

Ninth Month Meeting Minutes

Asheville Friends Meeting

10th Day Ninth Month, 2006

(11:45 a.m.)

Opening reading

My ideal meeting would be one in which the importance of the inward journey, which leads to the journey outwards, would be recognized. A meeting in which we honored our commitment to each other to come to worship with heart and mind prepared, a meeting in which we exercised our particular gifts, varying our responsibilities from time to time in accordance with our resources. We would each be trying consciously to be true to the leadings of the Spirit within and, recognizing that our objective was the same, even though our paths might be very different, we would be ready to accept our differences and share our experiences with others. Some of us, moved by the same concern, might make witness to a part of our outward journey together but, because we each have our special gifts, we would not expect all those in the meeting to share our own concern except with their prayerful support.

Because of our openness and the “mutual irradiation” that we shared with the children of the meeting, our meeting house would be a joyous place with sounds of laughter (even spontaneous hugs), and people would see this and say, “What is it that motivates them? Let me go and see.” And there they would hear about the Divine within themselves and be turned to it and learn that to live in the Light is to live and work in the Peaceable Kingdom. Our meeting would be the place where people are empowered and feel life and joy, the place where the Spirit is found most deeply.

from: *Deepening the Spiritual Life of the Meeting*—Edward Hoare

Worship

Attendance

Eda Smith, Alice Brown, Ellen Frerotte, Margaret Normile, Kitti Reynolds, Phil Neal, Joy Gossett, Palin Spruance, Katherine Kowal, Gary Briggs, George Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Sam Rizzo, Barbara Esther, Karen Cernek, Gerry Smith, Ellen Oldham, Laura Maynard, Adrienne Weir (21 total in attendance at 11:45 am) Robin Wells (at 12:00)

Clerk—Steve Livingston

Recording Clerk—Lynnora Bierce

News of Ourselves

There were no new attenders at this month’s meeting for business.

Clerk recounted his and Barbara Esther’s joyous experience of laughter at Representative Meeting arising from the planning committee’s discernment of the theme for next year’s SAYMA Gathering: “Nurturing our Roots, Bursting forth with Fruits!”

Review of Agenda

Approved as presented

Eighth Month Minutes

Approved as Published

Memorial Minute for Jeanne Doerschuk

Jeanne Louise Berger Doerschuk, a long-time member of Asheville Friends Meeting died June 7, 2006 from complications of Alzheimer's Disease. Jeanne was born October 11, 1924 into a Lutheran family and spent most of her young years in Mansfield, near Cleveland, Ohio. She attended Ohio State and received a Master of Library Science degree from Case Western Reserve. Jeanne was a librarian with Sun Oil Company in Philadelphia when she met her first husband John Rommel, a chemical engineer from Wilmington, Delaware.

During the early years of her marriage, Jeanne became a homemaker and cared for her sons John, Tom and David. In the mid-60s, she resumed her library work with the Chester County Library in West Chester, Pennsylvania. During her residence in Pennsylvania, Jeanne became associated with the Religious Society of Friends at Swarthmore.

In 1973, Jeanne moved with her children to Wisconsin, following a divorce, in the hope of improved job prospects. She worked as a reference librarian with the City of Kenosha until 1980, when she moved to the Leicester community in western North Carolina and married Ernst Edwin Doerschuk, Jr., another librarian whom she had known during her years in Pennsylvania.

Asheville friends knew Jeanne as a good-humored and devoted librarian, whose diligent work led to the organization of the library we hold so dear. Jeanne was an avid gardener. She wove cloth for shirts that she made from scratch and presented to her family each year at Christmas. Jeanne's forthright manner, kind spirit and infectious laugh are missed by friends, as is the gentle spiritual presence of her husband Ernst who preceded her in death in February.

Approved with minor clarification about the correct way to spell Ernest or Ernst, and the correct form for her degree.

(12 noon—Joined by Robin Wells, 22 attending)

Joy will also confirm whether or not there is a charge to list the above with Friend's Journal.

Friends final visit with Jeanne (Phil, Susan and Marcia), in May or June of this year, they sang "Simple Gifts" with her, and despite her advanced Alzheimers she managed to sing with them.

Karen Cernek Membership

Barbara Esther read the report:

The clearness committee consisting of Susan Mitchell, Philip Neal and Barbara Esther met with Karen at Susan Mitchell's house on Monday, August 1st, 2006. We spent a period of time questioning Karen according to the usual procedure and listened carefully to her answers. In spite of Karen's long history with the meeting, and high level of participation in the life of the meeting, we were thorough in our inquiries. After the clearness committee's work was done, Susan served coffee/tea, sandwiches and sweets to us, including a special snack Lauren had brought back from Bangladesh. We truly enjoyed our fellowship together in her lovely home.

