with the meeting as a whole is needed regarding the work of the Pastoral Care committee. The notice on the e-mail announcement list brought no response from Friends and it was felt appropriate to make an announcement at the end of worship for a few weeks, so that others might know the best way to contact Pastoral Care with concerns.

Submitted by Susan Mitchell, Clerk

Susan also mentioned that the committee will meet again in the Spring of 2006.

The original goal was to have 12 members of the committee, but they have 5, which has been working for them so far, and they are comfortable with the committee as it stands. However if the need arises for them to expand into home care, more members will be needed.

Report was accepted.

Finance Committee report

Asheville Friends Meeting Finance Committee report November 2005

- 1) George Gjelfriend has been attending the Finance Committee Meetings regularly, and we commend him to the Nominating Committee to consider as a regular member of the Committee.
- 2) Margaret Normile has asked for reimbursement for two cakes that she purchased for meeting celebrations. The first was for the party for Agnita Dupree, which Meeting had asked her to organize without specifying a budget. The second was for a celebration for Alice Brown. We note that this expenditure falls outside the regular responsibilities of any committee. We therefore are asking Meeting to authorize reimbursing Margaret from the miscellaneous budget line for the

- amount she spent, approximately \$65.
- 3) The Finance Committee foresees a possible shortfall in contributions for 2005. We remind Friends that there are reserves from prior years that could be used to make up a shortfall, although the Finance Committee would prefer not to have to deplete those reserves. To help keep the meeting informed and to plan for an orderly financial year:
 - a) We have asked Satchel Loftis, our bookkeeper, to present today the expenses and receipts of the general fund for the year to date, and to update meeting regularly for the rest of the year.
 - b) We recommend that Meeting defer any contributions from the General Outreach and Quaker Outreach budget lines until we can determine that our 2005 receipts will be sufficient. Each of these groups of contributions is budgeted at \$3,000, for a total of \$6,000 to be deferred.
 - 4) We will be putting a link on the Meeting web site so that Friends can make credit card or bank draft contributions through an organization called Network for Good. There is a charge of 3% of each credit card contribution and \$10 for each bank draft. Friends can make contributions to other charitable organizations through the same means and at the same time.
 - 5) We welcome in-kind contributions from Friends. We hope that Friends will continue their regular monetary contributions as well.
 - 6) Recommendations regarding our two Pax World Fund Accounts:
 - a) We remind Friends of the guidelines for investing our money that Finance Committee has been following since their approval in the November 2002 Business Meeting. Those guidelines specified that in general we will not be investing in stocks or stock funds, except that the bulk of the College-Age Friends Support Fund (about \$11,000) is invested in a Pax World Fund stock fund. The College-Age Friends Support Fund is the only pool of money we have that we use as an endowment. Other money is intended to be available to us on relatively short notice. The guidelines approved in 11/02 are reprinted at the end of this report.
 - b) We have a second Pax World Fund Account which is part of the General Fund (approximately \$11,000). When the 2002 guidelines were proposed the Finance Committee was reluctant to recommend that we sell those shares, because the stock market was depressed and we would have sold at a loss. It now appears that the market has recovered sufficiently, and we recommend liquidating this account. Proceeds from the sale will be placed in our checking account for the time being.
 - 7) The Finance Committee intends to establish a second account at the Self-Help Credit Union. The current account has been configured to contain only the Meeting's Building Fund, which has been separated from all the other funds. The second account would contain a mix of money from the General Fund and restricted funds. The Board of Directors of the Asheville Friends Meeting's corporation has adopted a specific formal corporate resolution which was required by the Self Help Credit Union to open the account. Our bylaws specify that all such decisions of the Board need to be approved by Meeting for Business. We are awaiting the approval of Meeting for Business to proceed.
 - 8) We have reviewed the work of the ad hoc committee to draft personnel practices for Meeting. They originally reported to Meeting in 2001. Their work led to some changes in how we have treated employees, namely being careful to abide by the various legal requirements for employees. However, the policy recommended was not formally approved by meeting. David Clements, a member of the original ad hoc committee, brought the report, together with several changes that had been recommended by members of Meeting in the discussions of 2001.
 - a) We considered taking on the stewardship of finalizing the personnel practices. We recognize that it in addition would be helpful for Meeting to have a single group that has responsibility for supervising all employees. However, the finance committee is reluctant to take on that responsibility.
 - b) We note that there has been a call for an Administrative Committee, which might take on the supervision of employees as well as other administrative tasks for Meeting.
 - c) The Finance Committee recommends:

- i. That Meeting considers establishing an Administrative Committee.
- ii. That the Committee be empowered to:
 - 1 Review the previous draft versions of the personnel policy, and propose a final version to Meeting.
 - 2 Review salaries of employees and develop a consistent pay scale and policy for raises and bonuses.
 - 3 Provide ongoing supervision to employees.

Guidelines for the Finance Committee to use in managing the investments of Asheville Friends Meeting, Approved by Meeting 11/2002

In managing Meeting's money, the Finance Committee will act within the following guidelines. The Committee need not bring before Meeting for approval the various transactions and movements of our investments, so long as the Committee is acting within these guidelines. Any other investments or movements of money will need approval by Meeting for Business. These guidelines are intended to restrict only the Finance Committee. They are not intended to be a restriction on action by the Business Meeting. Friends are invited to suggest, for review by the Finance Committee or by the Meeting, other investments not mentioned below or which do not meet these guidelines. The following will apply to all Meeting funds except the Young Friends Support Fund, which will be separately managed for long-term income and appreciation.

1. The Finance Committee will invest conservatively, with a goal of preserving our principal and earning a fair return, consistent with Friends' principles.
2. The Finance Committee will plan to have any of Meeting's investments available for use by the Meeting within 5 years.
3. The Finance Committee will not purchase any individual stocks, and will make no new investments in stock funds. We welcome gifts of stock, and would convert such a gift to another form of investment promptly.
4. The Finance Committee will manage Meeting funds by investing among the following: Checking account, Self Help Credit Union money market funds, Self Help Credit Union Certificates of Deposit, Federal mortgage-backed bonds or bond funds, and municipal bonds or bond funds. We will defer any change in our current investment in Pax World Fund for the present.
5. The Building Fund will be separated from all other funds. As of January 1, 2003 all income from the Building Fund will accrue to the Building Fund. This will change our current practice whereby all the income in funds other than the Young Friends Support Fund is assigned to the General Fund.
6. The Finance Committee and the Meeting will work to define other types of acceptable investments.

Friends were concerned that deferring charitable contributions from the budget might set a precedent. A Friend suggested that it is incumbent upon those who object to help decide where that money should come from. David C. was asked to address this concern and pointed out that the deferment is temporary and may well be addressed if more funds are available by Dec.

Responding to a concern about the building fund, Satchel and David informed the meeting that \$21,000 is in AFM House and Grounds Emergency Fund and \$57,800 is in the Building Fund. Meeting used to add \$6,000 per year to the Building Fund, but this has not been the practice for the past two years.

Since some Friends were uncomfortable deferring the charitable contributions at this time, the Clerk suggested we might put aside until December's meeting. In response to Friends' inquiries as to whom we will giving charitable contributions, the clerk of Peace and Earth said that a list of those organizations will be presented to December business meeting.

A Friend suggested we try to discover more creative way to solicit funds that still fall within the parameters of friendliness. Another Friend suggested using forum time for further discussion of fundraising. A Friend suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to examine fund raising. Nominating offered aid in setting up this ad hoc committee.

Friends approved forming an ad hoc committee to examine fundraising.

Friends approved reimbursing Margaret Normile \$65 for the purchase of two cakes.

Friends approved liquidating our Pax World Fund account.

Friends approved formation of Administrative Committee as recommended with Satchel Loftis and David Clements serving.

Report was accepted

Friends agreed to defer review of ninth and tenth month minutes until December. Friends took a break from our business at 1:07 p.m. We resumed our work at about 1:30 p.m.

Review of Board Meeting and approval of decisions of the Board

A Friend mentioned that the Board of Directors is an edifice that we a required to have in order to own property, and that the meeting of the BoD could be held at some other convenient time.

The Clerk asked if it the sense of the meeting that the decisions of the BoD which were made during the Oct Meeting for Business, or do they need to be reviewed. In response to an inquiry, David stated that the Bylaws state that Board decisions are not official until approved by the Meeting; the Board can only make recommendations.

A Friend asked to review the decisions of the Board meeting. The clerk read them from Tenth Month Minutes.

Friends approved the recommendations of the Board of Directors made at tenth month Meeting for Business. Friends agreed that the Board should meet on the same day as, but not the same time as, tenth month Meeting for Business in 2006.

Report of ad hoc committee examining first day structure

To Asheville Friends Meeting Community,

Last spring, our committee, the Ad-Hoc Committee on First Day Meeting Structure, was charged to consider the question: "Is our current First Day time structure serving us, meaning both adults and children, as well as it could?" Since that time, we have held four threshing sessions, have had many conversations with individuals in our community and have had time to sit together to consider all that we have heard from our community. Through this listening, several themes have come through strongly. These include:

1) A strong hunger for some sort of on-going Adult Spiritual Enrichment that is part of our First Day time together. There was a sense among many people that our current forum structure was not feeding this hunger for both spiritual and community growth as well as it might. There was also a real sense of excitement around the idea that a spiritual enrichment time before Worship could have an effect on our worship itself as a sort of preparation for Worship together. *(Note: our committee felt that the term Spiritual Enrichment better expressed the desire we felt in our community for this time, as opposed to Adult Religious Education. Therefore we purposely chose the term spiritual enrichment to describe what we were hearing.. We use this term in general, not as a reference to the Spiritual Enrichment committee — yet we appreciate their enrichment of us with the term...)*

2) There was also a strong sense of desire to support First Day School teachers who, in our current schedule, have to miss Meeting for Worship in order to be with the children. Repeatedly the sentiment arose that if this was an issue for our teachers, then it was an issue that needed to be addressed.

3) The issue of children in worship was more varied. Many members of our community felt very strongly that children should have the opportunity to be in full worship without having to choose between worship time and First Day School. For many others, however, the idea of children attending the full hour of worship brought up concerns. This concern was about not only our youngest children, but also children of any age for whom sitting still might be difficult and for older youth who had not grown up doing this. There was a universal strong sense that Meeting for Worship should not be forced upon anyone, and that if some change is to happen, great care must be taken in how we offer loving support of our community children.

4) Finally there was a strong sense of willingness, even eagerness for some, to try something new. Several times we heard people speak to our ability as a community to grow and change just as our community members have both grown and changed. There was also a feeling voiced that we have the capability to simply try something new—and that if it doesn't work, we can work with that. There was an underlying recognition of our community's ability to be flexible and resilient. By the end of the summer, our committee's sense was that the Meeting strongly wanted to consider a change, and in fact, was asking for a concrete proposal.

Therefore we put forward the following proposal for a new First Day Meeting time structure:

9:45 – 10:00 *Meeting for Singing in the Worship Room*

(Another possibility would be singing during the transition time at 10:45)

10:00 – 10:45 *Spiritual Enrichment programs for Adults and for Children.*

We suggest that programs arise out of the idea of this time as preparation for worship, as a time to grow deeper in our spiritual lives and shared community together.

*Adult Spiritual Enrichment might include options such as Quaker 101, a Bible Study using perhaps *Lectio Divina*, a study group of early Quaker lives or a study of Quaker Testaments, or any other ideas that people in the community wish to offer.