Ministry and Counsel Committee concur with the clearness committee's report.

We were united in our feeling that Karen will be a wonderful addition to our meeting as a full member and delight in recommending she be accepted as such. We further hope that the meeting will extend a formal welcome to Karen soon after that approval is accomplished.

Approved

Clerk asked if Friends would step forward to coordinate this gathering:

Ellen Frerotte, Barbara Esther, Katherine Kowal, volunteered to plan the gathering and Gerry Smith volunteered to cook for the event. The welcome is scheduled for the rise of 4th First day, 9/24/06.

Friends approved.

(12:15)

First Day Structure Change

The committee recommends that the meeting follow this schedule for a trial period of six months:

- 9:30 to 10:15:
First Day School Classes & Spiritual Enrichment for adults
 - 10:15 to 10:30:
Transition to worship
 - 10:30 to 11:30:
Worship available for all ages.
- Childcare would be provided (with volunteer assistance) for infants to four year olds (pre-kindergarten),
 - Wiggle worship would be available in the library for other children accompanied by family member(s) with audio speakers provided for ability to hear vocal ministry. No provision is planned for speaking from that space, however.
 - When the youth group is finished with their time together they may join us in worship or otherwise be engaged in quiet activity until break of meeting.
 - The Ad Hoc First Day Structure Committee could continue to receive feedback and organize response to such feedback during the six months, making a final report before it is laid down in March of 2007.

Two other matters:

(Currently under the care of other committees/groups within the meeting)

- Singing: The placement of singing could remain in the transition time, or could be part of the first hour's activities. This decision might be the choice of the committees that are in charge of the First Day School and Spiritual Enrichment planning, or could be referred to the Ministry and Counsel Committee to consider. Some Friends have reservations about singing just prior to meeting for worship, finding that it doesn't help them to settle into the silence.
- Meeting for Business: We recognize that there is other work being done within our meeting to consider our meetings for worship with attention to business, and do not wish to duplicate that work. We ask the meeting for approval of the above proposal regarding the scheduling of First Day School and Meeting

for Worship. We hope that the fact that changes to our Meeting for Business are still under development will not prevent this proposed schedule change from moving forward.

Report Accepted

Action:

Are we ready to move forward with this proposal, is there work that needs to be done before we move forward, or should the matter should be referred back to the ad hoc committee for further seasoning?

(12:50 p.m. check in):

1. Thresh out during this meeting to continue the work of this first day structure time change.
2. Schedule a called meeting for business to gather the committees and develop a concrete proposal.
3. Wait until October Meeting for Business to allow the committees to bring reports concerning this issue.

These concerns arose:

- A.** Wiggle Room, concern that vocal ministry not be stifled. The Wiggle Room will have incoming speakers from the main room, but not a way to be heard in the main room, which is in part its point. A Friend suggested that anyone in the Wiggle Room led to speak to the Meeting could come to an entry door and speak from the entry.
- B.** A concern arose regarding children who do not fall under the 1-4 age group and who do not want to be in Wiggle Worship. It was explained that a second child caregiver would be available along with a volunteer. This would not serve as a first choice for parents, but as an alternative option for children.
- C.** Concern that as it is we trickle in after 10 am, how much more difficult will it be for our families to come in at 9:30? A Friend offered that we should think more of what we can do rather than what we might do.
- D.** Concern that we are bowing down to the children too much. It is difficult enough being an adult and accomplishing Quaker worship without wiggling. What we are trying to accomplish is teach ourselves how to worship in this style. To make alternatives seems excessive.
- E.** Singing. There was a concern that arose over singing spilling out into worship time, as it often does now.
- F.** A concern over transition time, which tends to be noisy during the first 5 to 10 minutes of worship time. It was suggested that the meeting needed to be educated about the proper way to come to meeting: Prepared and Quietly.
- G.** Wiggle Room. It was suggested that the older elementary children be given some responsibility to steward the Wiggle Room and help in its weekly set-up.
- H.** Concern arose over when we would implement the change, and how soon we would need to change our notice in the weekly paper.

Clerk noted a sense of unity despite the absence of detail as how the changes will be implemented. Since we are

ready to move forward to accept the proposal in principle perhaps we are also ready to implement it in practice as well. Clerk asked if there were any Friend present who was uneasy with this idea. After ample time in silence, no Friend came forward as having unease with accepting implementation of the proposal.