*At least part of the First Day children's spiritual enrichment program could be geared towards preparing children for attending Worship.

10:45 – 11:00 *Transition time*

11:00 – 12:00 *Meeting for Worship*

All ages invited to attend with child care available — such as a paid worker and one volunteer. We suggest considering our general aim to be for children 7 and older to be in Meeting. Yet we also feel very strongly that there always be an alternative available for any youth, regardless of age, for whom this would be appropriate or needed. We recognize that 2 adults providing this alternative may not prove to be enough staffing, and that the whole question of how to best bring our children into the full Meeting is one that will particularly deserve careful consideration and planning.

On the weeks of *Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business*, we suggest having no Spiritual Enrichment programs. Child care be available during the usual Spiritual Enrichment time and that that time be used for the first part of Business Meeting. After Meeting for Worship and a short fellowship with food, Business Meeting could continue. We see a couple of advantages to such a schedule. First, it might actually allow for greater attendance of Business Meeting. The first part of Business Meeting would occur during a time in which we are already usually together. And the second part may not go so long into the afternoon. For many people, staying into the afternoon at all is difficult. Also, it might have the effect of allowing our worship to have a greater influence on how we conduct our business. We have heard of other Meetings that have successfully adopted a similar model.

If our Meeting does decide to move forward either with this proposal, or something like it, we as a committee feel it will be very important for us to be tender with a transition period. We believe it may take up to a year, and for some of our children, maybe even longer, for us to grow fully into such a large change. We expect that if such a change is to be successful, it will take creative problem solving as unforeseen problems arise along the way, and it will take an openness with the discomfort of transition. We have already heard in at least 2 of the Threshing sessions, people anticipating problems and coming up with great ideas of how they might be addressed.

In regards to our committee, we feel that this report and proposal reflect the completion of our charge. We would, at this time, like to continue our involvement with this issue as community members, not committee members. Therefore we request the Meeting's approval to lay down this committee. If, after appropriate consideration, the Meeting does decide to move forward on a proposal for change, we suggest a new committee be formed to carefully consider details and how to best go about implementation.

Thank you,

Ad-Hoc Committee on First Day Meeting Structure Members:

Lindsay Bridges, Barbara Esther, George Gjelfriend, Evan Richardson

The clerk asks if Friends are comfortable with laying down of this Ad Hoc Committee.

Friends approved the laying down of the Ad Hoc Committee Examining First Day Structure affirming the minute of gratitude from ninth month meeting for business.

While some Friends felt that we should go ahead with the proposal, many saw obstacles that needed to

first be addressed: the ten o'clock hour is somewhat written in stone and visitors and guests will expect some worship at that time; such a significant change requires seasoning and exposure. Friends considered a called meeting for business on 12/4/2005 to further examine this proposal. A member of the committee noted that the proposal was introduced at ninth month meeting for business, that it has been available to the community since then, and it has been well received.

A Friend stated that she received notice of this issue via email and attended this meeting because of it. Everyone received this notification and everyone has the opportunity to attend business meeting if they have concerns or leadings on an issue. Another Friend suggested that those who do not attend give those who do responsibility and trust to make decisions.

A Friend suggested that either a Standing Committee be charged with continuing the work, or a new ad hoc committee be formed, admonishing that if we fool around long enough, it will become another thing that we do not get done. A Friend said that we could approve this proposal as it is, recognizing that part of it is an understanding that an Ad Hoc Committee would be appointed to work out the details.

Friends agreed to establish an ad hoc committee to shepherd this issue, and entrust them with the task of seasoning the proposal for our First Day structure and addressing the obstacles to implementation. Make up of committee with representatives from Spiritual Enrichment, Religious Education, Ministry and Counsel, Junior Meeting, and anyone else who feels led to serve.

Friends accepted the report, requesting that the decisions of the Meeting be made available via mass email.

With the assent of the committee clerk, the Peace and Earth report was deferred to next month, with the report to be made available via mass email.