After much discussion it was decided that the various committees working on this transition should be allowed to move forward in their discussion and planning.

There was a sense in meeting that a start date would be needed, and the Friends in attendance saw 9/22 as the first opportunity to try the new First Day Structure, with the understanding that this change is considered a trial period, and will be revisited in 6 months.

–Friends approved implementing the new First Day Structure, with the first hour at 9:30 a.m. for First Day School and Adult Spritual Enrichment, and the second hour at 10:30 a.m. for worship.

Clerk asked if this Ad Hoc committee needs to continue, or if its work is done?

A Friend on the committee said the committee will monitor, review, and be a place for suggestions to go. Clerk: They will be managing the change? Another committee member said that standing committees need to own the change, become more of a “clearing house” than “managers”, and suggested that standing committees were taking on responsibilities as follows:

Religious Education will put together Wiggle Worship room.

House and Grounds will see to installation of speaker.

Ministry and Counsel will notify the membership. Goerge Gjelfriend will make changes to our ad in the Mountain Express.

Spiritual Enrichment will plan the Adult program.

Friends approved reviewing our experience with the new First Day structure in 5th month 2007.

Approved

Clerk voiced his appreciation for the work of this committee.

Peace and Earth Report

Peace and Earth reminds Meeting of the September 11 events tomorrow, celebrating the 100th anniversary of Gandhi’s first nonviolent action. Gather at 5:30 at Pritchard Park, after leaving a potluck contribution at First Presbyterian. After the Meeting, participants will walk to First Presbyterian for a shared meal. Peace and Earth has co-sponsored this event (thanks to Margaret Normile). (Peace on Earth—Peace with Earth; Asheville Mayor, Terry Bellamy)

AFSC is sponsoring a Declaration of Peace, which can be signed online. The Declaration calls for a plan to end the war in Iraq. They are scheduling a number of events in connection with this declaration, including three national call-in days when people are urged to call Congressional members to urge support for the Declaration of Peace – Sept. 11, 19, and 26.

Susan Oehler visited Congressman Taylor’s office on September 7th, to make a case for withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. Other members of Peace and Earth called Taylor’s office in support of Susan’s visit.

Peace and Earth is co-sponsoring the showing of Al Gore’s movie about global warming, An

Inconvenient Truth, at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Oct 13, from 7 to 9 PM. The movie is free, although contributions will be accepted to support the work of local churches to combat global climate change.

—Report Accepted

Nominating Committee Report:

Two Requests:

- Ask Committee Clerks to inform the Nominating Committee of Active and Inactive members
- Committees which are in particular need of members are:
 1. House & Grounds
 2. Religious Education
 3. Ministry & Counsel
- Need someone to serve as Scheduler of use of the Meeting house. George offered to take on the responsibility of Meetinghouse scheduler.

Friends approved George Gjelfriend to take on the responsibility of Meetinghouse Coordinator.

Three Actions:

- Guest Clerk and Guest Recording Clerk become available for those of the community who are interested in pursuing this leading.

—Approved

It was further remarked that the meeting make available to interested persons the Arthur Larrabee Workshop on Clerking which Steve Livingston took and we are still receiving the fruits from. Also, this matter will be put on the Ministry and Counsel agenda. In this way Ministry and Counsel can help encourage interest in Guest Clerking and Guest Recording.

- Seeking Release Kristi Gjelfriend from Religious Education

—Approved with thanks

- Seeking Release Lynnora Bierce from Fundraising, and Long Range Planning and Visioning Committee

—Approved with thanks

- Lynnora Bierce seeks to act a recording clerk for another year.

Friends approved with thanks Lynnora Bierce serving as recording clerk for another year.

Clerk's concerns

Unfinished work on the matter of marriage under the care of the meeting. Procedures: Gathering as a community to consider the Queries. The Ad Hoc committee completed a rough draft of marriage procedure

in June. To unite with the suggestion to act on these queries requires a called meeting—which is a matter of scheduling.

Friends united on a minute of appreciation to House and Grounds Committee and committee clerk Satchel Loftis for the greatly improved appearance of the front porch and meeting room.

Personal Concerns

Phil—Entry room.

George—Vestibule

Lynnora—Keep it Simple... more of a leading than a concern

Ellen—Right Sharing of World Resources is looking for 13 beds for 3 nights Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights with a simple breakfast for each following morning. October 11 thru 15, 2006. Contact Evan Richardson.

Friends noted with joy the 41st anniversary of Eda and Gerry Smith, and the eleventh birthday of Wesley Clements.

(2 pm) Closing Worship

14 Friends remained in attendance at the close of Meeting.