Report from Worship Sharing on FGC and SAYMA Minute/Queries concerning spiritual gifts of LGBTQ Friends

Our community gathered on First Day November 6 to reflect on the minutes from FGC and SAYMA on "Our Experience of and with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Friends." We met in worship sharing focusing as led on the queries, how do these minutes speak to your personal experience and to our meeting's experience? Present at this gathering were Alice Brown, Sam Rizzo, Adrienne Weir, Gary Briggs, Evan Richardson, Will Kaylor, Ellen Frerotte, Sarah Cousins, Phil Neal, Margaret Farmer, Jim Cavener, David Clements, Alan Robinson, Lynnora Bierce, Steve Livingston, Paula Weir-Villatora and Gary Byrne.

Based on the requests from both FGC Central Committee and SAYMA we invited friends to take these minutes into their hearts, to dwell deep, to "know one another in that which is eternal," to consider the words of these minutes and share with each other their experience.

Many friends shared. There was a sense of truth and honesty among friends. One friend acknowledged a need to learn more about the experience of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer friends and expressed a question about the need for so many labels. Another friend acknowledged falling short of accepting friends as spiritual equals regardless of sexual orientation and felt that our meeting's seeming unwillingness to accept or be able to support marriages between same gender couples makes it clear that our meeting falls short of accepting friends as spiritual equals regardless of sexual orientation. Many friends shared a sense of being able to unite with these minutes, particularly with the phrases that declared "spiritual gifts are not distributed with regard to sexual orientation or gender identity..." and we "will never go back to silencing those voices or suppressing those gifts." There was expression of frustration with our not being able to simply endorse these minutes given that our faith tradition calls us to see all as equal before God. One friend shared how important it is for people to be known for who they are rather than simply "other." The FLGBTQC (Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns) community explicitly expanded their names to include these labels because it offers inclusive love to all who participate and allows room for the individuals in this community to be who they are. Several friends shared a sense of surprise and disappointment as newcomers that our community has such fundamental work to do around the issue of fully accepting gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer friends. One friend called our attention to children among us who may grow up to be queer and the importance of offering them a safe place to be who they are. Yet another friend identified not feeling safe in our meeting community and shared deeply of how painful it is to not be accepted for who you are and the immense love available in the place of truth and acceptance -- that this is the experience of knowing God. It was offered that if we are to become the faith community that we all pretend to be then we all must do

the work of opening ourselves to true acceptance.

It was the sense of those gathered that our work as a community is not done. That while there may be frustration with how long this work is taking, to ignore what we have learned from each other today, that our community is not a safe place for many gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer friends, would be like sweeping this issue under the rug. If we were to do this, individual people and our community would get hurt.

It was suggested that we be prepared to report back to FGC Central Committee and SAYMA about the effect of their minutes on our community. Our committee offers the following minute:

Asheville Friends Meeting is grateful for the work of FGC Central Committee and SAYMA in recognizing the truth as spoken regarding their experiences of and with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Friends. As requested, our community took these minutes into our hearts and dwelled deep together in that which is eternal. As a result, we were able to honestly and humbly recognize that there is work we have to do as a community to truly become the beloved community we long to be. We are laboring with the question of whether we can unite to take under our care same-gender marriages and are now aware that we have more fundamental work to do in order to truthfully live as a community in the power that calls Friends to the testimony of equality. We ask that you hold us in the light as we embark on this act of love and faith together.

Friends approved the minute as offered, with Friend Phil N standing aside from the decision.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee by
Evan Richardson, committee member.

A Friend said that he was shocked about our not uniting with the minutes. Evan clarified that Meeting did unite with the sense of the minutes, but we recognized that as a community we have not lived up to it. This same Friend was surprised to hear that there was more work to do and asked whether or not this work was continuing. Clerk pointed out that several sessions have been scheduled to examine the matter, and the ad hoc committee examining our marriage procedures indicated willingness to shepherd this work. A Friend said that this was a step towards working on our relations with our community. The Committee on Marriage will meet again 11/20/05.

The report from the ad hoc committee examining marriage was submitted for review without comment.

REPORT FROM AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON MARRIAGE
UNDER THE CARE OF THE MEETING

To Our Asheville Friends Meeting Community,

On Sunday, October 16, 2005, the Ad-Hoc Committee on Marriage under the Care of the Meeting met to resume work on developing a procedure for marriage for Asheville Friends meeting. Present were Gary Briggs, David Clements, George Gjelfriend, Rain Newcomb, Evan Richardson and Bob Smith. Not present but also serving on the committee was Alan Robinson. Please note that this committee is under the care of Ministry and Counsel and has recently been reconstituted in an effort to renew the committee's capacity to carry its work forward. Previously Margaret Farmer, Paul Endry and Steve Livingston have served the meeting in this capacity. We extend our gratitude for the work they have done.

As we move forward, we want the community to be aware of our process. With this awareness we ask that the meeting hold us in the light as we work. We also invite the community to engage in an ongoing conversation regarding some of the elements of the work before us.

We reaffirmed for ourselves that our work is to be grounded in that which we can agree upon – that we hold each individual to be equally valuable and support loving human relationships wherever they may be. This is the same groundwork that was given to Ministry and Counsel by the meeting during the 1/04 meeting for business:

We are not in unity regarding either the use of the term "marriage" or the role of "membership" in defining who can apply for marriage under the care of the Meeting. We do unite in the belief that we are all equal in the eyes of the divine. We hold sacred the commitments made by couples who share a deep love with each other, regardless of whether the partners in such couples are of the same or opposite gender. We ask that Ministry and Counsel lead the Meeting in working out and seasoning the details of a procedure for marriage using these expressed beliefs and values as their guide.

We want to share with the community questions that seemed important to consider as we work together. We ask that the community consider these questions as well and encourage individuals to share their thoughts,

feelings and responses with each other and the ad-hoc committee:

What does it mean to be married?

What does it mean to be married and Quaker?

What does it mean to be married under the care of the meeting?

What does it mean to be married in the manner of Friends?

Should we offer this option?

How is it different from being married under the care of the meeting?

What is the relationship of membership to marriage under the care of the meeting and to marriage in the manner of Friends?

What do we offer to same gender couples?

What language do we use in referring to same gender, different gender and/or all “unions” under our care?

What are the legal implications of marriage under the care of the meeting?

Where is our unity as a meeting?

Our committee will be meeting again on Sunday, November 20 after the rise of meeting. We welcome input and participation. You may approach any of us with questions, concerns, information and the like. Please know that we seek to deeply love and listen to each other as we hold a space for difference among us. We seek to labor together in the spirit. In such, your light will be helpful.

We cannot say how long this process will take, but do intend to keep up the momentum. We are aware that the meeting decided in January 2004 to hold all requests for marriage under the care of the Meeting until a procedure for marriage is clarified and approved by Meeting. The meeting also asked Ministry and Counsel to give full priority to this issue on behalf of the Meeting. It is the intention of the ad-hoc committee to do this.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee by Evan Richardson, committee member.

Dying and Death Committee

Meeting approved with gratitude the laying down of the Death and Dying Committee as their charge has been fulfilled.

A brief report was given by Nominating Committee. The Committee did not recommend any actions. **Friends accepted the report.**

Personal concerns

Friends were asked to hold our former members and beloved old Friends Chris and Ollie (Olga) Ahrens in the Light, as Chris has been hospitalized due to oxygen deficiency and Ollie is not able to drive due to her poor eyesight.

A Friend asked if it was time to take down the jigsaw puzzle in the foyer.

A Friend observed that elephants in the room sometimes hinder us from doing our work. Perhaps from time to time we need to call these elephants forward.

Meeting ended with a few minutes of Worship at 3:00 p.m.